



Children, Young People,  
Education and Skills

# Jersey Virtual School Handbook

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Government of Jersey



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## An Introduction to the Virtual School

### **From Victoria Bisson, Virtual School Headteacher**

This handbook is designed to provide you with advice, guidance and support. This handbook is specifically designed for the professionals who work with a child who has support for Jersey Virtual School. This includes designated teachers and social workers.

However, the information in this handbook may also be useful for parents and carers. If you are a parent or a carer, you can find more information about Jersey Virtual School on the Government of Jersey website.

Jersey Virtual School works to make sure that all children and young people have been or are in care get extra support and resources they need to achieve their best.

We know that children who have been looked after (or who are currently looked after) face extra challenges accessing education, and achieving their best.

Jersey Virtual School was set up in 2020 to make sure that we address these challenges, from Early Years, to school and beyond.

Jersey Virtual School is made up of five people, all of whom have different professional experience. Some of the team are former teachers (including me). Some have worked with children with Special Educational Needs. Some of us are specialists in Early Years. All of us believe that all children have a right to the best-possible education.

The Jersey Virtual School team work closely with parents and carers, school staff, social workers, and children and young people. We don't just bring together these different professionals, we also do our best to make sure that the child or young people has an active part in all the decisions about them.

This handbook explains more about what the Virtual School and what we offer. It explains the process we use to support children and young people. It also outlines the roles and responsibilities for social workers and designated teachers.

If you have more questions, please do contact the Virtual School team. We are always happy to answer questions and ensure we work together to provide the best possible support we can.

## What is Jersey Virtual School?

Jersey Virtual School is not a physical building, or an educational institution.

Instead, the Virtual School provides an extra layer of support for children and young people who:

- are currently in care
- who have been in care in the past
- are leaving care

Jersey Virtual School does this by making sure that these children and young people have access to extra funding ([known as the Jersey Premium](#)), and that this funding is used to support the child or young person's learning and development.

Every child and young person has a Personal Education Plan (PEP) which sets out how their nursery, school or college which use this extra funding to help them succeed. The PEP is agreed by the child and young person, and the people around them. It is updated every term.

The Virtual School works with schools, parents and carers, social workers, and the child and young person to agree their PEP. They are also responsible for quality assuring PEPs and releasing the funding needed to complete the PEPs.

Jersey Virtual School also ensures that the extra funding spent on the child or young person is improving their educational outcomes.

In addition, the Virtual School provides children and young people with support in term time. Outside of term time, the Virtual School also provides activity programmes.

## Personal Education Plan (PEP)

The Personal Education Plan (PEP) is the main way that schools, and Jersey Virtual School work together to help that children who are in care, or who are care-experienced, to succeed.

Many children and young people who come into care, or who are care-experienced, have lower educational outcomes than their peers. Regular PEP meetings ensure that the child or young person's Jersey Premium funding is used to support their educational attainment.

### Involving the child or young person

The child or young person is at the centre of the PEP process. They are invited to attend each PEP meeting, and they have a chance to set out their aspirations, and what goals they want to set to achieve these aspirations. Because of this, the PEP process also helps build the child or young person's self esteem.

Before, during and after the PEP meeting, all the adults involved should work together in the best interests of the child, in line with the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#), Article 3: *"the best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children."*

### Examples of how Jersey Premium Funding could be used:

The child or young person's Jersey Premium funding can be used for anything that supports their educational attainment. Some examples of how the funding could be used include:

- 1:1 teaching
- a specialist programme delivered by a support teacher
- music lessons (to support GCSE performance)
- additional well-being support
- extra time or resources to help the child or young person transition
- training for staff so they can support the child or young person

For **children who are looked after** (as opposed to children who are care-experienced), the Jersey Premium Funding can be used for anything that a parent would provide. This includes:

- food
- school uniform
- equipment, including laptops
- school trips
- music lessons
- extra-curricular clubs
- university visits

These are examples of what the funding can be used for, but this is not a complete list. The child or young person's Jersey Premium funding can be used for anything that improves their overall educational attainment.

The Jersey Virtual School can provide advice on how funding can be used:  
[jerseyvirtuelschool@gov.je](mailto:jerseyvirtuelschool@gov.je)

### The PEP meeting

Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are agreed and updated every term at a termly PEP meeting. The following people are invited to attend the PEP meeting:

- the child or young person
- the Designated Teacher (see below)
- the child or young person's social worker, if applicable (see below)
- a representative from Jersey Virtual School
- the child or young person's carer
- the child or young person's carer, if appropriate
- any other professionals who are supporting the child or young person (for example, CAMHS)
- for children in Year 9 and above, a representative from Skills Jersey

During the meeting, all the attendees will discuss what ambitions the child or young person has, and what goals and support can be put in place to meet these ambitions. The Designated Teacher (see below) will update the PEP during the meeting using a platform called Welfare Call (see below).

After the meeting, the Social Worker (see below) and Designated Teacher (see below) will sign off the Personal Education Plan (PEP) using Welfare Call. Jersey Virtual School will then sign off the PEP. After this, the funding will be released and the child or young person will be able to access the support they need.

### Reviewing and updating PEPs

Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are updated and reviewed every term. The PEPs are reviewed using a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) system. The RAG rating is given by the Jersey Virtual School, based on:

- how much information is completed
- how personal and effective the proposed plan is
- whether progress has been made from previous targets
- whether the PEP takes into account the views and wishes of the child or young person

The Jersey Virtual School will give feedback and support to Designated Teachers (see below) to help them update the PEP so that it provides the best outcomes for the child or young person. A copy of the RAG rating – and actions needed – is available in Appendix Four.

## Using Welfare Call

Welfare Call is an online platform which is used by Jersey Virtual School to record, manage, and track each child or young person's Personal Education Plan (PEP).

You should have access to Welfare Call if you are a Designated Teacher or a Social Worker.

Welfare Call is used to record:

- the time and date for monthly PEP meetings
- track attendance at PEP meetings
- the termly targets for the child
- progress against these targets (either red, amber or green)

To get access to Welfare Call, email the Jersey Virtual School: [jerseyvirtualschool@gov.je](mailto:jerseyvirtualschool@gov.je). Once you have access, you can then login to Welfare Call by visiting <https://extranet.welfarecall.com>.

You can get support in using Welfare Call by calling 01226 71633, or emailing [epep@welfare.com](mailto:epep@welfare.com)

## The role of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher acts as the advocate for the child or young person within their nursery, school or college.

To do this, they should develop a secure relationship with the child and young person by meeting with them, outside of the Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings. This secure relationship will help the Designated Teacher to ensure that the child's voice is at the centre of all discussions about their educational development.

The Designated Teacher should also support the child's overall wellbeing by promoting the holiday activities that Jersey Virtual School offers (see above). They should also link in with wider support networks and agencies who can support the child or young person's wellbeing and mental health, where relevant. For a list of support agencies, see Appendix 2.

The Designated Teacher is designated by the nursery, school or college. They can be the child's class teacher or form tutor, a SENCO Coordinator. They should be a qualified teacher with an understanding of how to agree appropriate objectives for each child.

Specific training and support is in place for Designated Teachers, and they are expected to attend relevant training. For more details on training, contact Jersey Virtual School:

[jerseyvirtualschool@gov.je](mailto:jerseyvirtualschool@gov.je)

The Designated Teacher also has specific obligations which they must carry out. These are listed below.



### Arranging and Attending PEP meetings

With the exception of the first PEP meeting, **the Designated Teacher is responsible for organising any future PEP meetings**. As part of this, the Designated Teacher should work with the child or young person's social worker to agree a time and date for the meeting and update this on Welfare Call (see above).

The Designated teacher is also responsible for inviting the following people to each PEP meeting:

- the child or young person
- a member of the Virtual School team
- the child or young person's parent or carer
- the social worker
- any other professionals who work with the child or young person

### Preparing for PEP meetings

Before a PEP meeting, the Designated Teacher should meet with the child or young person to find out what they want to achieve over the next term, and what goals they want to set themselves to get there.

For younger children, the Designated should include their class teacher and – wherever possible – their carer in this meeting. This will allow all the adults to work together to support the child.

The Designated Teacher is responsible for completing the PEP ahead of the meeting so that it can be discussed at the PEP meeting. This includes ensuring that the voice of the child or young person is reflected in the PEP.

### Leading PEP meetings

A senior member of school staff or the Designated Teacher should lead the termly Personal Education Plan (PEP) meeting. In leading the meeting, they should ensure that the child or young person has opportunity and encouragement to share their views on their PEP.

They should also ensure that all the adults around the child have an equal opportunity to input their views on progress and next steps.

### Agreeing targets and updating PEPs

Following each termly PEP meeting, the school – led by the Designated Teacher – is responsible for updating the PEP based on feedback from the meeting. They are also responsible for updating and completing the Personal Education Plan (PEP) through Welfare Call (see above) **within 8 days of the PEP meeting taking place**.

## The role of the social worker

The role of the social worker is to work in partnership to ensure that the child or young person gets the best outcomes possible. Generally, they should work closely with:

- the child or young person
- the Jersey Virtual School team
- the child or young person's school
- the Designated Teacher
- the parent(s) or carer(s)
- any other agencies working with the child or young person

The social worker also has specific obligations which they must carry out. These are listed below.

### Organising the first Personal Education Plan (PEP) meeting.

It is the responsibility of the social worker to arrange an initial PEP meeting **within the first 48 hours of a child or young coming into care.** The PEP should take place **within 10 days of the child or young person coming into care.**

To set up the first PEP, you will need access to Welfare Call (see above). This platform is used to organise, track, and update PEPs. The Virtual School team can support you with getting a login for the platform: [jerseyvirtualschool@gov.je](mailto:jerseyvirtualschool@gov.je).

Once you have access to Welfare Call (see above), you should invite the following people to the PEP

- the child or young person
- their parent
- their carer
- their designated teacher
- their key worker

The first PEP should be held **within 10 days of the child or young person coming into care:**

### Agreeing, recording, and updating PEPs

After the first Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings, the social worker should work closely with the Designated Teacher to sign off the **PEP within 8 days of the meeting taking place.**

### Preparing for and attending later PEP meetings

Following the first PEP meeting, it is the responsibility of the Designated Teacher to organise PEP meetings each term. They will work with the social worker to agree a time and date.

The social worker should update the social care section of the PEP before each termly meeting.

## Alternative Provision and Holiday programmes

As well as supporting the PEP process, the Jersey Virtual School also supports children and young people by offering educational and recreational opportunities to support their overall development.

**Alternative provision** is a type of education experience which takes place outside of a mainstream school setting. The Jersey Virtual School offers alternative provision for looked after children during term time. Examples of the alternative provision Jersey Virtual School offers includes:

Forest school	Cycling tours
Farm visits	Tennis
Equine therapy	Golf
Fishing trips	Swimming
Surfing	Trampolining

**Holiday programmes.** The Jersey Virtual School also offers holiday programmes outside of term time. Holiday programmes give children and young people the opportunity to develop their interests as part of a small group.

Children and young people get to choose the activities that suit their interests. Holiday programme activities include:

Fishing tours	Forest and Beach schools
Boat cruises	Creepy valley
Surfing sessions	Jump Jersey
Horseriding sessions	Rock climbing
Sailing	Paddle boarding

# Appendices

## Appendix One – PEP process and roles

### **START HERE:** Child arrives in care or in a new school/setting.

Social worker to liaise with school and the Virtual School within 48 hrs in order to arrange the first PEP meeting within 10 school days.

Within 10 days

### **First PEP Meeting**

See PEP meeting guidance

**Convened by:** Social Worker

**Attended by:**

- Designated Teacher
- Carer
- Child
- Key Worker
- Parent

**Led by:** Senior School Staff/Designated Teacher

If child changes school or leaves and re-enters care

**At Looked After Child Reviews, the Independent Reviewing Officer ensures:**

- 1) There is a PEP in the time lines stated
- 2) The school has made plans for effective use of the Jersey premium

Within 8 days

### **Subsequent PEP Meetings**

**Convened by:** Designated Teacher

**Attended by:**

- Social Worker
- Carer
- Child
- Key Worker
- Parent

**Led by:** Senior School Staff/Designated Teacher

The social worker should **update** the social care section of the PEP before the meeting.

**School has responsibility for updating and completing the PEP**

If the child remains in care the school continues to have responsibility for completing and updating the PEP

### **PEP signed off by DT and SW**

When signed off by Virtual School, PEP documents should be sent to carers, and parents if appropriate  
PEP entered onto Mosaic by SW

### **PEP signed off by DT and SW**

When signed off by Virtual School, PEP documents should be sent to carers, and parents if appropriate

### **2<sup>nd</sup> PEP Meeting**

**Convened by:** Designated Teacher

**Attended by:**

- Social Worker
- Carer
- Child
- Key Worker
- Parent

**Led by:** Senior School Staff/Designated Teacher

The social worker should **update** the social care section of the PEP before the meeting.

**School has responsibility for updating and completing the PEP via Welfare call -**

<https://extranet.welfarecall.com>

Support helpline: Tel 01226 716333 Email: epep@welfare.com

Each term

## Appendix Two - Jargon buster

### **Children in care of the Minister**

A child or young person under the age of 18 who lives with foster carers, or in children's home. This does not include children or young people who have been adopted.

### **Cared for Child /Child Looked After/ Looked After Child**

Another term for Children in care of the Minister (see above)

### **DT (Designated Teacher)**

A qualified teacher who advocates for the child or young person within their nursery, school or college. They are responsible for attending PEP meetings.

### **JP (Jersey Premium)**

Funding allocated to children or young people who need additional support and funding to get the most from their education. Looked after children are one of the groups who receive funding.

[More information is available online.](#)

### **Previously looked after child**

A child or young person up to the age of 18 who has previously lived with foster carers or in a children's home.

### **PEP (Personal Education Plan)**

A tailored plan to improve a child or young person's education by using their Jersey Premium funding. It is updated every term, and co-designed with the child.

### **Welfare Call**

The online platform used to track, record and analyse support for looked after children or previously looked after children.

## Appendix Three - PEP RAG ratings

The table below shows the Red, Amber Green rating that is given to each Personal Education Plan (PEP) by the Jersey Virtual School. For support when completing a PEP, contact Jersey Virtual School: [jerseyvirtualschool@gov.je](mailto:jerseyvirtualschool@gov.je)

<p><b>Green</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All fields are completed and up to date</li> <li>• Reflects a personalised approach to learning that will meet educational needs</li> <li>• Plans for behaviour, SEN, attendance, reduced timetable are attached where appropriate and contribute to meeting need</li> <li>• Progress has been made from previous targets</li> <li>• Targets are SMART and Jersey Premium funding allocated to help meet identified need and secure the best outcomes</li> <li>• Takes into account views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person</li> </ul>	<p>Action required</p>
<p><b>Amber</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some information is missing</li> <li>• Reflects a personalised approach to learning that will, with some adjustments, meet educational need</li> <li>• Plans for behaviour, SEN, attendance, reduced timetable are attached where appropriate</li> <li>• Some progress has been made from previous targets</li> <li>• Targets need some adjustments</li> <li>• Jersey Premium funding needs clearer focus</li> <li>• Takes into account views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person</li> </ul>	<p>Feedback and support given to Designated Teacher</p> <p>Adjustments made within two weeks</p>
<p><b>Red</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sections not completed</li> <li>• Educational needs not clear</li> <li>• Plans for behaviour, SEN, attendance, reduced timetable are not attached or conflict with educational needs</li> <li>• Previous targets not met</li> <li>• Targets are not SMART and unlikely to impact on educational outcomes</li> <li>• Jersey Premium funding not related to targets</li> <li>• Views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person are not reflected in the plan</li> </ul>	<p>Feedback and support given to Designated Teacher</p> <p>Virtual School to discuss next PEP two weeks prior to meeting</p> <p>Virtual School to attend next PEP</p>

## Appendix Four - Other agencies who can help

The Virtual School works closely with lots of other organisations to support children who are looked after, and previously looked after children.

### **Children's Service**

Promotes, safeguards, and improves the wellbeing of all children and their families in Jersey. For more information, contact the child's social worker.

### **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)**

Offers mental health assessment and therapeutic service for children and young people, from the age of 5 to 18 years of age, and their families. They offer a range of 1:1, group and family interventions to help with mental health issues such as.

[More information and contact details are available online.](#)

### **Children and Families Hub**

Provide advice and support to families. This can include direct work, and coordinating with other children and family organisations to provide the right help at the right time.

Email: [childrenandfamilieshub@gov.je](mailto:childrenandfamilieshub@gov.je)

Call: 01534 519000

### **Kooth**

An online service which offers free online counselling and support for anyone aged 1 to 25. This is an online service available 24 hours and offers bookable counselling sessions from Monday to Friday 12pm to 10pm and Saturday and Sunday 6pm to 10pm.

[More information and joining instructions are available online.](#)

### **Mind Jersey**

Provides a range of mental health support for children and young people aged 7 to 25, including a free helpline, courses and support.

Email: [youthfulminds@mindjersey.org](mailto:youthfulminds@mindjersey.org)

Call: 07829 933 929



**School based counselling team**

School counsellors are available in most secondary schools and Highlands College.

For more information, contact the child's school.

**Youth Enquiry Service (YES)**

Provides free, independent and confidential information, support and counselling to anyone aged 14 50 25.

[More information and contact details are available online.](#)

## Appendix Five - Related policies

There are several policies which support the education of children who are looked after, and children who have been previously looked after. These policies are all available on the Government of Jersey website, and are linked below.

[Education of Looked After Children Policy](#)

[Jersey Premium information](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education Policy](#)

[Positive Behaviour, Exclusions and Part-time Timetables Policy](#)