

# Barnet Virtual School Carer Newsletter Spring 2025

Happy New Year and welcome to the Spring 2025 edition of the Barnet Virtual School Carer Newsletter. We hope you had a good break and the return to school has gone smoothly. Please do contact your young person's caseworker if you have any questions or queries—contact details are further on. Please also ensure you ask your child's D.T. in school if you want a copy of the PEP. Sarah Deale Headteacher

## FOSTER CARER TRAINING THIS TERM

Barnet Virtual School are offering a range of virtual workshops over the Spring Term. These are an opportunity to learn more about a particular topic, meet other foster carers and ask questions.



### Emotion Coaching

**5th February 10.00- 11.30am**

Emotion Coaching is an evidence-based approach that can support children with expressing and regulating their feelings. In this workshop we'll explore how this approach can be used to help children and young people navigate their feelings, particularly when experiencing more challenging emotions.

Run by Sam Rothwell, Inclusion Advisory Team

### Understanding social and emotional barriers to learning

**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2025 10.00- 11.30am**

Emotions influence how we learn. In this workshop we will explore how social and emotional needs can impact the learning process and consider ways we can improve and enrich children and young people's learning experiences.

Run by Sam Rothwell, Inclusion Advisory Team

### Supporting Expressive Language (Narrative Skills) for the Vulnerable child/Young person

**27th March 10.00—11.00**

What do we mean by narrative skills and why are they so important?

What factors might be impacting narrative skills in the context of a LAC or vulnerable child?

Ideas/strategies for adults to support the development of effective narrative skills in children and young people.

Run by our Speech and Language Therapists

*If you would like to do any of these, please email: [barnet.virtualschool@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:barnet.virtualschool@barnet.gov.uk) stating which course you would like to do and we will set up access for you.*

*You will be given a certificate of attendance for each workshop that you attend.*

## Other Training

Just a reminder that there is access to free training for carers/parents as well as drop in consultation support with Barnet **occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, and physios**. There is a wide range of training available to foster carers in and out of borough. The drop-ins are available to carers of children in a Barnet school or who have a barnet GP. Follow this link to find out more: [Parental Advice and Support](#)

The first for the new term is:



<b>08/01/2025</b> 14:00-14:45 <b>Parents, Secondary School Staff, Other Professionals</b>	<b>Workshop (for attendees of Learn and Remember words Part 1)</b> <i>Aims:</i> <i>Discuss and share ideas around strategies to support word learning</i>	<i>To Book:</i> <a href="https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/workshop-for-attendees-of-learn-and-remember-words-part-1-tickets-925982266887?aff=oddtcreator">https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/workshop-for-attendees-of-learn-and-remember-words-part-1-tickets-925982266887?aff=oddtcreator</a>
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### **Supporting Children with Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) - Tuesday February 4th 9.30—12.00**

**This is an online course for parents and carers and is facilitated by an outside provider.**

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) can be a challenging experience for both children and their families. This webinar is designed to equip parents and carers with practical strategies and insights to better understand and support children who struggle to attend school due to emotional difficulties. We will explore the EBSA cycle, identify early warning signs, and learn how to work collaboratively with schools to create effective, supportive solutions.

The session will also cover strategies to address the push-and-pull factors affecting school attendance and include the development of a personal wellbeing action plan to help parents and carers maintain balance and resilience.

Objectives:

1. Understand the EBSA Cycle: Develop a clear understanding of the thoughts, beliefs and behaviours that drive EBSA, including the push-and-pull factors that influence school attendance.
2. Recognise Early Signs and Work with Schools: Learn to identify the early warning signs of EBSA and explore ways to collaborate effectively with schools to create tailored, supportive plans for your child.
3. Implement Practical Strategies and Wellbeing Actions: Discover practical approaches to addressing EBSA while creating a self-care and wellbeing action plan to support your own mental health and resilience as a parent or carer.

Jessica Parker, currently pursuing a PhD in Psychological Medicine at King's College London, has a strong background in both Psychology and Education having worked both clinically and in schools. Her thesis is on school-based prevention of mental ill-health. As an Associate across several organisations and a former Education Director at Creative Education, Jessica has led numerous mental health and education initiatives, including the Department for Health and Education programmes. She is passionate about promoting resilience and well-being in schools, having developed and delivered training for professionals internationally.

To register, please follow this link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/supporting-children-with-emotionally-based-school-avoidance-eb-sa-tickets-1123043927619?aff=oddtcreator>

## Attendance

### Return to school

If you are at all concerned about your young person's attendance at school, please contact your Virtual School caseworker and the school **as soon as possible** so that we can set an early PEP and get the appropriate support in place as soon as possible.

**Attendance is one of the most significant factors that can make a difference to outcomes and it is everyone's responsibility.**

**Whilst 90% may seem like a high mark in an exam, when it comes to attendance, 90% is in fact a very worrying picture and equates to 4 weeks of absence with over 100 school lessons missed.**

### Attendance Ladder



## Contacts in the Virtual School

**Head Teacher:** Sarah.deale@barnet.gov.uk

**School Business Manager:** Jane.thrift@barnet.gov.uk

**PEP Coordinator:** Caroline.Gladkow@barnet.gov.uk

**Caseworker:** Ornella.rochfort@barnet.gov.uk

**Senior Caseworker :** Sejal.patel@barnet.gov.uk

**Caseworker:** Isabella.underhill@barnet.gov.uk

**Education Lead—children with a social worker:** Nicola.axford@barnet.gov.uk

**Deputy/Head of School:** Julie.locke@barnet.gov.uk

**Caseworker:** Allan.newby@barnet.gov.uk

**Caseworker :** Hannah.hudson@barnet.gov.uk

**Senior Caseworker:** Frazier.stroud@barnet.gov.uk

**Caseworker—Post 16:** Aiysha.Iqbal@barnet.gov.uk

## Changes

Many of you will know Ornella Rochfort, one of our caseworkers. Ornella supports most of our Year 10 and 11 young people. She has been a mainstay at the Virtual School, having been here for 8 years. Sadly Ornella will be leaving us mid-January to take up a new opportunity. Like us, I am sure many of you will be sad to see her go. She is a real champion of her young people and an advocate for them getting all the opportunities they should. We will miss her dedication, hard work and sense of humour but wish her all the best with her new role. If Ornella is the caseworker for your child, they will be re-allocated a new caseworker but if you have any concerns, please email Julie.Locke@barnet.gov.uk or Sejal.patel@Barnet.gov.uk.

