

# Barnet Virtual School Carer Newsletter Spring 2023

Welcome to the Summer 2023 edition of the Barnet Virtual School Carer Newsletter. We hope you had a good break.

## FOSTER CARER TRAINING THIS TERM

We are offering a range of virtual workshops over the summer term. These are an opportunity to learn more about a particular topic, meet other foster carers and ask questions.



### **Supporting Transitions Thursday 25th May 2023 10.00-11.15am**

Transitions however small can be challenging for looked after children, who may have experienced far more than other children. This workshop we will explore a range of tried and tested strategies that will support children and young people as they move classes or to a new school in September. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions and share ideas.

### **An introduction to ADHD Thursday 17th June 2023 10.00- 11.15am**

An opportunity to gain an understanding of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and practical ways you can support children and young people who may have needs in this area. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions and share ideas.

### **Understanding Personal Education Plans (PEPs) Thursday 6th July 2023 10.00am – 11.15am**

This workshop will help you gain an understanding of Personal Education Plans (PEPs), how they support the education of children and young people in care and the importance of your role in supporting the PEP process.

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.

### **Transition into Reception 2023 (Current Nursery) Thursday 8th June 2023 1.00pm—2p.m.**

If you have a child due to transition into Reception in September 2023, you will be sent an invite to this session. Social workers will also be invited.

### **Transition into Year 7 2023 (Current Year 6) Wednesday 14th June 2023 1.00pm—2p.m.**

If you have a child due to transition into Year 7 in September 2023, you will be sent an invite to this session. Social workers will also be invited.

### **Drop ins for any advice about transition into Reception or Year 7 2024**

#### **Thursday 6th July 2023 1.00pm—2.00pm**

If you have a child due to transition into Reception or Year 7 in September 2024, you will be sent an invite to this session. Social workers will also be invited.

#### **Thursday 7th September 2023 1.00-pm-2.00pm**

If you have a child due to transition into Reception or Year 7 in September 2024, you will be sent an invite to this session. Social workers will also be invited.

# Transitions

This term is often a tricky one as children face endings and new beginnings are on the horizon. We are mindful that times of change can be more unsettling for care experienced young people who have already experienced difficult transitions in their life. We are running three different training options—one for the transition into reception and one for transition into Year 7. If you have a child in these year groups, you will be sent an invitation. We are also offering a general session which anyone is welcome to attend. Whatever age your child is, the transition should be discussed at the Summer Term PEP and do make contact with your child's school if you feel they need to be aware of any particular strong feelings your child has about their new school/class.



Year 6 children will be receiving a pack of resources ready for the new school term and children going up to reception will receive materials to help prepare them for the change.

This term is also key for young people moving into Post-16 ... Do build in time to support visits and applications to Sixth Forms, universities, colleges and apprenticeships. Try to take a copy of college applications that young people make - it makes following up applications much easier – i.e. have they actually applied, have they missed phone calls asking them to interview, etc. If you need any help, please contact the Virtual School caseworker.

## ***Starting a new school—things to think about***

Whether your child is changing school due to a transition point or because they have moved area, there are some things that can help. Supporting your child to settle quickly at their new school so that they can start to make friends and be ready to learn is really important.



- Do they need a graduated start to get used to the environment?
- Would it help to allocate a 'Buddy' from the class to help them to settle?
- How can the class teacher help your child start to make friends at school? Can they help you to approach other parents to arrange playdates or find out more about local activities your child could join?
- Do they need a named adult with whom they can start to build a trusting relationship as a secure base in school? Can that be their class teacher, or a teaching assistant if they need someone who can be available to them when needed?
- Do they need a safe space they can use if they are feeling overwhelmed and need to calm and regulate?
- If your child is collected from school, make sure the staff know who this will be
- Arrange to meet the school's D.T., class or form tutor and if necessary, the SENCO, before your child starts

***If you attend any of the training courses, you will receive lots of useful tips. There is also material available on the Young Minds website, including Transition Tips for Parents and a Find your Feet webinar for parents. There is also information about transitioning into further education. [Supporting school transitions](#) | [Resources](#) | [YoungMinds](#)***

***Beacon House have a useful handout on The Transition Storm [Supporting-Transitions-2.pdf](#) ([beaconhouse.org.uk](http://beaconhouse.org.uk))***

## Other useful resources

### Online safety

The NSPCC have partnered with Ambitious about Autism to produce online safety tips, advice and activities specifically for parents and carers of children with SEND. You can find the materials here: [Online safety for children with SEND | NSPCC](#)



### Beacon House



Beacon House have an enormous amount of useful resources including 'What if we are curious about behaviour?' [What-if...-1.jpg \(1697x1200\) \(beaconhouse.org.uk\)](#) and interesting materials on developmental trauma [Developmental-Trauma-Close-Up-Revised-Jan-2020.pdf \(beaconhouse.org.uk\)](#)

### Reading



The National Literacy Trust has lots of useful information including 'Ten must-reads' for different age groups and tips on how to help your child learn at home. [Improve your child's learning at home | Words for Life](#)

### Free things to do in London

If you fancy a day trip out these websites have lots of ideas for things you can do that are completely free! [101 free things to do in London - visitlondon.com](#) [Free Things To Do In London | Day Out With The Kids](#)

### Thinking of uni

The Propel Website has information for care leavers thinking of going to higher education [Propel | Home](#). The Fostering Network has information and advice about how foster carers can provide emotional and practical support in the transition from foster care to university life. [Talking about Higher Education and the future | The Fostering Network](#)

## Contacts in the Virtual School

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