

# Barnet Virtual School Newsletter

Autumn 2 2023

Welcome to the second Autumn Term newsletter from the Virtual School.

**The deadline for Autumn PEPs is the 10th November at the latest—best practice is completing them straight after the meeting to ensure there is no drift and delay.** Please ensure that your PEP meetings have happened and the PEP document is complete by this date. **For statutory age children, any PEPs completed after this date will not be able to have funding agreed. Please remember that we hold both recovery funding and Pupil Premium Plus funding for looked after children and that you can request this through the PEP attached to an outcome for the young person.** Any questions please just get in touch. Sarah Deale

## To support SEN needs

Sensory toys / equipment.

Communication device.

Software for laptops to support additional needs.

Independent travel training.

## To support attendance and punctuality

Adult support / check in before school starts to regulate and settle the young person..—N.B. TA support is funded at £22 an hour

Resources to support any before school sessions such as board games, art materials etc.

Attendance at breakfast club where there are issues around punctuality (not for childcare purposes).

Purchasing an alarm clock.

## To support academic achievement

Adult support to deliver focused learning groups, pre-learning / catch up sessions

Tuition ideally provided by school staff who have a better idea of needs and curriculum.

Books / Kindle to promote reading.

GCSE revision guides / additional text books for wider reading around a subject.

Equipment to support GCSE subjects i.e. camera for photography, sports equipment to support participation in GCSE PE focus sport.

Software for laptops to support learning.

## To support Social / Emotional / Behavioural needs

Adult support to deliver focused playtime / lunchtime activities, circle of friends etc.

Therapies organised through school i.e. play, drama, art, music, lego or equine therapy.

Provision of counselling.

Provision of external mentors (not learning mentors within school as this should be a universal offer available at no additional cost).

Resources, games , activities to support intervention groups i.e. board games, lego etc.

## To support wider learning and achievement

Provision of a musical instrument / funding for music lessons.

One third of the total cost of a residential trip at school i.e. school journey.

Funding for a school club when there is a clear, demonstrable link to their social, emotional wellbeing or academic achievement.

Activities which support their cultural heritage.

Online / short courses.

Additional career guidance.

## Ideas for the use of PPG Funding / Recovery Funding

## Useful Free Resources/Links

### Support for ECTs

As always The Bell Foundation has useful resources. In the last newsletter, we signposted to the Bell Foundation. Their latest one is free self-study modules for early career teachers. One in five pupils in England use English as an Additional Language (EAL) making it likely that early career teachers (ECTs) will have multilingual learners in their classroom (School census, 2023). Yet, research shows that ECTs feel least prepared to teach in multilingual classrooms compared to all other training areas. The series consists of 18 short, highly impactful EAL topics that ECTs and their mentors can choose to dip into when needed or work through in chronological order. The self-study series is freely available to anyone online. Users will be given a two-year access period to all modules, the length of a typical induction process. It is up to the ECT mentor and early career teacher to determine how and when they want to engage with the materials. Find out more here: [Early Career Teachers - The Bell Foundation \(bell-foundation.org.uk\)](https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk)



### TOOLKIT FROM BROOK - Spotting Child Exploitation Toolkit

Identifying child exploitation in either its criminal or sexual form can be challenging. Early intervention is key to preventing the occurrence of child exploitation. Brook, an organisation focusing on matters of sexual health and wellbeing has released a suite of tools aimed at helping professionals to investigate suspected cases of child exploitation called Spotting the Signs. It is designed to guide professionals to ask children the key questions that can help identify abuse and/or exploitation. If you want to find out more please look here: <https://www.brook.org.uk/spotting-the-signs-tool/>



### And nothing to do with vulnerable children but might be useful

#### Free Seeds! [www.rhs.org.uk](http://www.rhs.org.uk)

RHS campaign for all schools to have a garden, and upon free registration, they will provide each school with a free start up kit, free seeds every year, newsletters and rewards for progress.



#### Grow your own Potatoes [www.potatoesforschools.org.uk](http://www.potatoesforschools.org.uk)

'Grow your own Potatoes' is a project that teaches primary school children about potatoes. Schools can register to receive a free potato growing kit, supporting lesson plans and worksheets.




#### DIY Faraday Science Challenge Days [IET Faraday DIY Challenge Days - SchoolScience.co.uk](http://IETFaradayDIYChallengeDays-SchoolScience.co.uk)

These are packs of printable resources and guidance notes to take you through the day!

Website: [Home | Barnet Virtual School | London Borough of Barnet | England \(barnetvs.org\)](http://Home|BarnetVirtualSchool|LondonBoroughofBarnet|England(barnetvs.org))

Tel: 020 8359 4534

Email: [Barnet.virtualschool@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:Barnet.virtualschool@barnet.gov.uk)

Follow us on Twitter  (@barnetvs), Instagram  (Barnet\_virtual\_school) and Facebook  (Barnet Virtual School) to keep up with news, resources, training etc .

## Supporting Sleep

Sleep is crucial for children and young people's health, development, and learning. Sleep helps replenish the brain and body ready for the next day. It helps young people to process and form memories, be ready to focus and learn, and protects their mental and physical health.

### Several factors can impact on sleep, including:

- Feeling anxious, stressed, depressed.
- Trauma experiences & symptoms.
- Changes in routine & sleep environment e.g. moving to a new foster home.
- Physical and hormonal changes to the body e.g. puberty.
- Children with additional needs e.g. autism, are also more likely to struggle with sleep.

**Sleep in teenagers:** sleep patterns during teenage years often change due to puberty and changing social lives. This leaves young people experiencing a 'jet lag' effect, falling to sleep and waking late. Many secondary schools start their day before 8:30am, requiring students to wake up when their body clock is in deep sleep. Subsequently, many teenagers aren't ready to learn when the school day starts, which can impact on their attendance, learning, and wellbeing.

**Sleep in unaccompanied young people (separated children):** sleep can be especially challenging for these young people. During their journey to the UK, it is often safer to sleep during the day. Attempts to travel (forced or by choice) also often take place at night. Subsequently sleep patterns are often reversed. Trauma experienced before, during, or after the journey to the UK also impacts sleep.

### How can education settings support sleep?

#### Teach students about sleep

- How much sleep they need
- The importance of sleep (for mental and physical health and learning)
- Things that can disrupt sleep e.g. caffeine, worries, screen time before bed
- How to create good sleep health
- Signpost to helpful websites e.g. [Sleeping - The Mix](#) (secondary & post-16 age)

(Click [here](#) for example lesson and assembly plans and useful resources)

### Signs of poor sleep

- Fatigue & exhaustion
- Falling asleep, excessive yawning
- Difficulties concentrating
- Forgetting learning
- Drop in academic progress
- Late to school
- Irritable, stressed, emotional

#### Recommended hours sleep (*National Sleep Foundation, 2014*)

Toddlers (1-3 years)	11-14 hours
Pre-schoolers (3-5 years)	10-13 hours
Primary age (5-10 years)	9-11 hours
Teenagers (10-17 years)	8-10 hours
Young adults (18-25 years)	7-9 hours

*Sleep helps us to process and memorise information from the day, thus supporting learning*

## Supporting Sleep continued

### Tips for good sleep health

Establish a **sleep routine**, going to bed and waking up at roughly the same time.

Create a **'chill out' routine** 45 minutes before bed, to help calm the brain for sleep. This could include having a bath, getting dressed for bed, reading, listening to music.

Minimise **screen time** before bed (screens keep the brain alert).

**Minimise caffeine** in the afternoon and evening.

Have a **warm bath** or shower before bed (the warmth makes the body sleepy).

Use **strategies** to cope with stress and anxiety



### Collaborate with others

Look for signs of excessive tiredness. Talk with the young person about their sleep and ways to support their sleep. If concerns remain, problem-solve ways forward with the child's foster carer and social worker. Seek further advice from medical and mental health professionals when concerns continue, and/or when the child is experiencing nightmares or sleep terrors.

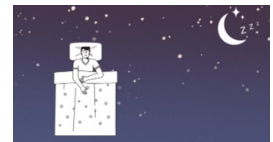
### Review school procedures

Can the school day start slightly later?

Is there a soft start to the day e.g. relaxed tutor time before lessons?

If students submit homework online, is the submission deadline during the day (rather than late evening) to support bedtime routines?

Do you provide sleep packs for unaccompanied young people? [Sleep packs - The Separated Child Foundation](#)



Where to go to for further advice or support

GP, school nurse, mental health teams, or school Educational Psychologist

[Sleep: Mentally Healthy Schools](#)

[Sleep in children with SEN \(councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk\)](#)

[Sleep: Finding our confidence with sleep – School Pack | Mental Health Foundation](#)

## Key Contacts at the Virtual School

**Head Teacher:** Sarah.deale@barnet.gov.uk    **Deputy Head of School:** Julie.locke@barnet.gov.uk

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**Senior Learning Mentor—** Amy.wight@barnet.gov.uk    **Learning Mentor—** Jhana.mills@barnet.gov.uk

# Training

## Workshop on ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences)

13/11/2023 at 3.15pm on TEAMS and again on 04/12/2023 at 10am on TEAMS

This session is focused on ACES and the impact they can have on a child's communication, behaviour and emotional development.

Suitable for all school staff.

Leaders: Barnet Speech and Language Therapists

**Our training is free to ALL schools. You do not need to buy into BPSI/Bels**

## Back by popular demand!

### Body Based Approaches to working with children and young people who have experienced trauma

Tuesday 5th December—9.30—15.00 at the PDC

This course will:

- Explore how trauma affects a child/young person's nervous system and what happens when they are triggered into a fight/flight/freeze response.
- Develop an understanding of how trauma is stored in the body.
- Try out creative and sensory based approaches to support a child/young person who is trauma experienced
- Explore practical approaches to sooth a child's nervous system when in fight/flight/freeze (including individual and whole class approaches).

This training will include a mixture of traditional and experiential learning. Attendees must be prepared to try out and practice, creative, movement and other sensory based activities.

**Leader:** Dr Amy Gibb, Educational Psychologist

**To book either of these training courses, please open this link:** [Training & Events | BELS | Barnet Education and Learning Service \(belstradedservices.uk\)](#)

**Drop in sessions are run by our Speech and Language therapist and you do not need to book. Just join using the link provided for the session.**

### [LAC SLT drop in session \(30<sup>th</sup> October -10am—11.30am via TEAMS\): RESOURCES BONANZA](#)

"All the ideas, strategies and resources you could ever dream of (to run your SLT session)— join in to find out more!

**Join on your computer, mobile app or room device**

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 321 377 831 162

Passcode: YeUwqV