

Essex Virtual School for Children in Care

Natalie Stephenson –Virtual School Head Teacher

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Tel: 03330 321416 / 07795 481814

Service area: Head of Service

Natalie is the Virtual School Head Teacher for Essex. Natalie leads a team that is focused on improving educational outcomes for all children in care looked after by the Local Authority, making sure that their time in school is the very best it can be and that each learner is able to achieve their true potential.

Mandy Griffin – Information & Performance Co-ordinator

mandy.griffin@essex.gov.uk

Tel: 033301 31074

Service area: Performance data

Mandy Griffin is the Information and Performance Co-ordinator for the team. Her role primarily relates to analysing outcomes for children in care in respect of attainment and attendance. Mandy is also responsible for CLA Tracker which is the Virtual School online data portal. Mandy works closely with Welfare Call, the company Essex County Council commissions to collect the school attendance of children in care. Mandy ensures accurate and timely data is recorded and reported to ensure that the Virtual School is able to focus support where it is needed most. Mandy also maintains the service website www.essex.gov.uk/virtualschool and the news bulletins from the Virtual School

Sharon Halsey – Personal Education Planning Co-ordinator

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Tel: 033303 21200

Service area: Personal Education Plans

As the Personal Education Planning Co-ordinator, Sharon's work supports the Virtual School key priority to ensure every child in care to have a high quality Personal Education Plan. Sharon works with Designated Teachers to ensure that each learner's PEP 1 reflects the quality of support and provision that is in place at school and that schools receive the Pupil Premium Grant. Sharon's work ensures that the plans in place for every child in care are sufficient to accelerate progress, and that the provision and resources recorded for all children support them towards achieving their very best in school.

Sylvia Ruck and Jane Mills – Commissioned Primary Advisers

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Tel: 033301 38036 / 07827 840808

Service area: Achievement (Primary)

Sylvia is an established and experienced Primary Head Teacher in Essex working for the Virtual School as a Commissioned Primary Adviser. Jane is an established and experienced Teacher/Adviser in Essex. Sylvia and Jane work with school leaders in Primary Schools, providing support that aims to accelerate the academic progress and achievement of children in care.

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Through visits to schools, they work with schools to enhance the impact of school leadership in the primary sector.

Frances Howarth and Rhonda Murthar – Commissioned Secondary Advisers

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Tel: 033303 21189

Service area: Achievement (Secondary)

Frances and Rhonda joined Essex Virtual School in 2017. Frances and Rhonda are both established and experienced Head Teachers from Essex schools and fulfil a similar role to Sylvia and Jane, but in the secondary phase.

Clare Davis – Commissioner for Inclusion

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Service area: Inclusion and post 16

Clare is the Inclusion Commissioner for the Virtual School. Her role is to ensure children can access education through having a school place, improve attendance and reduce exclusion. Working closely with schools, both in Essex and out of county, Clare ensures that children and young people are supported to be able to attend schools and colleges that best meet their needs. This role also includes monitoring the attendance of young people aged 16-18 to ensure that they are also supported to access education, employment or training. Clare works with Hedda Wright and Gemma Keating, who are the Essex Virtual School's Inclusion Officers.

Hedda Wright and Gemma Keating – Inclusion Officers

hedda.wright@essex.gov.uk

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Gemma Keating – Inclusion Officer

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Tel: 0333 013 4393 / 07919 624 793

Service area: Inclusion

Hedda and Gemma are Inclusion Officers – Hedda is linked to the Mid and North East social care quadrants and Gemma is linked to the South and West social care quadrants. They become involved when there are admission, attendance or behaviour concerns, linking with social care, schools and other agencies to address any barriers to learning and progress in school. Hedda also works with unaccompanied asylum seeking children, ensuring that, through effective multi agency partnership working, their educational provision is matched to their learning needs. Through identifying and removing barriers to learning, their work looks towards maintaining the good attendance of children in care as well as limiting the use of fixed term exclusions for these learners where possible.