

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) AND THE HOPE VIRTUAL SCHOOL

The HOPE staff team is all working at home for the time being. The voicemail is being checked regularly but we would ask, if possible, that you email the person you need to contact. If you don't know who that is, please email thehope@bristol.gov.uk and your message will be forwarded to the correct person.

As we are no longer able to attend meetings, we are trying to do as much support as possible via email, telephone and Twitter (@HOPE4CiC).

Where time permits, we will also put updates on our web pages. Our most recent update is a list of [resources to support carers](#).

Members of our team are calling carers and responding to enquiries from school and social care staff. We will try to contribute to virtual PEP meetings too. Even if we can't be part of the meeting, we can offer information, advice and our professional perspective on educational issues.

The current situation has been described as unprecedented. As such, we are having to respond to frequently changing circumstances. We will do our very best to maintain our service to all our stakeholders as best we can.

Thank you very much to our carers, social care staff, school colleagues and local authority colleagues for all you are doing at this very difficult time. We really appreciate the efforts everyone is making to keep our young people safe and as engaged as possible.

The HOPE will have a few staff members working during the Easter holiday period which, for Bristol, runs from Monday 6 April to Friday 17 April inclusive. For general queries, please contact us on 0117 90 36282 or via thehope@bristol.gov.uk

For emergencies or specific queries about a young person's education, our Deputy Heads will be covering the Easter holidays.

Nick Lawrence will be the contact on these dates: 6th, 7th, 10th, 13th and 17th April. Nick's number is 07827896562 and his email address is nick.lawrence@bristol.gov.uk

Sue Cox will be the contact on these dates: 8th, 9th, 14th, 15th and 16th April. Sue's contact number is 07775220630 and her email address is sue.cox@bristol.gov.uk

Bristol City Council has information about Coronavirus on this [web page](#).

The Department for Education has a page for its [guidance on Coronavirus for education settings](#).

CiC PPG AND COMPLIANCE CRITERIA

In light of the current pandemic and ongoing uncertainty, The HOPE is putting CiC Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) compliance on hold for the time being. We will provide an update in due course.

In order to support online learning for any CiC who are currently not able to attend school, Rachael Pryor has agreed that, during the Covid-19 epidemic, schools may use CiC PPG to purchase a laptop if you are not able to provide one on loan.

ESTABLISHMENT PORTAL

The launch of the Establishment Portal, The HOPE's new data system, has also been put on hold for now. PEP documents and any accompanying paperwork should continue to be securely emailed to thehope@bristol.gov.uk.

We will keep designated teachers informed of when the Portal will go live for Bristol CiC and Care Leavers.

POSTGRADUATE COURSE IN THE EDUCATION OF CARE EXPERIENCED CHILDREN, 2020-2021

Applications are now open for the 2020-2021 postgraduate course in the education of care experienced children, run by the National Association of Virtual School Heads (NAVSH) with Bath Spa University. Over 50 people have joined the course since it started in 2018 and this will be its third year.

Full details of the course are on the NAVSH website at the address below, including:

- A downloadable prospectus
- Two podcasts of current and previous students talking about their experience of the course
- A link to sign up for an information webinar on April 1st 2020
- The online application form (the closing date is Friday May 15th 2020)

<https://navsh.org.uk/postgraduate-study-in-professional-practice/>

The course is open to anyone with a first degree interested in the education of care-experienced children; applicants do not need to be members of NAVSH.

Queries should be emailed to postgrad@navsh.org.uk

CORAM 'YOUR LIFE, YOUR CARE' SURVEY

Thank you very much to everyone who encouraged and/or assisted Bristol CiC to participate in the above survey. Results are now being collated. We hope our response rate will enable meaningful conclusions to be drawn.

CHALLENGING STIGMA IN THE CARE SYSTEM: PAPER FROM CORAM BRIGHT SPOTS

We have been asked to make you aware of a recent paper from Coram Bright Spots

entitled [Challenging Stigma in the Care System](#).

The paper shares what children and young people have told Coram about stigma, what they want to see from services and gives examples of how local authorities have worked with children in care and care leavers to challenge stigma.

TRAINING

Face to face training is not going ahead at present but The HOPE is looking at options for online training and whether or not it would be viable for the number of people who would be able to access the session/s.

We will put information about The HOPE's training for designated teachers and named governors on our [training web page](#).

Social workers will find information on the Source, Bristol City Council's intranet and **carers** via the [Fostering website](#).

All new to Bristol social workers and student social workers are asked to participate in an introductory session to find out about the work of The HOPE Virtual School, what we do to promote the education of Bristol's children in care and care leavers and our links with social care. If there are enough people needing to have an introduction to the work of The HOPE, we will look at organising online sessions. Please contact [Bev Leeson](#) to find out more.

We hope you all stay safe and keep well. Thank you again for your efforts and very best wishes to you all.

For more information about anything in this newsletter or any feedback please leave a voicemail for Bev Leeson on (0117) 90 36282 or email beverley.leeson@bristol.gov.uk.