

Assistant Heads – Progress and Achievement

Jen Kemp BA (Hons) – Ashford, Tunbridge Wells and The Marsh Academy



I began my journey with the service in January 2008 being appointed as the LAC Education Adviser for Mid Kent. Since then I have witnessed a team of 5 advisers grow into a team of over 80 staff, developing into an integrated multi-agency service and then re-born as a Virtual School in line with the national directive for improving children in care's educational and health outcomes in 2010. Previously to VSK I graduated from university in 2003 having studied in Primary Education and post graduate Educational Studies and began work as an outreach project officer for children with social and emotional needs and led a team of colleagues to deliver peer mentoring schemes in the Swale schools district of Kent. As a team leader in KCC's Kent Safe School's service I also became county lead for Anti-bullying and represented the authority on the South East branch of the Anti-bullying Alliance. I am also trained in restorative approaches and mediation techniques, and have a particular interest in attachment and therapeutic approaches for children. As a VSK Assistant Head I am passionate about improving the life chances for our children in care and work hard to support colleagues in schools and social work teams to promote the importance of stability, continuity and meaningful engagement in education.

Carole Bailey MEd – Shepway and Dover

I qualified as a teacher in 1979 and worked in various secondary schools in Dudley, Wolverhampton and Birmingham in the West Midlands. I have chosen throughout my career to work in schools in challenging circumstances and sought to provide opportunities to better life chances for disadvantaged young people. I was delighted in 1998 to be appointed as Headteacher of a Kent secondary school. The school was in a negative Ofsted category, and staff and students worked very hard to turn this situation around. We were delighted to be the first Kent high school in 2006 to be identified by OFSTED as outstanding. During this time, I also chaired the Thanet Excellence Cluster; a partnership of 14 primary and secondary schools working together to raise standards of achievement through key strands of foci such as creating emotionally intelligent schools, effective use of learning mentors, and innovative use of technology in learning. Soon after this, I left to design and open a new academy outside Kent. In 2012 I returned to Kent to work as an Assistant Headteacher for Virtual School Kent, covering the Thanet area. More recently I moved to France for 2 years, but am delighted to return to Virtual School Kent in 2017 to lead in supporting the education for Kent's children in care in the Dover and Folkestone locality.



Gina Turner BA (Hons) and PGCE – Canterbury and SENCo



I joined VSK as Assistant Head for the locality of Canterbury in January 2015. Prior to this I worked for six years as an inclusion Leader in a large Primary School in Thanet. The school had a specialist resourced provision for children with physical disabilities and a high percentage of vulnerable children and families. I have had in-depth training regarding ASD, ADHD/ADD, Attachment Disorder, various speech, language and communication difficulties, including alternative methods of communication. I am trained in and have used Makaton signs and symbols, social stories and comic strip conversations. Over the years I have learnt an extensive range of behaviour management strategies and techniques and have completed the Solihull Training course. I have also acquired the National Accreditation for SEN Coordination. I am very happy to become part of a pro-active, growing service dedicated to working towards better outcomes for children in care!

Joanne Hayes BSc (Hons), PGCE and NPQH – Swale

I was very excited to start working for VSK in 2014. Working with children in care has been a huge part of my career. After studying for my Psychology degree and PGCE I began working with children in care, both as a residential worker in a children's home and as a teacher in a secure unit. Following this I worked as a Children's Rights Officer, advocating on an individual and local level for children in care of a London Borough. I also sat as an education advisor on a Fostering Panel for an independent fostering agency. After a short time working for Children 1st in Scotland I returned to teaching, working as an Assistant Head and managing a Pupil Referral Unit. I gained my NPQH in 2010".



Simon Fosse-Collins Bed (Hons) - Thanet



I have been an Assistant Head since October 2014 and previously worked as an EWO supporting CiC with their attendance at school since 2009. Prior to this I worked with Kent Safe Schools delivering Youth Action Groups, Buddy Training, e-Safety and supporting children who had been excluded from Thanet secondary schools. I also have experience of working in Alternative Curriculum where I was a Course Leader in Dover, as well as experience of working with NEETS and long term unemployed people in Thanet.

Jemma Page BA (Hons) – Maidstone, Tonbridge and Malling

My career started in children's nurseries where I worked for a large private group supporting and setting up new sites as well as working as a SENCO and deputy manager. It was in 2004 that I moved to work for Kent County Council as an Educational Welfare Officer. During my time as an Education Welfare officer I developed a passion for working with vulnerable and difficult to manage families supporting them to effect and manage their own changes became something I really thrived on. To this end I undertook many training courses in counselling skills, solution focus work alongside Solihull training and courses in ASD/ADHD and behaviour management. Alongside this I attended university on a part time basis where in 2009 I graduated with a BA hons in Childhood and Education Studies. In 2009 following the theme of supporting vulnerable families I began work as a Parent Early Intervention manager – in this role I received training and qualifications to deliver and manage three out of the four core recognised parenting programmes, Strengthening Families, Incredible years and Solihull. This job was taking my passion of supporting vulnerable families one step further and gave me the ability to work with some of the most disaffected families in a more informed and effective way. In 2010 I moved over to the LAC Advisory team which quickly became the Virtual School this role has given me the opportunity to use my skills to understand and support vulnerable children in care by trying to ensure the best educational outcomes for them in whatever format that may look like for each individual child.



Sarah Howell B.Ed (Hons) – North Kent (Sevenoaks, Dartford and Gravesham) & Medway



I began working with VSK as Assistant Head for North Kent and Medway in August 2018. Throughout my teaching career I have been fortunate in working with young people from all different backgrounds, ages and within various types of provision settings. Most recently, I have been a headteacher at a Kent primary school. During the last ten years, I have been working to develop strategies for good levels of achievement and progression; with a direct focus on Pupil Premium pupils in the past few year years. I have been a Designated Safeguarding Lead and Online Safety Lead in school. I am passionate about equality of opportunity and provision, as well as the health and well-being of young people, and the adults who support them.