



Whitefield
Academy Trust

**Policy
Document**

Policy on supporting Children who are, or have been, Looked After

Category: Leadership

Key Elements

Statement of Whitefield Academy Trust's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children.

The scheme was written by the Vice Principal of Whitefield Schools on behalf of the Directors.

Adopted on:

02.11.2019

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Agreed by:

Directors



Table of Contents

Introduction	3
1. Statutory Framework	4
1.1. PEP Reviews	4
1.2. CLA Reviews	5
2. Definition of Looked After Children	5
3. Definition of previously Looked After Children	5
4. Aims of the policy	6
5. Roles and Responsibilities	7
5.1. The Directors will:	7
5.2. The CEO, Principal and Headteacher will:	7
5.3. The Designated Teachers will:	8
The Designated Teachers will liaise with classroom staff and ensure that teams:	9
5.4. All staff will:	9
6. Monitoring the impact of this policy	9



Introduction

Helping Children who are Looked After and those who have previously been Looked After succeed and so experience a better future is a key priority for the Whitefield Academy Trust as part of our commitment to ensure that all children and young people experience enjoyment, achievement and wellbeing.

Nationally, Children who are, or have been, Looked After significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that these children receive the support which leads to positive outcomes.

This policy has been reviewed and amended in the light of recent guidance. It takes account of:

- The Statutory Guidance on Promoting the Health and Well-being of Looked After Children – DCSF/DfH (2015).
- The Children Act 1989, as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- Keeping children safe in education - Statutory guidance for schools and colleges September 2019
- Working Together to safeguard children 2018
- The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children - Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities: February 2018
- Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children - Statutory guidance for local authorities: February 2018
- The DfE Guidance on Pupil premium 2019-20: conditions of grant Updated: September 2019
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010, as amended.
- The Local Authority's duty under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children.



1. Statutory Framework

The governing bodies of Whitefield Academy Trust (including are required:

- to appoint a Designated Teacher to promote the educational achievement of looked after and previously looked after children who are on the school roll.
- to ensure that the Designated Teacher undertakes appropriate training and has regard to any guidance issued by the secretary of state.
- to consider an annual report from the Designated Teacher and act on any issues it raises so as to support the Designated Teacher and maximise the impact of the role.
- to ensure Pupils Premium is allocated to all Children who are looked after or have previously been looked after, in line with the most recent DfE guidance on Pupil Premium spent.
- to abide by the Local Authority's admissions code in all matters relating to the admission of current and former children in care. Whitefield Academy will match all incoming referrals in terms of age, educational needs and resource requirements in the place we have available and will treat Children who are or have been Looked After as a matter of priority.

Virtual School Heads (VSHs) are responsible for managing pupil premium funding for the children they look after and for allocating it to schools and alternative provision settings. VSHs, working with education settings, should implement PP+ arrangements for all looked-after children, in need of support for whom the authority is responsible, in accordance with the latest conditions of grant published by the department and any supplementary departmental advice it issues. VSHs have considerable flexibility in the use of PP+ funding in order to maximise its impact for individual looked-after children as well as the looked-after cohort. (Promoting the Achievement of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children 2018)

All maintained schools, academies and Free Schools are required to appoint a Designated Teacher to champion the educational attainment of looked after children and act as a source of information and advice about their needs. The Designated Teacher should be "someone with sufficient authority to make things happen...[who] should be an advocate for Looked After Children, assessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them." It is strongly recommended that this person should be a member of the Senior Management Team.

Under the Children and Social Work Act 2017 Schools have responsibilities with regard to previously Looked After Children. These can be broadly summarized as follows:

designate a member of the staff at the school (the "designated person") as having responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of pupils previously looked after ensure that the designated person undertakes appropriate training and has regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

All Children who are currently Looked after must have a Personal Education Plan Reviews and CLA Reviews organized for them as follows:

1.1. PEP Reviews

1. All Children who are Looked After must have a care plan, of which the PEP is an integral part. All of those involved in the process of developing the PEP should use it to support the personalised learning of the child.
2. The PEP (pre-school to age 18) is an evolving record of what needs to happen for looked-after children to enable them to make at least expected progress and fulfil their potential. The PEP should reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning that meets the identified educational needs of the child, raises aspirations and builds life chances.



3. The quality of the PEP is the joint responsibility of the local authority that looks after the child and the school. Social workers, carers, VSHs, designated teachers and, as appropriate, other relevant professionals will need to work closely together. All of those involved in the PEP process at all stages should involve the child (according to understanding and ability) and, where appropriate, the child's parent and/or relevant family member.
4. Wherever the child is placed, their social worker, supported by the authority's VSH, should take the lead to:
 5. ensure, with the support of others, including the VSH, that the PEP contains a summary of the child's current attainment and progress (including any additional needs such as SEN and mental health needs);
 6. ensure the PEP is effective and is available for the first statutory review meeting of the care plan; and
 7. ensure the PEP gives details of who will take the plan forward and specifies timescales for action and review.
8. VSHs should have a quality assurance role in relation to PEPs.
9. The designated teacher leads on how the PEP is developed and used in school to make sure the child's progress towards education targets is monitored.

1.2. CLA Reviews

A child who is looked after (CLA) review is an annual meeting that brings together those people who are closely concerned with the care of the child. It is an opportunity to:

- review the child's care plan – the document which sets out how the child will be cared for while they are looked after
- discuss the child's progress
- make plans for the future.

2. Definition of Looked After Children

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the local authority. Children who are Looked After include

- children who are accommodated by the local authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents;
- children who are the subject of a care order or interim care order;
- (iii) children who are the subject of emergency orders for the protection of the child.

Children are "accommodated" by the local authority when:

- there is no person who has parental responsibility for them;
- the child is lost or abandoned;
- the person who has been caring for them is prevented from providing him or her with suitable accommodation or care.

The local authority is also empowered to provide accommodation for any child if it will safeguard or promote his or her welfare.

3. Definition of previously Looked After Children



A child is considered to be previously looked after if he or she:

- was looked after by a local authority but ceased to be looked after by them as a result of—
 - (i) a child arrangements order (within the meaning given by section 8(1) of the 1989 Act) which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person,
 - (ii) a special guardianship order (within the meaning given by section 14A(1) of the 1989 Act), or
 - (iii) an adoption order (within the meaning given by section 72(1) of the Adoption Act 1976 or section 46(1) of the Adoption and Children Act 2002), or
- appears to the governing body
 - (i) to have been in state care in a place outside England and Wales because he or she would not otherwise have been cared for adequately, and
 - (ii) to have ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted.

Whitefield Academy Trust recognises that 'Looked After Children' and 'Previously Looked After Children' may have very specific needs and may be coping with trauma, abuse or rejection, and are likely to experience personal distress and uncertainty

4. Aims of the policy

Whitefield Academy Trust's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Children who are Looked After and those who were previously Looked After is based on the following principles:

- placing the highest priority on their education;
- promoting regular attendance;
- having high expectations;
- promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes;
- promoting stability and continuity; supporting early intervention;
- listening to them;
- promoting health and wellbeing;
- maintaining and respecting the child's confidentiality wherever possible
- ensuring staff awareness of, and sensitivity to, the difficulties and educational disadvantages of Children who are, or have been, Looked After
- working in partnership with parents, carers, social workers and other professionals.
- promoting good communication between all those involved in the child's life and listening to the child.
- deploying school and pupil premium resources effectively to meet individual needs
- ensuring Children who are Looked After will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) drawn up between the school, the child, and the child's social worker, which will identify the child's individual needs, the support they require and it is reviewed termly with the school, family and social care

The Trust is committed to helping every child who is, or has been, looked after to achieve the highest standards they can and to support them to follow appropriate and challenging pathways at the end of their school career.



Schools in the Trust will raise awareness of the needs of Looked After Children and those who were previously Looked After and challenge negative stereotypes about them in order to ensure that they achieve as well as they possibly can and do their personal best.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies including the following:

- Equalities Statement
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Pupil Premium Strategy

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Executive Principal – Elaine Colquhoun

Whitefield Schools Designated teacher – Evelina Dimopoulou

Joseph Clarke Schools Designated teacher – Chadia Filali-Moutei

Director – Owen O'Regan

5.1. The Directors will:

- nominate a school Director to ensure that the needs of Looked After Children and those who were previously Looked After are taken into account at a school leadership level and to support the Designated Teacher in carrying out their duties.
 - monitor the academic progress of current and former children in care, through an annual report from the Principal or Head Teacher.
 - work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school, by ensuring the school implements policies, practices and procedures to ensure current and former children in care achieve and enjoy their time at the school.
 - ensure the school has a Designated Teacher for current and former children in care and that they are enabled and supported, along with the Principal or Head Teacher and other staff, to carry out their responsibilities as below
- Nominate a Director to ensure that the needs of current and former children in care in the school are taken into account at a school leadership level and to support the Designated Teacher in carrying out their duties.
- receive a report each year setting out:
 - The number of looked after pupils on roll (if any) and dates of joining and/or leaving.
 - Their attendance, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils
 - Their progress, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
 - The number and duration of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any) as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
 - The destination of pupils who leave the school

The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.

- ensure systems are in place to share the above annual report with the Directors

5.2. The CEO assisted by the Principal and the Headteacher will:

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- identify a Designated Teacher for Children who are Looked After in each school for current and former children in care who will act as their advocate, target support and champion them in aspects of school life
- Support the Designated Teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they engage with training on Current and former children in care, Virtual School forums and network meetings
- identify another Designated Teacher quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take sick leave
- ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusions of Children who are, or have been, Looked After and take action where attainment, behaviour or attendance is causing concern;
- report on the progress, attendance and behaviour of Children who are, or have been, Looked After to Directors, Department for Education, Ofsted and the local authority as required;
- ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance;
- ensure the policy is reviewed annually;
- ensure that the Pupil Premium is used 'to the benefit of the looked after child's educational needs as described in their Personal Education Plan (PEP)', where appropriate.
- Abide by the admissions code in all matters relating to the admission of current and former children in care

5.3. The Designated Teachers will:

- Be a qualified teacher
- Be a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Maintain an up to date record of all Children who are Looked and those who were previously Looked After who are on the school roll. This will include:
 - Status i.e. care order or accommodated.
 - Type of Placement i.e. Foster, respite, residential.
 - Name of Social Worker, area office, telephone number.
 - Daily contact and numbers e.g. name of parent or carer or key worker in children's home.
 - SEN Code of Practice
 - Child Protection information when appropriate.
 - Baseline information and all test results.
 - Attendance figures
 - Exclusions
- Ensure that there is an up-to-date Personal Education Plan (PEP) for every Looked After Child which is completed within statutory timescales (appendix 2) and reviewed at least termly in accordance with the placing authority's guidance. The PEP should be a 'live document' with a clear narrative, SMART targets and a meaningful Pupil Premium Plus spend. The PEP must acknowledge the child's Care Plan and other appropriate documents (e.g. EHC Plan).
- Contribute to reviews and meetings on each child/young person as appropriate.
- Liaise with the Virtual School of the placing authority on a regular basis
- Ensure that if/when the child transfers school all relevant information is forwarded to the receiving school as a matter of priority.
- Ensure that any underachieving Child who is Looked After is identified and prioritised for school-based interventions
- Share information about Current and former children in care appropriately and sensitively with staff.
- Listen to current and former children in care and champion them within the school community.
- Keep the school up-to-date with current, relevant legislation and its implication.



- Report to the Directors annually on the performance of all current and former children in care on the school roll and termly with regards to behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.

The Designated Teachers will liaise with classroom staff and ensure that teams:

- maintain high expectations of Children who are, or have been, Looked After, promoting a culture of success;
- have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of CLA and PCLA
- maintain CLA and PCLA confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively;
- respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information
- use allocated pupil premium funding to promote the progress of Children who are, or have been, Looked After and monitor its impact;
- understand how important it is to see Children who are, or have been, Looked After as individuals and not to treat them any differently from their peers;
- assess a young person's specific educational needs promptly when a child at the school becomes looked after, or when a looked after child joins the school either at the beginning of, or during, the school year;
- promote the involvement of Children who are, or have been, Looked After in after school clubs and enrichment activities in accordance with their interests and aptitudes;
- liaise with other designated teachers at key points of transition such as moving key stages or to a new school;
- promote good home-school links through contact with the child's carer and social worker about how they can support his or her progress.
- share information with social workers and carers regarding progress, behaviour and wellbeing;
- work in partnership with social workers and carers to support behaviour, ensuring that they are fully informed regarding PPSPs and that details of any incident are shared;
- work in partnership with social workers and carers in identifying and following up any concerns about health or emotional wellbeing.

5.4. All staff will:

- have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of current and former children in care, as for all pupils.
- maintain confidentiality and ensure that Current and former children in care are supported sensitively.
- respond positively to requests to be the child's key trusted adult
- respond promptly to the designated teacher's requests for information.
- have an understanding of the key issues that may affect the learning of Current and former children in care

6. Monitoring the impact of this policy

The Designated Teachers will meet with the nominated Director each term for a termly conversation scrutinising the effectiveness of support for Children who are, or have been, Looked After. This will be part of the Termly Safeguarding Committee agenda and it will be reported to the safeguarding committee who will also oversee the provision for Children who are, or have been, Looked After. This ongoing dialogue between the designated teachers and link Director will inform the Annual Report to Directors which will report on the achievement, behavior and attendance of CLA. The report should enable the Directors to make overall judgements about how well the school meets its responsibilities to Children who are, or have been, Looked After and to follow up any issues.



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