



Looked After Children Policy

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VERSION CONTROL			
Version	Date	Author/Reviewer	Substantive changes since the previous version
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Contents

1. Introduction
2. Aims
3. Principles
4. Roles & Responsibilities
5. Confidentiality
6. Record Keeping & Information Sharing
7. Exclusions
8. Staff development & training
9. Support & resources
10. Home-School Liaison
11. Admissions Arrangements
12. Monitoring & review

1. Introduction

- 1.1 'Looked After' is a term that refers to children for whom the Local Authority is sharing parental responsibility. This can happen either with parental agreement or when a Court makes a Care Order. The child may be living with foster carers, in a residential unit, with family members or sometimes with their parents. These children are therefore subject to corporate parenting.
- 1.2 A Previously Looked After child is one who is no longer looked after because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales.
- 1.3 *The term 'Looked After Children' and 'Previously Looked After Children' is often abbreviated in educational and social settings to 'LAC' and as such this abbreviation may be used through this policy to refer to these groups of children.*
- 1.4 Despite having as broad a range of abilities as their peers, Looked After and Previously Looked After Children are particularly vulnerable to underachievement. Their academic and social progress is likely to be affected by their experiences and compounded by instability in their personal circumstances. Helping Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority in our trust. We believe that the educational experience of all children should be positive and powerful and we aim to provide a learning environment in which every child can be successful. We believe that our schools have a major part to play in ensuring that Looked After Children and Previously Looked After

Children are able to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic wellbeing.

- 1.5 We recognise that Looked After and Previously Looked After Children may have very specific needs and may be coping with trauma, abuse, neglect or rejection, and are likely to experience personal distress and uncertainty.
- 1.6 We are aware that Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children may have specific difficulties in transport and attendance, doing homework, getting parental consent for activities, obtaining funding for extra activities, obtaining correct uniforms and equipment, as well as stigma about their circumstances.
- 1.7 The trust recognises the value of working together with other agencies and organisations and will work closely with colleagues from services involved with the Looked After Child/Previously Looked After Child including Social Care teams, the Educational Psychologist, Health Services and CAMHS.
- 1.8 This policy reflects legislation at the time when it was last reviewed. Any changes in legislation will take precedence over anything printed in the policy.
- 1.9 This policy includes the requirements set out in legislation and guidance including:
 - the '[Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote educational achievement](#)' under section 52 of the Children Act 2004
 - the DfE statutory guidance '[The designated teacher for looked after and previously looked-after children](#)' issued under sections 20(4) and 20A(4) of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008
 - Section 20 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 ("the 2008 Act").
 - Section 20A of the 2008 Act inserted by section 5 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 ("the 2017 Act").
 - [Section 2E of the Academies Act 2010 inserted by section 6 of the 2017 Act.](#)
 - The Designated Teacher (Looked-After Pupils etc.) (England) Regulations 2009
- 1.10 This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant documents and policies such as:
 - ONE Academy Trust Admissions Criteria
 - ONE Academy Trust Attendance Policy
 - The school's Behaviour Policy
 - ONE Academy Trust Data Protection Policy
 - The school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
 - ONE Academy Trust Equality & Diversity Policy
 - ONE Academy Trust Exclusion Policy
 - The school's Home School Agreement
 - The school's pupil induction procedures
 - The school's SEND Policy
- 1.11 This policy applies to all staff employed by ONE Academy Trust.

2. Aims

- 2.1 Our trust is committed to providing a rich, broad and high-quality learning experience in a safe, secure environment, enabling all learners to realise their potential. We are committed to playing our part in promoting the education of looked after and previously looked after children in our schools.
- 2.2 This policy sets out our responsibilities, duties and approaches in providing for pupils who are defined as 'looked after and previously looked after children'.

3. Principles

- 3.1 ONE Academy Trust endorses the relevant Local Authority's policy in relation to each of our schools and welcomes LAC who may be looked after by the relevant Local Authority as well as those who may be in the care of another authority.
- 3.2 Our approach to encouraging and supporting the educational achievement of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children is based on the following principles:
 - Ensuring an appropriately trained Designated Teacher is appointed, who will be responsible for all Looked After and Previously Looked After children.
 - All Looked After and Previously Looked After Children 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 and the support they require
 - Having high expectations for the child and ensuring equal access to a balanced and broadly-based education.
 - Recording, monitoring, and improving the child's academic achievement in addition to their health and well-being.
 - Achieving stability and continuity
 - Prioritising reduction in exclusions and promoting attendance.
 - Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes
 - Promoting good communication between all those involved in the child's life and listening to the child
 - Maintaining and respecting the child's confidentiality wherever possible.
 - Ensuring staff awareness of, and sensitivity to, the difficulties and educational disadvantages of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibility of the Board of Trustees

- 4.1 Trustees should:
 - Understand the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Looked After and Previously Looked After children.

- Ensure that arrangements are in place in each school to meet the requirements of [Section 2E of the Academies Act 2010 inserted by section 6 of the 2017 Act.](#)

Responsibility of the Local Governing Body

4.2 The Local Governing Body should:

- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Looked After and Previously Looked After children.
- Ensure that arrangements are in place in each school to meet the requirements of [Section 2E of the Academies Act 2010 inserted by section 6 of the 2017 Act.](#)
- Ensure that the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- Ensure allocation of resources to meet the needs of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- Ensure that trust and school policies and procedures support the needs of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Support the Headteacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of Looked After Children are recognised and met.
- Appoint a link governor to liaise with the Designated Teacher and monitor provision.
- Receive a termly report setting out:
 - The number of looked-after pupils on the school's roll (if any).
 - Their attendance, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
 - Their Teacher Assessment, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
 - The number of fixed-term and permanent exclusions (if any).
 - The destinations 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.

The role of the Designated Teacher

4.3 The role of the Designated Teacher is to:

- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan to plan for that transition in consultation with the child's social worker and arrangements are put in place to ensure their needs are identified and met. This may include providing basic equipment and resources if necessary and providing appropriate support in meeting uniform requirements if needed.
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is initiated within 20 school days of the Looked After Child or Young Person starting at the school or being taken into care and that it is reviewed regularly and as necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the Looked After and Previously Looked After Children. The PEP will provide a regular opportunity to review progress, note any concerns and ensure that all relevant parties are informed accordingly.

- Ensure that the Personal Education Plan is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people at least two weeks before the Care Plan reviews.
- Maintain an up-to-date record of the Looked After and Previously Looked After Children in school, including those in the care of other authorities and ensuring all necessary information is passed to other staff as required
- Ensure that each Looked After and Previously Looked After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher but should be based on the child's wishes.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately
- Co-ordinate any support for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children that is necessary within school, liaising with teaching and non-teaching staff in school, including the person responsible for Child Protection as well as pastoral and subject staff to ensure they are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage LACs may face.
- Establish and maintain regular contact with home, statutory and voluntary agencies.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils sharing personal information on a need to know basis
- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life and encourage Looked After and Previously Looked After Children to join in extracurricular activities and out of school learning.
- Act as an advisor to staff and governors, raising their awareness of the needs of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- Set up meetings with relevant parties where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion.
- Ensure the rapid transfer of information between individuals, agencies and if the pupil changes school – to a new school.
- Be proactive in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education.
- Actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy.
- Ensure that attendance is monitored.
- Attending training as required to keep fully informed of the latest developments and policies regarding Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.

The responsibility of all staff

4.4 All staff should:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children as for all pupils.
- Maintain Looked After and Previously Looked After Children confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.

- Work to enable Looked After and Previously Looked After Children to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- Understanding the key issues that affect the learning of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- Work to prevent bullying in line with the school's anti-bullying policy.

5. Confidentiality

- 5.1 Information on Looked After and Previously Looked After Children will be shared on a “need to know” basis. The Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with which school staff at the PEP meeting. Once this has been agreed with the social worker, carer, young person, and other parties, complete confidentiality is to be maintained in accordance with data protection legislation.

6. Record keeping and information sharing

- 6.1 The Designated Teacher will keep an up-to-date record of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children in school and will ensure that relevant information is made known to appropriate staff.
- 6.2 The Designated Teacher will ensure that the Personal Education Plan is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people and reviewed regularly and as necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- 6.3 Copies of reports and appropriate documentation will be sent to authorised carers and agencies involved with the child as well as any receiving school at the point of transition. It is vital that Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children are aware of the information being recorded, in what circumstances and who will have access to it. How this is shared with them will depend on their age and level of understanding.

7. Exclusions

- 7.1 ONE Academy Trust recognises that Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children are particularly vulnerable to exclusions. Where a LAC is at risk of exclusion the school will try every practicable means to maintain the child in school. A multi-professional meeting will be arranged, bringing together all those involved with the young person to discuss strategies to minimise the risk of exclusion. The child or young person's Personal Education Plan will reflect strategies to support the child and where relevant those employed in the Pastoral Support Plan. All relevant measures and resources will be considered to provide support and provide alternative educational packages to prevent exclusion from happening.

8. Staff development and training

- 8.1 Arrangements will be made to ensure that the Designated Teacher is kept up to date with developments relating to the education and attainment of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children and receives appropriate training.
- 8.2 Other staff will receive relevant training and support to enable them to work sympathetically and productively with Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children, including those who are underachieving or at risk of underachieving, have additional needs, or are identified as meeting or exceeding expectations and need additional support to reach their full potential.

9. Support and resources

- 9.1 The local governing body will monitor that the school is allocating sufficient resources, including professional time and expertise, to support appropriate provision for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children, in order to meet the objectives set out in this policy.

10. Home-school liaison

- 10.1 The school recognises the value of a close working relationship between home and school and will work towards developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable Looked After Children to achieve their potential.
- 10.2 Open evenings as well as PEP and Care Plan review meetings provide opportunities to continue to develop this partnership working

11. Admission arrangements

- 11.1 We recognise that due to care arrangements Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children may enter school mid-term and that it is important that they are given a positive welcome and where appropriate additional support and pre-entry visits to help them settle.
- 11.2 ONE Academy Trust recognises that Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children are an 'excepted group' and will prioritise Looked After Children in the school's oversubscription criteria following the [DfE School Admissions Code 2021](#).

12. Monitoring and review

- 12.1 This policy and procedure will be reviewed by the CEO and approved by the Board of Trustees every three years or whenever a change in legislation necessitates a review, whichever is sooner.