



St Richard's VC Academy
Looked After Children Policy



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Produced by: St Cuthbert's RC Academy Trust

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Reviewed by: K Merkel

Other related policies that support this Looked After Children policy include:- Anti-Bullying, Attendance, Behaviour, Child Protection, E Safety and Acceptable Use of the Internet, Inclusion, Physical Intervention, Pupil Premium, SEN, Supporting Children with Medical Needs

1. Introduction

Looked After Children (LAC) are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational under achievement when compared to other groups.

Raising levels of achievement has been strongly and clearly highlighted as a major part of improving the life chances of looked after children and schools play a pivotal role in this.

The Academy Trust is committed to ensuring that all children receive access to a broad and balanced curriculum which motivates and inspire them to learn. The gaps in LAC learning – and in many cases the emotional impact of their experiences – are likely to have become significant barriers to their progress, the school therefore carries out careful planning, monitoring and evaluation to ensure the best possible outcomes for our LAC children.

2. Definition of “Looked After Children”

Looked after children: the law

In UK, law children in care are referred to as ‘looked after children’. A child is ‘looked after’ if they are in the care of the local authority for more than 24 hours. Legally, this could be when they are:

- living in accommodation provided by the local authority with the parents’ agreement
- the subject of an interim or full care order or, in Scotland, a permanence order
- the subject of an emergency legal order to remove them from immediate danger
- in a secure children’s home, secure training centre or young offender institution
- unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

3. Principles and Objectives

This policy incorporates requirements set out in the statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004.

4. The Designated Teacher

The designated person must be a qualified teacher. The role became statutory in September 2009 under the Children and Young Person's Act 2008. Ideally, the designated teacher should be a senior member of staff who is able to influence decisions about the teaching and learning of LAC children.

Some responsibilities of the designated teacher are to:

- Maintain a detailed record of all Looked After Children – including information relating to current status, type of placement, name and contact details of Social Worker, relevant health information, SEN status, PEP information, current and historic assessment information
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is completed when a child enters the school and is then reviewed at least every 6 months – this should take into account the opinions of the social worker, class teacher, carers and where possible the child and their parents
- Co-ordinate support for the child in school, liaising where necessary with other professionals and carers
- Ensure that all staff, through appropriate training, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantages faced by looked after children and understand the need for positive systems to support them
- Ensure all information remains confidential, sharing only personal information on a need to know basis
- Prepare reports for and attend LAC meetings
- Monitor the educational progress of all looked after children and intervene, in co-operation with other agencies if required, if there is evidence of underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy, or other similar concern
- produce at least one annual report to the Board of Directors which should include information on staff training, links with external agencies and for each child: current progress, attendance, exclusions (if any), concerns regarding behaviour, how the PEP has been implemented and whether the plans put in place are

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effective in addressing the learning needs of the child. The report should not mention any child's name.

This is not an exhaustive list of expectations.

5. The role of the Board of Directors

Section 20 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 places a duty on the Board of Directors to designate a member of staff (the designated teacher) as having responsibility to promote the educational achievement of Looked after Children.

To this effect, the Board of Directors should:

- Ensure that the necessary provision is being made for any pupil who is a looked after child
- Ensure that the designated teacher is given the appropriate level of support and has the opportunity to keep up to date with relevant training
- Ensure the designated teacher disseminates relevant training and provides support for all members of staff that will influence teaching and learning for Looked After Children
- The Board of Directors in partnership with the head teacher is responsible for monitoring how well the role is working. As part of this monitoring an annual report will be received from the DT.
- Annually review the effective implementation of the school policy for LAC.

6. Admissions

The Board of Directors and Academy Trust believe that admissions criteria should not discriminate against LAC children; we therefore endorse the LA policy and ensure LAC children are given priority.

7. Personal Education Plans

All LAC children must have a Personal Education Plan (PEP), which their social worker will take the lead in developing. The social worker, parents, carers and the child may be invited to the PEP meeting. The school's role in this plan is crucial and at least one member of staff who knows the child well will attend the meeting to establish and subsequently review this.

Issues that may be discussed in the PEP:

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- the child's strengths and weaknesses
- interests, both in and out of school
- developmental and educational and pastoral needs
- future plans, and how these can be supported
- issues arising for the child
- It will also identify targets that will be reviewed during the next PEP meeting.

The PEP should set clear objectives or targets which relate to academic achievement as well as out of school activities and wherever necessary behavioural targets.

8. Funding

Looked after Children are entitled to additional funding to help improve their outcomes and narrow the gap between their outcomes and those of their peers.

The academy trust is committed to ensuring effective use of dedicated funding, where available, for all eligible Looked after Children on roll to provide additional, personalised support to ensure accelerated progress in order to improve outcomes.

All Looked after Children are entitled to one to one tuition in English and/or Mathematics even if they appear to be reaching expected levels. This school is committed to prioritising all Looked after Children for this tuition.

The appropriate use of allocated funding is to be assessed through the Personal Education Plan.

9. Partnership Working

The Academy Trust values partnership working, and in order to secure the best possible outcomes for Looked After Children, it is essential that we work with parents/carers, social workers and other external partners to ensure we are providing the best possible life chances for our Looked after Children.

10. Further Information

Keeping children safe in education Sept 2016

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550511/Keeping_childr_en_safe_in_education.pdf

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DfE: Promoting the education of looked after children. Statutory guidance for LA

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335964/Promoting_the_educational_achievement_of_looked_after_children_Final_23-....pdf

Working Together to safeguard children 2015

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf

The role of the designated teacher

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/269764/role_and_responsibilities_of_the_designated_teacher_for_looked_after_children.pdf