

CHILDREN IN CARE POLICY

Learning Academies Trust – Mayflower Community
Academy

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CHANGES

Policy date	Summary of change	Author	Version	Review date
18.10.23	Policy has been created.	Director of Education (Leadership and Inclusion)	2.0	October 2025

1. AIMS

Learning Academies Trust is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. We recognise that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of children in residential and foster care, when compared with their peers,

Looked after children and previously looked after children as a group are no less able than their peers but they often underachieve. As their lives have frequently been characterised by instability, many have spent too much time out of school. As a result, they fall behind and in the past have often not received the help and support they needed to catch up.

Looked after children and previously looked after children are a priority for admission, and all schools in the Trust will follow the Learning Academies Trust admission criteria, admitting students as quickly as possible, recognising the importance of re-establishing school stability.

We aim to fulfil our role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of looked after children by asking the question **‘Would this be good enough for my child?’**

We will work alongside and with partners including the Plymouth Virtual School to make sure that looked after children and previously looked after children:

Enjoy and achieve

- › Feel stable and supported in an environment that values education and believes in all children
- › Participate in a wide range of out of school activities, including volunteering
- › Narrow the gap so that their attainment is in line or better than their peers

Stay Safe

- › Are happy at school
- › Feel safe and secure at school

- › Are advised and signposted to the most appropriate sources of support

Are Healthy

- › Are supported to access a wide range of positive activities to promote their physical and/or mental health

Achieve Economic well-being

- › Make successful and sustained transitions into secondary school
- › Develop the skills necessary to live in the 21st Century [independently] and be responsible citizens

Make a positive contribution

- › Develop their confidence and self esteem
- › Have a voice and contribute to decisions that affect them including through the PEP process

2. LEGISLATION AND STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy meets the requirements set out in the government statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of children under Section 52 of the Children's Act 2004.

It is also based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance: Promoting the Education of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children' February 2018.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

DfE Promoting the Education Of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children>

DfE Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-children>

3. DEFINITION

'In care' is a term that refers to children in the care of the Local Authority. 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, and sometimes with their parents. Knowle Primary_School recognises that children in care may have very specific needs.

Previously Looked After Child – is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because he/she is now subject to an Adoption, Special Guardianship Order or Child Arrangement Order.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Designated Teacher for Looked after children and previously looked after children: Penny Peters

The Designated Governor for Looked after children and previously looked after children: Natalie Berry

4.1 The local governing body

The local governing body will:

- › ensure that the school / Trust admission criteria and practice priorities Looked-After children and previously looked after children according to the DFE Admissions Code of practice

- › ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and statutory guidance for Looked-after children and previously looked after children
- › appoint a qualified teacher as the Designated Teacher (DT) for Looked after children and previously looked after children
- › ensure That that the DT receives training, including understanding trauma and mental health training
- › ensure that the DT and staff receive appropriate and on-going support for their role working with Looked-after children and previously looked after children
- › liaise with the Head Teacher, DT, SENCO and all other staff to ensure the needs of Looked-after children and previously looked after children care are met
- › nominate a governor with responsibility for Looked after children and previously looked after children who links with the DT
- › ensure there are arrangements in place to keep themselves informed about provision for, and attainment of Looked-after children and previously looked after children
- › receive and approve an annual report on numbers, achievements and progress of looked after children within the school and work with the school leadership team to act on any issues raised by the DT
- › annually review the effective implementation of the school policy for Looked after children and previously looked after children
- › ensure that the school's policies and procedures have regard to the needs of Looked-after children and previously looked after children, in particular
 - Oversubscription criteria/Admission Arrangements
 - Staff Discipline, conduct and grievance procedures
 - Behaviour/discipline policy (including use of exclusions)
 - Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
 - SEND Policy
 - Supporting pupils with medical conditions
 - Equality information and objectives

4.2 The Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher will:

- › Make welcome and ensure a smooth transition for the child and their carer/parent
- › promote a culture of high expectation amongst all staff in the school and one in which Looked-after children and previously looked after children believe they can succeed
- › make sure the young person has a voice in setting learning targets
- › be a source of advice and facilitate training for staff in developing their understanding of the factors which can affect how children in care learn and develop including of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss, separation and trauma (attachment awareness)
- › to keep an up to date list of all looked after children including those in the care of other LAs
- › record and monitor academic progress, attendance and personal development of looked after children and report to Virtual School Head Teacher (using eGOV)
- › monitor attendance and exclusions weekly of looked after children and in the event of any exclusion make contact with the Plymouth Virtual School Team and Social worker outlining reasons why the child has been excluded
- › liaise pro-actively with the Virtual School Team and Social Care Team particularly where the pupil is experiencing difficulties at school or is at risk of exclusion
- › lead on the termly development, implementation and review of each looked after child's Personal Education Plan (PEP)
- › ensure that Pupil Premium Plus funding is used to provide additional, personalised support as identified in the PEP for looked after children
- › review the on-going use of Pupil Premium Plus within a needs-led approach while recognising that larger allocations cannot be seen as a long-term option

- › Maintain an oversight of the Pupil Premium allocation for Previously Looked After children and report to governors on how the funding has been used and its impact
- › make or support applications for Personal Education Allowance for looked after children to further improve educational outcomes
- › ensure specific interventions and targeted support are used to make sure personal education targets are met (particularly in English and Maths)
- › attend relevant training which must be regularly updated (at least annually)
- › establish good communication with parents and carers and make sure that they understand the importance of supporting learning at home and that they are provided with copies of the most recent PEP
- › promote good communication between all those involved in the child's life and ensure appropriate school staff are aware of all relevant information, including the use of fact files/timelines to understand the trauma and losses a child may have experienced
- › ensure confidentiality on individual children, sharing confidential/personal information on a need to know basis
- › ensure that a member of staff attends care reviews, whenever possible
- › ensure that each Looked after child and previously looked after child has an identified member of staff they can talk to. This need not be the DT (but should link closely), but should be based on the child's own wishes
- › provide additional support for transition between schools/key stages and liaise with new DT
- › link with SENCO to ensure any Special Educational Needs are assessed on arrival and that appropriate provision is made and ensure that looked after children are on the agenda for planning meetings with the school Educational Psychologist
- › identify signs of potential issues relating to mental health (and complete SDQs as part of the PEP process)
- › celebrate achievements including nominating our looked after children for the annual You Can do it! Celebrations

3.4 Staff

All staff will:

- › ensure that any child in care is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained
- › be familiar with the and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings
- › respond positively to a child in care's request to be the named person that they can talk to when they feel it is necessary
- › contribute to the Designated Teacher's requests for information on educational attainment and needs, as appropriate
- › provide a supportive climate to enable a child in care to achieve stability within the school setting
- › have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of looked-after children
- › positively promote the self-esteem of looked-after children

4. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Our Trust is clear about the need to actively support looked after pupils to engage fully in school life and achieve their full potential. This will be fully supported by the Virtual School and the PEP process.

5. TRAINING

The Head Teacher or the Designated Teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy

6. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

This policy will be approved by the Trust Board of Directors and implementation will be overseen by the Local Governing Body. This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.