CASTLE MEAD
ACADEMY

GUIDANCE FOR THE EDUCATION OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC) AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (PLAC)

Policy Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the academy. The Local Governing Body will review the policy, unless there are significant changes in the interim period.

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Author:	Principal
Ratified by:	Chloe French
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Revision History:

Version:	Date:	Author:	Summary of Changes:
V2.0	01.09.2021	THA	*Page 2: Names and roles updated* *Page 4: Bullet point 3 – removed '2016'* *Page 7: Removed – '[insert name of SENCO]'*
V3.0	01.09.22	THA	Updated role of Designated Teacher Updated role of Staff
V4.0	06.03.23	JPA	Emphasis of guidance for Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)
V5.0	23.10.2023	JPA	Reviewed. No changes.
V6.0	31.10.24	NMU	Reviewed. No changes.
V7.0	15.10.25	NMU	Reviewed. No changes
V8.0	27.10.26	CFR	Updated Lead Teacher and Deputy Lead Teacher for LAC names.

Introduction

Nationally, children who are 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 Looked After Children are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic wellbeing. Helping Looked After Children succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority for Castle Mead Academy. The experiences and outcomes of Previously Looked After Children can be very similar to those of Looked After Children. Previously Looked After Children's educational needs are unlikely to have changed just because their care status has. To address this, the needs of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children are prioritised and addressed in a similar way.

Objectives

The objective of this policy is to promote the educational achievement and welfare of Looked After Children *and Previously Looked After Children* on the roll of Castle Mead Academy. This policy incorporates requirements set out within:

1. Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children, 2018
2. Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2022.
3. Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018.

The Name of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children in our school is:

Elizabeth Callan, Lead Teacher of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

The name of the Deputy Designated Teacher for Looked After Children in our school is:

Tom Gardner, Lead DSL

The name of the Governor, to support the named teacher for Looked After Children in our school is:

Sara McAdam

This guidance will be renewed annually by Castle Mead Academy to ensure we are providing the best possible outcomes for the Looked After Children in our school.

- A child 'looked-after by a local authority' is one who is looked after within the meaning of section 22 of Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014;

- A previously looked-after child is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because they are the subject of 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; and

- A child is in 'state care' outside England and Wales if they are is in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.

All 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.

At Castle Mead Academy we are committed to enhancing the achievement and welfare of Looked After Children, and Previously Looked-After Children in the following ways:

- Having high expectations for the scholar and ensuring equal access to a balanced and broadly based curriculum.
- Recording, monitoring, and improving the academic achievement of the scholar in addition to their health and wellbeing.
- Achieving stability and continuity.
- Promoting attendance.
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes.
- Promoting good communication between all those involved in the scholar's life and listening to the scholar.
- Maintaining and respecting the scholar's confidentiality wherever possible.
- Ensuring staff awareness of, and sensitivity to, the difficulties and educational disadvantages of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- Ensuring an appropriately trained Designated Teacher is appointed, who will be responsible for all Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.

The role of the Principal is to:

- Ensure that the school provides a good framework of support for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children attending the school.
- Follow the relevant statutory guidance.
- Appoint a suitably qualified teacher with the necessary experience and status as the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children.
- Ensure the Designated Teacher receives the full support needed to carry out their role effectively, including training and development opportunities so that they are able to increase their knowledge and understanding.
- Ensure adequate time and resources are made available for the Designated Teacher to carry out their duties.
- Ensure the Designated Teacher has opportunities to disseminate knowledge and information to other staff members, so that the school environment is one that supports and continually monitors the effectiveness of school policies and the role of the Designated Teacher on outcomes for Looked After and Previously Looked After scholars via an annual report provided by the Designated Teacher.
- Act on any concerns raised by the Designated Teacher or arising from any other source with regard to promoting the education of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- Ensure the Academy Council has effective oversight of the implementation of this guidance.

The role of the Designated Teacher is to:

- Be a central point of initial contact with the school.
- Promote a culture within the school whereby staff have a good understanding of the things which can affect how Looked After and Previously Looked After Children learn and achieve and how the whole school supports these scholars.

- Ensure that Looked After and Previously Looked After Children are not disadvantaged under school policies by contributing to the development and review of school policies that actively support the education of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- Foster a culture of high expectations for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children in staff and help raise the aspirations of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- Be responsible for the oversight of the development and monitoring of Personal Education Plans within the school and setting targets for Looked After Children.
- Liaise with social workers and Virtual Schools regarding individual scholars regarding their Personal Education Plan and any associated issues with their learning.
- Develop a good understanding of care planning and how the Personal Education Plan fits into the wider picture of the scholar's care.
- Promote best practice in helping Looked After and Previously Looked After Children learn and achieve and being a source of advice for teachers.
- Disseminate information to staff on how to provide effective support to individual Looked After Children and Previously Looked After in order to maximise their opportunities.
- Identify additional learning opportunities and resources for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After.
- Help Looked After Children become involved in the Personal Education Plan planning process and ensure the 'voice of the child' and their views are taken into account.
- Work closely with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to.
- Liaise with and report annually to the Academy Council on outcomes for Looked After Children.
- Liaise with carers to support home learning.
- Oversee transitions of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children to and from the school and transfer of information to the advocate for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children and pursue all resources and educational opportunities on their behalf.

The role of all staff:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children, as for all scholars.
- Maintain Looked After and Previously Looked After Children's 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.
- Have an understanding of 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 policy.

The role of the foster carer is to:

- Support the scholar's education and encourage them to achieve.
- Liaise with the scholar's social worker to agree tasks and areas of responsibility relating to the scholar's education.
- Contribute to the development and review of the scholar's Personal Education Plan.

- Be the main point of contact for the school on a day-to-day basis and have regard for the home school agreement.
- Support the scholar to attend school regularly and engage in school activities and ensure adequate support at home for the scholar to carry out homework.
- Carry out any allocated tasks relating to the scholar's education and fulfilment of the corporate parenting role as set out in the scholar's placement plan.
- Attend parent's evenings and other such events that the scholar is involved in.
- Take an active interest in the scholar's education and provide a home environment that actively encourages learning.
- Ensure homework and revision is completed.
- Promote regular school attendance and good behaviour.
- Liaise with the school to deal with any arising issues.

Castle Mead Academy understands its responsibilities in supporting and encouraging the educational development and achievement of Looked After Children. In addition to allocating a named Staff Member and Academy Councillor responsible for Looked After Children, we work closely with the Virtual Schools Team to ensure we are fulfilling requirements as set out by the Local Authority.

Virtual School Team:

The role of the Virtual school team involves working with a wide range of professionals to improve the educational outcomes, and therefore the life chances, of all Looked After Children, young people and care leavers for whom Leicester City Council is the corporate parent. The Virtual School also provide advice and support in working with Previously Looked After Children and will ensure that Pupil Premium Plus funding is allocated in an appropriate manner.

Aims of the Virtual School Team:

- Promote the emotional well-being and educational achievement of all the children and young people in the care of Leicester City Council.
- Encourage a deeper understanding of the issues facing children and young people who have experienced separation and loss and how this impacts upon attainment and achievement.
- Improve and maintain excellent school attendance.
- Work with schools to avoid exclusions.
- Work with schools, carers and the young people to raise attainment and accelerate progress.
- Encourage young people to participate in a range of activities in and out of school relevant to their interests and abilities.
- Promote effective multi-agency working that benefits all looked after children and young people. Partners include:
    - Carers
    - Social workers
    - Schools
    - Independent Reviewing Officers
    - Residential children's homes
    - Youth Offending Service
    - Special Education Service
    - Education Welfare Service
    - Educational Psychology Service
    - Raising Achievement Team
    - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

- Admission and Exclusion team
- The Heritage Panel
- Leicester City Football Club

Personal Education Plans (PEPs):

Personal Education Plan is a mechanism for promoting and prioritising the education of young people in public care and is a statutory requirement. Castle Mead Academy ensures that there is a Personal Education Plan for every Looked After Children in our school, and we ensure that Personal Education Plans are revisited and reviewed 3 times each year - once in each school term. The planning process for Personal Education Plan meetings will be carried out in collaboration between our school, the social worker, the carer, the scholar and the Virtual School Team. The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children in our school, will ensure regular meetings take place and that they are the single point of contact for all Looked After Children in our school.

Castle Mead Academy completes all Personal Education Plans on an online template using Local Authority Procedures and will seek advice from the Virtual Schools Team as necessary.

Previously Looked After Children
Parents and Carers of PLAC are encouraged to identify their child's previously looked after status on entry to the school and are required to produce documentation to support this. Any information will be treated confidentially.

Previously Looked After Children no longer have termly PEP meetings, however the progress of PLAC pupils is reviewed termly and we will work proactively with parents, carers and other professionals to address any areas of concern and put in place support as appropriate. Funding for additional support (over and above the support available for any other pupil) is funded by the annual Pupil Premium Plus fund. Concerns regarding the progress of PLAC pupils are highlighted to parents, carers and the Virtual School (with parental consent) in a timely fashion so that support can be put in place swiftly. Parents/Guardians are directed to the Adoption Fund via LA Social Work assessment where necessary.

Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)
While the PP+ for Previously Looked After Children is not a 'personal budget,' should a Previously Looked After Child require support over and above that which is provided for any other pupil, the PP+ will be used to fund this. PP+ for Previously Looked After Children is also 'pooled' and used to provide additional support and services to raise the attainment of Previously Looked After Children, for instance:

- Attachment Training for all staff
- Priority access to support from our Academic Mentors in Maths and English
- Access to online maths tutoring programme.
- Mentoring programmes