



**Grange
Academy**

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**Bedford Inclusive Learning
and Training Trust**

Achieving • Believing • Collaborating

LAC Policy - Grange

Policy Status: Statutory

Review Cycle: Annually

Owner: Mel Wooding

Date: September 2022

Approved by: Trust Board

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Review Date: September 2023

Rationale

This policy describes our approach to meeting the requirements set out in:

- The Children and Young Persons Act 2008 - section 20, and section 20A inserted by section 5 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Academies Act 2010 - section 2E inserted by section 5 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Designated Teacher (Looked-After Pupils etc.) (England) Regulations 2009

A child who is looked-after (CLA) 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 (PCLA) is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is 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 persons, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales.

A child is in 'state care' outside England and Wales if s/he 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.

As a school, we are committed to do all that we can to promote the educational achievement and wellbeing of CLA and PCLA pupils.

- Our Designated Teacher for Children who are Looked After is Charlotte Thomas.
- Our Designated Governor for Children who are Looked After is Gill Lake.
- Our Designated Trustee for Children who are Looked After is Ian Lindsay.

The school recognises that the provisions outlined in this policy must be in place regardless of whether there are any CLA or PCLA pupils currently on the school roll.

Definitions

Looked-after children are registered pupils that are:

- In the care of a local authority i.e. 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; or
- Provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services functions, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours

Previously looked-after children are registered pupils that fall into either of these categories:

- They were looked after by a local authority but ceased to be as a result of any of the following –
- A child arrangements order, which includes arrangements relating to who the child lives with and when they are to live with them
- A special guardianship order
- An adoption order

Personal Education Plan (PEP)

A PEP is part of a looked-after child's care plan that is developed with the school. It forms a record of what needs to happen to support the needs of the child, set targets and identify and put in place support to ensure the child reaches their full potential. The PEP is updated termly by the designated teacher with

support from social care, the Virtual School and the child's carer/family. Copies of pupils PEP and relevant meeting notes are logged on My Concern.

The Designated Teacher will ensure that:

- A looked-after child's PEP is reviewed at least three times a year and kept up to date so that it informs review of their care plan
- PEPs are effectively completed so that they give clear information about a child's strengths and difficulties and give a clear plan for how needs will be met.
- Make sure PEPs work in harmony with any education, health and care (EHCP) plans that a looked-after child may have
- The PEP process is used to agree how pupil premium funding for looked-after children can most effectively be used to improve their attainment.
- The updated PEP is electronically passed to the child's social worker and VS representative within 2 weeks of the PEP meeting.
- PEPs are transferred to a child's next school or college, making sure it is up to date and that the local authority responsible for looking after the child has the most recent version

Virtual school head (VSH)

The Bedford Virtual School is our local authority officer responsible for promoting the educational achievement of their authority's looked-after children, working across schools to monitor and support these pupils as if they were in a single school. The VSH is also responsible for providing information and advice to schools, parents and guardians in respect of previously looked-after children. Our local Virtual School Worker is Erin Mills - Education Support Officer, Looked After Children. Her contact details are:

erin.mills@bedford.gov.uk

At the Virtual School their role is to:

- promote high aspiration and raise achievement through challenge, support and targeted intervention
- ensure that children in care access high quality teaching and learning
- work closely with all those involved in the care and education of looked after children providing training and support to help understand the issues and challenges they face
- co-ordinate and quality assure all Personal Education Plans (PEPs)
- monitor and challenge schools to make the most effective use of Pupil Premium Plus Grant (PPPG)
- ensure effective transition is provided between schools or specialist providers
- ensure Special Education Needs or Disability needs are identified and supported appropriately with an integrated plan
- celebrate LAC achievements
- lead training for Foster Carers, Designated Teachers, school governors and bespoke training for educational settings and staff in schools

Role of the Designated Teacher and Leadership responsibilities

The responsibilities of a Designated Teacher are outlined in the Df E's statutory guidance.

The designated teacher has lead responsibility but individual tasks may be appropriately delegated.

Our designated teacher takes lead responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children at our school. They are our initial point of contact for any of the matters set out in the section below.

The Designated teacher works closely with the SEND team, health and social care to ensure that we best support the needs of the LAC/ PLAC pupils in our care.

The Designated teacher and Senior Leadership Team will:

- Act as a central point of initial contact within the school for any matters involving looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Promote the educational achievement of every looked-after and previously looked-after child on roll

- Work with social workers and other social care professionals and the Virtual School to promote the educational achievement of every looked-after and previously looked-after child on roll
- Work with other services e.g. SEND and CAMHS, to ensure effective assessment and support for looked after and previously looked after children requiring additional support

Take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand:

- The things which can affect how looked-after and previously looked-after children learn and achieve
- How the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils
- Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies to ensure they consider the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Promote a culture in which looked-after and previously looked-after children are encouraged and supported to engage with their education and other school activities
- Act as a source of advice for teachers about working with looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Work directly with looked-after and previously looked-after children and their carers, parents and guardians to promote good home-school links, support progress and encourage high aspirations
- Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of looked-after children's PEPs
- 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
- Work closely with the SENCO to ensure that special educational needs are identified and appropriate support is put in place
- Involve parents and guardians of previously looked-after children and parents of looked after children as agreed with social workers, in decisions affecting their child's education

The designated teacher with support of the school staff will:

- Make sure looked-after children's PEPs meet their needs by working closely with other teachers to assess each child's specific educational needs
- Have overall responsibility for leading the process of target-setting in PEPs and deciding, with partners, what provisions will best meet needs
- Monitor and track the progress of looked after children and review as part of the PEP
- If a child is not on track to meet their targets, plan intervention as part of the PEP
- Ensure the identified actions of PEPs are put in place
- Ensure the specific needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children are understood by staff and reflected in how the school uses pupil premium funding
- Work with parents of previously looked-after children to provide support for these pupils
- Work together with parents and others to decide on how pupil premium funding is used to support previously looked-after children
- Ensure teachers have awareness and understanding of the specific needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children and how these impact on all areas of school life e.g. behaviour, attendance, homework and future career planning
- Be aware of the special educational needs (SEN) of looked-after and previously looked-after children, and make sure teachers also have awareness and understanding of this and that liaise effectively with SENCOs and other specialist staff e.g. Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing co-ordinators.
- Ensure the SEND code of practice, as it relates to looked-after children and previously-looked-after children, is followed
- Ensure that they and other staff can identify signs of potential mental health issues in looked-after and previously looked-after children and understand where the school can draw on specialist services
- Put in place mechanisms for understanding the emotional and behavioural needs of looked after and previously looked-after children e.g. formal assessment Thrive, Boxall, SDQ alongside more informal information gathering

Trust Board and School commitment to Enhanced Support for CLA and PCLA Pupils

- The Trust Board and School will ensure that high quality learning opportunities and education are

provided for all our pupils

- We will ensure equality of access to opportunities and learning outcomes for all
- We recognise that CLA and PCLA pupils can be especially vulnerable and are sometimes 'at risk' of failure in the learning context
- A suitable member of staff is appointed as the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children
- The designated teacher promotes the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, and supports other staff members to do this too
- Staff, parents, carers and guardians are aware of the identity of the designated teacher, how to contact them and what they are responsible for.

Therefore, with specific reference to this cohort of pupils we will strive to achieve the following aims:

- To ensure that all CLA and PCLA pupils have access to a broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum
- To provide personalised learning and curriculum appropriate to needs and ability
- To support and monitor social progress, ensuring key adults prioritise respectful and responsive relationship building with individual children and provide appropriate support for social development within the peer group
- To ensure that CLA and PCLA pupils receive a full 25 hours of education each week
- To ensure that CLA and PCLA pupils take as full a part as possible in all school activities and strive to reduce and eliminate any barriers that may stop them from taking part
- CLA children will continue to be offered a full time place in school if a further lockdown of school due to COVID were to occur.
- To ensure that carers, social workers and parents (as appropriate) of CLA and PCLA pupils are involved and kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment
- To ensure that wherever appropriate, CLA and PCLA pupils are involved in decisions affecting their learning, the plans for progress and future provision
- To ensure that success is appropriately recognised and reinforced
- To ensure that any emerging concerns are followed up in a timely way with skill and sensitivity (e.g. changes in patterns of behaviour and attendance)
- To liaise and cooperate with appropriate partners, in particular the appropriate Virtual School team, to ensure that all plans complement and support the promotion of the educational achievement and wellbeing of CLA pupils. We recognise that the Virtual School do not monitor PCLA pupils, but that they can provide advice and guidance
- To ensure all school policies and procedures are followed sensitively for CLA and PCLA pupils

Safeguarding Commitment

At BILTT we fully recognise the contribution we can make to protect children and support pupils in school and beyond. We are fully committed to safeguarding our pupils through prevention, protection and support. We are also committed to actively promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; the pupils are encouraged to develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain. It is our duty to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism and to prevent terrorism. Any concerns are referred using My Concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Admissions to our School

- The Trust Board supports the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 in that 'Children in public care have the highest priority in their admission arrangements'
- The Trust Board supports the statutory guidance that CLA and PCLA pupils are exempt from the fair access protocol and are excepted pupils in relation to infant class size
- Sometimes care placement changes lead to CLA and PCLA pupils entering school mid-term or mid-year if this is thought to be in the best interests of the child. This school will ensure that in these circumstances CLA and PCLA pupils will be admitted to the school in a timely manner, even if this would mean that this would increase class sizes above the recommended maximum. As necessary, we will give a positive welcome, plan entry, offer additional support and pre-entry visits to help pupils settled into school

- The appropriate Virtual School will work with the school when a pupil is leaving to ensure that it is made as positive an event as possible e.g. leaving events, farewells, information transfer etc.

Inclusion and Allocation of Resources

- Our policy recognises that all pupils are entitled to a broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum and learning programme
- For CLA and PCLA pupils, there can often be a need to develop learning opportunities emphasising personalised planning and planned inclusive approaches. This is especially pertinent as our pupils all have severe or profound and multiple learning disabilities
- The Trust Board will ensure our school makes all appropriate learning provision for CLA and PCLA pupils. Resources are allocated in line with this policy and with our wider school teaching and learning policies and good practice
- The Pupil Premium Plus funding allocated by the Head of the Virtual School will be used to support the individual learning programmes of the CLA pupils in the school, especially considering our pupils' severe or profound and multiple learning disabilities. Use of the Pupil Premium Plus will be discussed and monitored as part of the PEP process to ensure it is the most appropriate use for the individual pupil and to show impact on learning
- The Pupil Premium Plus funding for PCLA pupils allocated through census processes will be used to support the individual learning programmes of the pupil, especially considering our pupils' severe or profound and multiple learning disabilities

Monitoring the Progress of CLA and PCLA Pupils

- Progress for CLA and PCLA pupils in school is identified, monitored and supported, and is guided by school policies for teaching and learning
- We will monitor and track the achievement and attainment of CLA and PCLA pupils at least termly. For CLA pupils, this will be formally reported to the Virtual School and shared with partners through the PEP process
- The PEP is important to the planning and monitoring of education for CLA pupils and governors are aware that they are statutory school documents. The PEP will complement and reflect the high levels of personalised support that is already in place, such as IEP document
- The Designated Teacher (DT), working with the Virtual School if necessary, will ensure there is a PEP in place for all CLA pupils in school
- The DT will liaise with the Social Worker to ensure a PEP meeting takes place within statutory timelines and ensure the attendance of appropriate staff
- PEP processes will meet the requirements of the appropriate Local Authority, e.g. PEPs for Bedford Borough pupils will use the e-PEP system

Attendance and Exclusion

- The school will monitor the attendance of CLA and PCLA pupils and will notify all appropriate partners at an early stage if there is an indication that problems with attendance might occur
- Bedford Borough Council have a contract with Welfare Call Limited. A member of the Welfare Call team will call the school daily to ascertain attendance of CLA pupils. The school will ensure this information is provided promptly and accurately
- The school will take all reasonable steps to ensure that exclusion is rarely used for CLA and PCLA pupils and then is always only as a last resort, after all other avenues have been explored. The school will advise the Virtual School if there is a possibility of exclusion and discuss options with the appropriate support professionals
- The school will make arrangements for first day provision for any excluded CLA and PCLA pupil, as it would for any pupil after day 6 of exclusion

Record Keeping and Information Sharing

- The DT will coordinate record keeping for all CLA and PCLA pupils in school
- Records will include, up to date progress and attainment records, PEP planning records and personalised information relating to care context as appropriate. These records will be maintained in a single place, having regard to the statutory nature of some of these documents and the confidential information that they contain
- CLA and PCLA pupils' status is appropriately 'flagged' in school management information systems (including SIMS), ensuring information and planning records are readily available as

required

- The DT will ensure there is ready access to information and up to date contact details for carers, parents (where appropriate), social worker and the named contact in the Virtual School team
- All appropriate records will be forwarded to the receiving school promptly if there is a transfer to another school
- Sensitivity is a priority in sharing information with members of the school staff team. We are guided by best practice and use a 'need to know'. Wherever possible pupils' wishes are taken into account in sharing information within the staff team
- Any incidents of bullying of the CLA and PCLA pupils or by the CLA and PCLA pupils will be formally recorded and noted in the PEP and review processes

Appointments within Staff and Trust Board

The school will adhere to the statutory requirement to appoint a DT for CLA and PCLA pupils. This person will be a qualified teacher and ideally a senior person within the school.

- All staff and governors have a responsibility for the educational achievement and wellbeing of CLA and PCLA pupils. The work of the Designated Teacher is to lead in this area, but they do not hold sole responsibility

Staff and Trustees' Development and Training

- The DT makes particular efforts to develop good awareness and understanding of issues, guidance and developments associated with the CLA and PCLA context. The Designated Teacher disseminates knowledge and skills to colleagues in school as appropriate and necessary. Partnership working and collaboration with the Local Authority and the Virtual School team is essential here
- There is a specific statutory expectation that the DT will maintain and extend their personal expertise
- A Designated Trustee will attend appropriate briefings and relevant development opportunities provided by the Local Authority and the Virtual School

Partnership Working

The designated teacher will:

- Proactively engage with social workers and other care professionals to enable the school to respond effectively to the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Work with local authority and external services to respond effectively to the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Discuss with social workers how the school should engage with birth parents, and ensure the school is clear about who has parental responsibility and what information can be shared with whom
- recognise the essential contributions that external support services make in supporting CLA and PCLA pupils. We commit to developing positive partnerships with all involved. Our partnerships with community partners are extensive; some of our key partners for these children include: Virtual Schools, Social Care, Family Support Workers, Education Psychologists, Paediatricians, school nurses, SEND teams, CAMHS, Education Welfare Officers, locality teams and advocacy services
- Be open and accessible to parents and guardians of previously looked-after children and encourage them to be actively involved in their children's education
- Consider how the school works with others outside of the school to maximise the stability of education for looked-after children, such as:
 - Finding ways of making sure the latest information about educational progress is available to contribute to the statutory review of care plans
 - Ensuring mechanisms are in place to inform VSHs when looked-after children are absent without authorisation and work with the responsible authority to take appropriate safeguarding action
 - Talking to the child's social worker and/or other relevant parties in the local authority regarding any decisions about changes in care placements which will disrupt the child's education, providing advice about the likely impact and what the local authority should do to minimise disruption

- Making sure that, if a looked-after child moves school, their new designated teacher receives any information needed to help the transition process
- Seek advice from VSHs about meeting the needs of individual previously looked-after children, but only with the agreement of their parents or guardians

For each looked-after child, all staff will work together to make sure:

- There's an agreed process for how the school works in partnership with the child's carer and other professionals, such as their social worker, in order to review and develop educational progress
- School procedures are communicated to their carer and social worker and, where appropriate, birth parents
- Teachers know the most appropriate person to contact where necessary, such as who has the authority to sign permission slips and which family members a pupil can have contact with or information shared with

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour
- Safeguarding and Child protection
- Exclusions and Behaviour policy
- Special Education Needs