



INCLUSIVE LEARNING FEDERATION

**Bradwell Village School
Priory Common School
Romans Field School**

Children Looked After Policy

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1. Introduction

The staff and Governing Board of the Inclusive Learning Federation are committed to providing high 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, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in “Guidance on the Education of Looked After Children” (May 2000) and Section 52 of the Children Act 2004. Children who are “looked after” may be “Accommodated” “In Care” or “remanded/ detained” as follows:

Accommodated (Section 20):

This is a voluntary arrangement, because parents are ill, missing, unable to cope, or as part of a child protection plan negotiated with the family. The parents retain parental responsibility.

In Care:

A child is in care only if a court has granted a Care Order which it will issue if it believes a child to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. A care order generally gives parental responsibility to the local authority or shares this with the parents.

Remanded/Detained:

A child can be remanded or detained as in the following:

- an emergency protection order

- removed by police using their powers of protection
- remanded by a court following criminal charges
- a court directing a social services department to accommodate a child (already on a supervision order for criminal behaviour) for up to six months.

the Inclusive Learning Federation believe that in partnership with Milton Keynes Local Authority, Buckinghamshire County Council, Central Bedford Council, Bedford Borough Council, Northamptonshire County Council and Luton Borough Council, and any other Local Authority, as Corporate Parents we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of Children who are Looked After and those children who have previously been looked after.

Some Looked After Children may have some or all the following issues:

- low self esteem
- poor education standards due to time out of school
- delayed social/emotional/ cognitive development
- be bullied or bully others
- be prone to mental health issues
- be isolated with few friends
- have behaviour issues
- poor attachments to others
- have a need to be very private

This makes them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life-chances. Romans Field School recognise that as a school we play a vital role in providing a stable base for CLA. We are committed to ensuring that these children are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that, like all our children, they receive the highest quality education to help them develop academically, socially, and emotionally to be the best version of themselves. This policy sets out our aims and how we go about achieving this.

2. Aims:

Our aims for CLA and Post-CLA (throughout both will be referred to as CLA) are:

- to champion the needs of CLA to ensure they make rapid progress during their period in care
- to provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of **all** children
- to support our CLA in order to give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential and enjoy learning
- to promote the educational achievement and welfare of CLA
- to ensure all adults understand the specific needs of CLA, in particular with confidentiality and issues that affect looked after children
- to narrow the gap between the attainment of CLA and their peers, ensuring accelerated and rapid progress (DfE guidance 2018)
- that they benefit from school-based interventions, including 'Making Good Progress 121 Tuition', even if they do not meet the criteria for that intervention (DfE guidance 2018) and to use the allocated Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) to ensure effective impact
- for all CLA to have a minimum of three Personal Education Planning (PEP) meetings in an academic year and for the joint planning to actively impact on each child's learning on a daily basis

- for all adults to provide discreet, sensitive, child-led support, with one key adult identified who will form a strong relationship and take a special interest in daily life at school
- that school systems facilitate discrete support, as appropriate
- for CLA and their foster families to feel part of the school community; they will be actively welcomed into the community in recognition of the particular needs of this group ([DfE guidance 2018](#))
- to provide a designated teacher and governor for CLA

NB: The Designated Teacher for CLA at our schools are:

Romans Field School is **Mrs Amanda Brown**

Priory Common School is **Gill Cash**

Bradwell Village School is **Lisa Vincent**

The Designated Governor is **Mr Paul Hussey**

3. Roles and responsibilities of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher should:

- be an advocate for CLA;
- ensure a smooth and welcome induction for new CLA and carers, and note any specific requirements, including care status;
- ensure that a PEP is completed, and all parties are involved in its implementation,
- keep PEPs and other records up to date, particularly in time to inform review meetings;
- ensure that each child in public care (if they wish) has an identified member of staff that they can talk to (this should be based on the child's request, and may not necessarily be the Designated Teacher);
- co-ordinate support for the child in the school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary;
- ensure staff receive relevant information and training and act as an advisor to staff and governors;
- ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need-to-know basis;
- provide written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible;
- ensure that the child and carer(s) receive early notification of meetings, parents' evenings and other events and that communication remains regular and positive.
- encourage CLA to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning, where feasible;
- ensure speedy transfer of information between individuals and other relevant agencies and to a new school if and when the child transfers;
- seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded;
- ensure that any returns on looked after children are completed – as requested by the LA;
- ensuring that the CLA has access to quality first teaching;
- tracking the progress of CLA across the curriculum using data, teacher reports and book looks;
- ensuring that the PP+ is used effectively and efficiently in consultation with PP lead;
- ensuring effective communication with the school's assigned Education Adviser from the Virtual School;

- developing expertise in the field of CLA;
- providing and attending training and offering advice to the whole school staff;
- promoting a school culture which is supportive and has high expectations for CLA;
- regularly reporting to the Executive Head, Head of School and Governing Board on the attainment of CLA and school resource and staff training needs for working with this group
- prioritising CLA for school-based additional support, even when the young person does not meet the criteria; ([DfE guidance 2018](#))
- ensuring that CLA are not overlooked for positions of student responsibility within the school because of their care status;
- ensure the annual Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) of each CLA is completed, as requested, to inform the annual health review

4. Roles and responsibilities of all staff

All staff will promote improved educational life chances for CLA and Post-CLA by:

- ensure that any child in public care is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained;
- be familiar with the and respond appropriately to requests for information or reports to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings;
- respond positively to a child in public 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;
- as with all children, ensure that no child in public care is stigmatised in any way;
- provide a supportive climate to enable a child in public care to achieve stability within the school setting;
- as with all children, have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of CLA;
- positively promote the self-esteem of CLA;
- reading the 'school policy' and 'school policy guidance document' for CLA;
- attending training, as required;
- referring to the Designated Teacher for advice;
- playing their part in creating a 'CLA-friendly' culture and securing rapid progress for CLA by ensuring that they benefit from any additional school-based support available;
- ensuring that progress is regularly monitored and reviewed, against the expectation of progress each academic year, as agreed in the termly Virtual School visit, PEP and CLASEF

5. Roles and responsibilities of the Governing Board, Executive Head and Head of School

The Executive Headteacher, Head of School and Governing Board are committed to promoting improved educational life chances for CLA and will:

- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for CLA;
- be aware of whether the school has CLA and how many (no names);
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for CLA who has, appropriate seniority in the leadership team and time and experience to fulfil this statutory role.;
- liaise with the Executive Head Teacher and Head of School to ensure that the Designated

- Teacher is enabled to carry out her/his responsibilities in relation to CLA;
- support the Executive Head Teacher, Head of School, Designated Teacher, and other staff in ensuring the needs of CLA are met;
- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular anonymous progress reports, and provides feedback to the Governing Board;
- review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually;
- review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years.

6. Confidentiality

- information on CLA will be shared with school staff 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.

7. Personal Education Plans (PEP) and CLA Self Evaluation Forms (CLASEF)

The school will ensure that every CLA on roll has a Personal Education Planning (PEP) meeting that is reviewed termly, within the statutory care planning framework, and in collaboration with the social worker, carer, and other relevant professionals, in Milton Keynes a PEP is completed on the PEP portal. If a child is a new CLA to the school or is taken into care the social worker informs school of a child becoming looked after and a date is set for the completion of a PEP, this is normally within 20 days.

The school will complete the CLASEF to inform the Milton Keynes Virtual School of the school’s policy and practice, to account for the efficient and effective spend of the PP+ funding and to inform the school Governing Gas the annual report.

8 . Attendance

School attendance procedures reflect the specific needs of CLA to ensure good school attendance. Where there is a concern about attendance or punctuality the school contacts the carer, social worker and other professionals including the Virtual School, as an early intervention, as outlined in the attendance policy.

9. Admissions/Transitions

School procedures to support CLA during admission and transition include:

- prioritising CLA at the point of admission via the SEND panel;
- the swift transfer of information between schools that may include school visits and at times of transition, teaching at the previous school;
- early identification of staff mentor and peer buddy;
- structured activities to ‘say goodbye,’ in recognition of the impact of broken attachments and loss.

10. Safeguarding and Child Protection

School staff will be vigilant for any safeguarding issues which can impact particularly on CLA by: familiarising themselves with the 'School Policy Guidance for Children in Care' and following the school's child protection policy and the 'DfE: Keeping Children Safe in Education' (All staff) September 2021, if there are any safeguarding concerns.

More information on the schools Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures can be found in our policy, available from the school or accessible on our website.

11. Exclusions

We will make every effort to avoid excluding a CLA, in recognition of the increased risk this poses in terms of them quickly disengaging from the school, due to their early experience of broken attachments and loss. Before acting, we will discuss the rationale for exclusion with the assigned Education Adviser from the Virtual School. If there is no option other than exclusion, then we will make every attempt to reduce the number of days of the exclusion. School procedures are in place to reduce the risk of exclusion of CLA.

12. Multi-Agency Working

School staff will engage with colleagues from other agencies and facilitate their work. This should include Virtual Schools, Social Care, health, carers. This will enable colleagues to successfully perform their roles and positively impact on the education and wider needs of CLA.

13. Training

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

Any reference to statute, statutory guidance and any other document shall be construed as a reference to that statute as amended or re-enacted and to the current edition or replacement of that statutory guidance or other document.

13. Further documentation or information can be found through the following

'DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children, 28th February 2018.'

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683561/The_designated_teacher_for_looked-after_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf

Keeping children safe in Education September 2021:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1021914/KCSIE_2021_September_guidance.pdf

Milton Keynes Virtual School: <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/children-young-people-families/virtual-schools>

Luton Virtual School: https://m.luton.gov.uk/Page/Show/Education_and_learning/virtual/Pages/default.aspx

Northamptonshire Virtual School: <https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-families-education/schools-and-education/virtual-school/Pages/default.aspx>

Buckinghamshire Virtual School: <https://familyinfo.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/the-virtual-school/>

Bedford Borough Council Virtual School: <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/schools-education-and-childcare/virtual-school/>

Central Bedford Council Virtual School:
https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/3/schools_and_education/532/virtual_school