



Looked After Children

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MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed when there are changes in the law or at least every two years, to assess implementation and effectiveness in line with DfE guidance September 2022.

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Introduction

Chiltern Hills Academy is a learning environment at the heart of its community. We encourage every person in our community to:

Create, Aspire and Excel to 'Live life in all its fullness' (John 10:10)

We achieve this through our dedication to the seven Christian values of love, hope, self-discipline, compassion, forgiveness, respect and honesty.

We are a community in which staff, students and parents work collaboratively to develop a learning environment and organisation which is spiritual, safe, innovative, creative and exciting. All members of the Academy are motivated and inspired by the vision to give their best and to play a full part in the life of the school and in their own developing lives. The Governors at Chiltern Hills Academy are committed to achieving the vision and values. They oversee and monitor this policy to ensure that this is being achieved.

The following documents have been used to support those that are Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children.

[Promoting the health and well-being of looked-after children - update note added to start in August 2022 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/669e7501ab418ab055592a7b/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023.pdf

<https://schoolsweb.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/behaviour-wellbeing/virtual-school/guidelines-for-looked-after-children/>

[Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Chiltern Hills Academy aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of students in public care.

The Designated Teacher for looked after children is **Jo Conway**.

The Governor with responsibility for looked after children is **Nick Brown**.

The Governing Body is committed to providing quality education for all its students based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes. This policy includes requirements set out in "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" (Nov 2005), associated guidance on "Promoting the education of the looked-after and previously looked-after children" (July 2018) and "The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children" (February 2018).

1. Roles and Responsibilities

The Principal and Governing Body are committed to promoting improved educational life chances for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children. They will ensure that the Designated Teacher has qualified teacher status, appropriate seniority in the leadership team and time and experience to fulfil this statutory role. They will monitor the role of the Designated Teacher to ensure that all Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children make accelerated and rapid progress and that the whole school staff receives appropriate training.

1.1 Rationale for roles and responsibilities:

- Looked after children and previously looked after children are amongst the most vulnerable groups in society and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational underachievement when compared to their peers. For example, they may experience:
 - A high level of disruption and change in school placements.
 - Lack of involvement in extracurricular activities.
 - Inconsistent or no attention paid to homework.
 - Trauma.

This may result in:

- Poor exam success rates in comparison with the general population.
- Underachievement in further and higher education

2. Policy Aims

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) on the roll of the school.

At Chiltern Hills Academy we will create an environment where looked after children and previously looked after children have access to excellent educational provision and are prioritised for additional support through school-based interventions, in accordance with the DfE Guidance Document for Designated Teachers - February 2018.

We recognise that our school plays a vital role in providing a stable base for Looked After Children and in promoting their academic, social and emotional development. We promote staff training in their specific needs, so that all adults are sensitive to the barriers to learning that Looked After Children experience and feel able to support the children discretely and confidentially, as needs arise.

Our school community aims to champion the needs of Looked After Children to ensure they make rapid progress during their period in care.

2.1 . Our Aims for Looked After Children. We will:

- provide a safe and secure environment where education is always central to the planning and all adults understand the specific needs of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children
- set high aspirations for looked after children and expect them to make exceptional progress
- narrow the gap between the attainment of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children and their peers, ensuring accelerated and rapid progress
- ensure that they benefit from school-based interventions, even if they do not meet the criteria for that and to use the allocated Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) to ensure effective impact
- 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
- ensure that carers and social workers of looked after children are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment.
- that school systems facilitate discrete support, as appropriate
- Looked After Children will be advantaged within school policies and procedures, with their needs explicitly considered and provided for
- Looked After Children and their foster families will feel part of the school community; they will be actively welcomed into the community in recognition of the particular needs of this group
- provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual's needs and ability.
- ensure that looked after children are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision and next steps in learning.
- ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for looked after children as for all children.

3. Who are Looked After Children

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority.

They include the following:

- Children who are accommodated by the local authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20).
- Children who are the subject of a care order (section 31(1)) or interim care order (section 38); and
- Children who are the subject of emergency orders for the protection of the child (section 44 Under the Children Act 1989).
- previously looked after children are those no longer looked after by a local authority in England & Wales, because they are the subject of:
 - An adoption
 - Special guardianship

- Child arrangements order
- Adopted from state care outside England & Wales

4. Educational Planning for Looked After Children Personal Education Plans (ePEP)

The school will ensure that every Looked After Child 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. We will:

- ensure all Looked After Children to have a minimum of three Personal Education Planning (ePEP) meetings in an academic year and for the joint planning to actively impact on each child's learning on a daily basis, to ensure accelerated and rapid progress and will include targets to improve the student performance or educational achievement
- ensure each pupil in care will have a Care Plan that will include a Personal Education Plan (PEP) that is developed jointly by the Social Worker, Designated Teacher and Foster Carer

The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children is Jo Conway

She is a qualified teacher and a senior member of staff and will promote improved educational life chances for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children by:

- ensuring that the Looked After Child or Previously Looked After Child has access to quality first teaching
- being an advocate for looked after children and previously looked after children
- know all the looked after and previously looked after children and ensure that all student details are accurately recorded on CPOMS
- tracking the progress of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children across the curriculum using data, teacher reports and book reviews
- ensuring that the PP+ is used effectively and efficiently
- performing a coordinating role with school staff and outside agencies
- ensuring effective communication with the school's assigned Education Adviser from the Virtual School
- developing expertise in the field of Looked After Children
- providing and attending training and offering advice to all school staff
- promoting a school culture which is supportive and has high expectations for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children
- regularly reporting to the Principal and Governing Body on the attainment of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children and school resource and staff training needs for working with this group
- prioritising Looked After Children for school-based additional support, even when the young person does not meet the criteria

- ensuring that Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children are not overlooked for positions of student responsibility within the school because of their care status
- ensuring that carers and care staff are engaged with the targets outlined in the PEP
- convene an urgent multi-agency meeting if a looked after children is at risk of exclusion.
- ensure a speedy transfer of information, records and coursework, where appropriate, when a looked after children transfers to another educational placement
- ensure that any Special Educational Needs are addressed in conjunction with the SENCO and in accordance with the Code of Practice for SEND. Looked after children are six to eight times more likely to have a Statement of Special Educational Needs / EHCP than the general school population

All staff will promote improved educational life chances for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children by:

- reading the school policy for Looked After Children
- attending training, as appropriate
- have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of looked after children
- providing accurate information and data when asked by the Designated Teacher
- referring to the Designated Teacher for advice
- playing their part in creating a 'Looked After Children-friendly' culture and securing rapid progress for Looked After Children by ensuring that they benefit from any additional school-based support available
- be mindful of the effect that the curriculum and the time of year e.g. Christmas, Mother's Day, may have on looked after children and consult with the designated teacher if in doubt.

The Governing Body

The Governing Body at Chiltern Hills Academy will:

- ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritises looked after children according to the DfE admissions Code of Practice.
- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for looked after children.
- liaise with the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and all other staff to ensure the needs of looked after children are met.
- nominate a governor with responsibility for looked after children who links with the Designated Teacher.
- receive regular reports from the Designated Teacher
- ensure that the school's policies and procedures give looked after children equal access in respect of
 - admission to school
 - National Curriculum and examinations, both academic and vocational

out of school learning and extracurricular activities.

- work experience and careers guidance
- annually review the effective implementation of the school policy for looked after children
- ensure that the Designated Teacher and the Virtual School are invited to the exclusion meetings of looked after children.

Ensure that the school's policies and procedures give looked after children equal access in respect of:

- Admission to school
- National Curriculum and examinations, both academic and vocational
- Out of school learning and extracurricular activities
- Work experience and careers guidance.

Annually review the effective implementation of the school policy for looked after children. Ensure that the Designated Teacher and the Virtual School are invited to the exclusion meetings of looked after children

5. Attendance

School attendance procedures reflect the specific needs of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children 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.

5.1 Admissions/ Transitions

The Governing body endorses this policy.

We believe that admissions criteria should not discriminate against looked after or previously looked after children. The school understands that looked after children and previously looked after children have been given the highest priority within school admission arrangements. Due to care placement changes, looked after children may enter school mid-term. It is vital that we give them a positive welcome. If necessary, we may offer additional support and pre-entry visits to help the new student settle and a catch-up meeting to review the settling in process.

School procedures to support Looked After Children during admission and transition include:

- prioritising Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children at the point of admission
- 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
- additional support and planning for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children at times of transition

- structured activities to 'say goodbye', in recognition of the impact of broken attachments and loss

6. Additional Educational Needs - The Graduated Approach

All Staff endeavour to secure accelerated and rapid progress for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children with additional educational needs by:

- having high expectations
- ensuring that they are prioritised for additional school-based support, even if they do not meet the criteria
- ensuring that planning is coordinated, appropriate interventions identified and teaching to the plan is systematic; ensuring that any work undertaken by non-teaching staff has teacher over-sight
- ensuring that progress is regularly monitored and reviewed, against the expectation of progress each academic year, as agreed in the termly Virtual School visit, ePEP and CLASEF

7. Special Educational Needs

All Staff endeavour to secure accelerated and rapid progress for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children who have special educational needs by:

- adhering to graduated approach as outlined in the SEN Code of Practice
- having high expectation of minimum levels of progress each academic year (in line with the expectation set out in the ePEP and CLASEF)
- ensuring that all plans are coordinated, appropriate interventions identified, and teaching to the plan is systematic
- ensuring that progress is regularly monitored and reviewed, in line with the SEN Code of Practice
- Designated Teacher and SENDCO monitor delivery of interventions and review outcomes with class teacher
- where an EHCP is in place, PEPs and EHCP should be aligned to avoid duplication

8. Safeguarding

School staff will be vigilant for any safeguarding issues which can impact particularly on Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children by:

- familiarising themselves with the school's child protection policy and the 'DfE: Keeping Children Safe in Education' document (September 2024) there are any safeguarding concerns.
- working closely with the appointed social worker or external agency

9. Alternative Provision

We will make every effort to ensure that any arrangements for provision, alternative to daily attendance at school, will be:

- a plan that will retain the Looked After Children on the roll of the school or clarify in writing which educational establishment will be responsible for reporting and accountable for the PP+
- an agreed part of the overall ePEP for the student
- full time (25 hours) or contribute to full time attendance and be of high quality
- meet the educational needs of the Looked After Children or Previously Looked After Children
- will provide the opportunity to make rapid progress in the course of study provided by the setting
- will be monitored regularly and that ePEPs will include the school and the alternative provider

10. Suspension

We will make every effort to avoid suspending a Looked After Child, 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 suspension with the assigned Education Adviser from the Virtual School. If there is no option other than suspension, then we will make every attempt to reduce the number of days of the suspension. School procedures are in place to reduce the risk of suspension of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children. (Ref: Guidance for maintained schools, and pupil referral units in England. September 2022))

11. 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 Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children.