



**POLICY TITLE: Looked After Children**

**STATUS: Statutory**

**REVIEWED BY: TEFAT**

**DATE of REVIEW: Sept 2015**

## **Statutory framework**

The Children Act 1989 as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014.

The Children and Families Act 2014 amends section 22 of the Children Act 1989 to require every local authority in England to appoint an officer employed by the authority, or another authority, to make sure that its duty to promote the educational achievement of its looked after children is properly discharged. That officer is referred to as the Virtual School Head (VSH).

The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 as amended by the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013 and the Adoption and Care planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2014.

Since 1 September 2009 the governing bodies of all maintained schools (and now academies) were required under the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 to appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of looked after children who are on the school roll.

## **Key documents**

[Promoting the Education of Looked After Children](#) statutory guidance to local authorities 2014 (replaces guidance issued in 2010)

[The Role and responsibilities of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children](#)- Statutory guidance for school governing bodies

[Improving the Attainment of Looked After Children in Primary School Guidance for Schools](#)

[Young Persons Guide to the Children and Families Act 2014](#)

## Admissions

Elliot Foundation academies must:

- ✿ prioritise Looked After Children in Admissions Policies.
- ✿ ensure that Looked After Children are admitted promptly after a request for a place has been made, to avoid unnecessary disruption to the child's schooling.
- ✿ Request records from the pupil's previous school and arranged with the Virtual School Head, the carer/parent and Social Worker as appropriate. This will provide information to inform the Personal Education Plan. An appropriate school induction will take place.

## The role of the local governing body

- ✿ The Local Governing Body must appoint a named Governor responsible for Looked After Children
- ✿ The local governing body must ensure that the academy appoints a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children (DT-LAC) whether or not there are any looked after children on the academy's current roll
- ✿ The LGB must ensure that the designated teacher undertakes appropriate training (section 20(2) of the 2008 Act).
- ✿ As a minimum governors must consider an annual report from the designated teacher which contains the information described in section 2.10 of this guidance. The local governing body and school leadership team should consider the report and act on any issues it raises so as to support the designated teacher and maximise the impact of the role.
- ✿ When the school admits a Looked After Child, the named governor will liaise with the Principal and the Designated Teacher to monitor progress and be informed of any barriers to learning
- ✿ The Local Governing Body will ensure that the Academy policies are reviewed from the point of view of Looked After Children.

## The role of the Principal

- ✿ The Principal must appoint a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children (DT-LAC) whether or not there are any looked after children on the academy's current roll.
- ✿ The Principal must ensure that the DT-LAC has relevant and current training in order to ensure that the role is fulfilled to a high standard
- ✿ The Principal will ensure that the DT-LAC is in regular contact with the LA's Virtual School Head and receives appropriate support and guidance from the VSH.
- ✿ The Principal will meet regularly with the Designated Teacher to monitor progress of any LACs and be informed of any barriers to learning
- ✿ This process should help identify issues for school improvement and feed into the academy's self-evaluation

## The role of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children

The designated teacher has lead responsibility for the quality of provision for looked after children.

S/he must advocate for them and assist school staff in understanding the things that affect how looked after children learn and achieve. The designated teacher should:

- ✿ work together with social workers, VSHs, school admission officers and special educational needs teams to ensure that (except in an emergency) appropriate education provision for a child is arranged at the same time as a care placement.
- ✿ ensure that all looked after children have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) which is part of the child's care plan. The broad areas of information that must be covered in the PEP are specified in Schedule 1 (paragraph 2) of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 as amended. The PEP must now include the contact details of the VSH for the authority that looks after the child
- ✿ promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how looked after children learn
- ✿ make sure the child has a voice in setting learning targets

- ✿ be a source of advice for staff about differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children and in making full use of assessment to help the child learn
- ✿ make sure that looked after children are prioritised in any one-to-one tuition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home
- ✿ take the lead responsibility for the development and implementation of the child's personal education plan (PEP) within the school and liaise with outside agencies, particularly the VSH
- ✿ have ultimate responsibility for leading the process of target setting for individual looked after children in school and rigorously tracking their attainment progress.
- ✿ should implement pupil premium arrangements for looked after children in accordance with the latest conditions of grant published by the department and any supplementary departmental advice it issues.

### **Personal Education Plan (PEP)**

- ✿ All Looked After Children (LAC) will have a current PEP.
- ✿ If a LAC joins the school without a PEP, the designated teacher should pursue the matter with the Virtual School Head and the child's social worker who has a statutory duty to initiate the PEP.
- ✿ The Academy will work alongside the assigned social worker to contribute to the education content of the PEP.
- ✿ When a child leaves the school, it is the duty of the designated teacher to ensure that the PEP is passed on to the next designated teacher

### **Additional Educational Needs (e.g. SEN, G&T, Attendance & Behaviour)**

Any special educational needs must be promptly identified, bearing in mind that Looked After Children may have missed schooling.

Any additional needs must be addressed clearly in the child's PEP with clear steps and interventions to help the child catch up with her or his peers. Suitable learning support must be provided to secure this provision. The child's progress must be tracked carefully to evaluate which interventions are most effective in helping the child close any gaps in learning.

The SENCO and Designated Teacher will be responsible for liaising with carers and other professionals, including the Virtual School Head.

## Information sharing

Appropriate and specific arrangements for sharing reliable data should be in place to ensure that the educational needs of looked after children can be understood and met. This should be led by the local authority's Virtual School Head. This is particularly important in relation to the tracking and monitoring of attainment data and notifications of where children, including those placed out-of-authority are being educated. The arrangements should set out:

- ✿ who has access to what information and how the security of data will be ensured
- ✿ how children and parents are informed of, and allowed to challenge, information that is kept about them
- ✿ how carers contribute to and receive information
- ✿ mechanisms for sharing information between relevant local authority departments and the academy
- ✿ how relevant information about individual children is passed promptly between the academy and authorities, departments and new schools when children move.

Relevant information includes the PEP, which as part of the looked after child's educational record should be transferred with them to the new school

## Exclusions

It is important to be especially sensitive in relation to exclusions where looked after children are concerned. Every practicable means should be tried to maintain the child in school. Elliot Foundation academies are expected to find viable alternatives to fixed term/permanent exclusions in conjunction with the VSH. Exclusion of Looked After Child should be an absolute last resort.

### **The Local Governing Body will:**

Review this policy, with guidance from the Principal, and alongside the updated Elliot Foundation policy, every two years.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

This statement will be reviewed biennially by TEFAT.  
Equalities impact assessment considered

**DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: July 2017**