



# Children Looked After (CLA) & Children Previously Looked After Policy

Designated Person: Director of Inclusion  
Reviewed by: TGAT Policy Committee  
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## CLA/PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER POLICY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A Child Looked After is a child or young person up to their 18th birthday who is either accommodated by, or in the care of the local authority. There are many reasons why a child becomes looked after including: the death of parents, the child has experienced or is at risk of significant harm; or the child is or was experiencing neglect. Looked after children may be placed with foster carers (including in kinship arrangements with family and friends), in residential care homes, in secure accommodation or with prospective adopters. Some children may be placed with parents under a Supervision Order. However, children living in private fostering arrangements are not looked after. Children who have previously been looked after and have been adopted, or who are subject to a special guardianship or child arrangement order will be eligible for the support afforded to their previously looked-after status.
- 1.2 A student is described as being in care when a legal order is made (such as an Interim or Full Care Order; or Emergency Protection Order) and the parents or those with parental responsibility (PR) may or may not have provided consent.
- 1.3 Accommodated means that the local authority has provided accommodation usually with the parents' consent (under Section 20 Children Act 1989). Also, a student is accommodated if they are remanded to youth detention accommodation in which case they automatically become looked after.
- 1.4 In addition a child is looked after when placed for adoption (but not following adoption) or when the local authority is authorised to place a child for adoption, either when parents or those with PR have given consent or through the making of a Placement Order.
- 1.5 Every CLA student has an allocated social worker. They assess the student's needs and work with them and with other practitioners to develop a care plan. The plan is reviewed at a CLA review. Each student will also have an Independent Reviewing Officer whose role is to quality assure the care planning process for each student and to ensure that his/her current wishes and feelings are given full consideration.
- 1.6 The GORSE Academies Trust believes that as Corporate Parents we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of CLA students and continue to support those identified as previously looked after. These students face life challenges so deserve sensitive and proactive support to give them the equal life chances that every student deserves. This includes ensuring they receive the best education, are supported to attend school and achieve; and their physical, social, emotional and mental health needs are fully met.

## 2. LEGISLATION AND POLICY

2.1 This Policy takes account of:

- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- The Children's and Families Act 2014
- Education Act 2002, Education Act 2011
- The Equality Act 2010
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice, March 2022
- DFE Guidance: The designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children February 2018

2.2 This policy is written in conjunction with Trust policies that promote the welfare of students, including:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Anti-bullying, Hate Incidents and Hate Crime Policy
- Single Equality Policy
- SEND Policy
- Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Positive Discipline & Behaviour Policy
- Professional Principles Policy
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy

## 3. AIM

- 3.1. To provide a safe and secure environment which values education and believes in the abilities and potential of all students.
- 3.2. To bring the educational attainments of CLA/Previously CLA students nearer to those of their peers and to narrow the gap in attainment and progress.
- 3.3. To identify the educational establishment role as Corporate Parents to promote and support the education of our CLA students.
- 3.4. **In pursuit of this policy, we will;**
  - 3.4.1. Designate a teacher at each educational establishment for CLA and Previously CLA students who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them. These members of staff will usually be a senior leader with responsibility for safeguarding and/or inclusion, working in conjunction with key pastoral members of staff. The 'Designated Teacher' will undertake appropriate training and be a point of contact for outside agencies, social workers, the local authority's Virtual Schools Head (VSH) and parents/carers.

## 4. THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

- 4.1 Maintain a register of looked after and previously looked after students which will include a record of:
- Status i.e. care order or accommodated
  - Type of placement i.e. foster, respite, residential
  - Name of Social Worker, area office, telephone number, e-mail address
  - Daily contact and numbers e.g. name of parent or carer and/or key worker in residential home
  - Stage of Intervention and Referral Services (INRS), where appropriate
  - Child Protection information, when appropriate (this information should be stored securely as per the trust's Child Protection Policy)
  - Any Identified Special Educational Needs (SEN) information
  - Baseline information and all test/assessment results
- 4.2 To advise on most effective use of the Pupil Premium (PP) funding during the Personal Education Planning (PEP) meeting.
- 4.3 To ensure that the PP funding and additional budget share funding, where relevant, is used to support the learning objectives for the student and to be accountable for how the funding is spent with outcomes evidenced.
- 4.4 To ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by CLA/ Previously CLA students and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them.
- 4.5 To inform members of staff of the general educational needs of CLA/ Previously CLA students, and to promote the involvement of these students in homework clubs, extra-curricular activities, home reading schemes, student voice activities, etc.
- 4.6 Ensure that there is a PEP or electronic PEP (ePEP) for each CLA student to include appropriate targets. This must be compatible with the student's Children's Social Work Services Care Plan and form part of any other educational establishment plan, for example an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), Positive Handling Plan (PHP), Intimate Care Plan (ICP), Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP), transition plan, pastoral support programme.
- 4.7 To ensure that the educational targets within the PEP are implemented fully, reviewed regularly and that all relevant school staff are aware of them.
- 4.8 Ensure that the Designated Teacher, Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL) and/or child protection officers attend Children's Social Work Services reviews on each student and/or always prepares a written report which promotes the continuity and stability of their education.
- 4.9 Ensure that on entry to or transfer from the educational establishment all relevant information is obtained/shared.
- 4.10 Ensure, when enrolling at the educational establishment, parents and guardians of previously looked-after children are reminded that they need to inform the school if their child is eligible to attract PP+.

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- 4.11 Ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when CLA/ Previously CLA students are underachieving and have early interventions to improve their progress and attainment.
- 4.12 Ensure that systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about CLA/ Previously CLA students.
- 4.13 To intervene if there is evidence of absence from the educational establishment or internal truancy.
- 4.14 Ensure that CLA/ Previously CLA students are listened to and have access to support and counselling services in the educational establishment.
- 4.15 Ensure there are no barriers to looked-after children accessing the general activities and experiences the school offers to all its pupils (e.g. taking into account possible transport difficulties and the arrangements for looked-after children to attend meetings).
- 4.16 To ensure that staff have an awareness of the impact of attachment disorder, pre-care trauma and other mental health issues associated with a looked after and previously looked after status.

## **5. SUPPORT FOR CLA/ PREVIOUSLY CLA STUDENTS**

- 5.1 The Designated Teacher will discuss with individual students, possibly alongside a carer, to arrive at a statement about their care arrangements and circumstances that they would be happy to share with staff and/or other students.
- 5.2 The Designated Teacher will enable the student to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their Care Plan
- 5.3 The Designated Teacher will ensure that the Student Voice section of the PEP or ePEP is completed for each student and is the result of a one to one meeting so that the views of the student are faithfully represented in the PEP/ePEP.
- 5.4 The Designated Teacher will co-ordinate the smooth induction of a new CLA/ Previously CLA into the educational establishment.
- 5.5 The Designated Teacher will work alongside the relevant senior leader, including where appropriate the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo) and key pastoral staff to develop strategies to track, promote and accelerate the achievement of CLA/ Previously CLA students.
- 5.6 The Designated Teacher will fully support additional learning opportunities that may be available from the Virtual School and partner agencies.
- 5.7 CLA/ Previously CLA will have targeted access to intervention and support, which may include study support, learning mentor support, home/educational establishment agreement, referrals to outside agencies, counselling support, local cluster services, universal, targeted and specialist services.

## **6. ALL GOVERNORS AND STAFF WILL:**

- 6.1 Work in partnership with parents/carers and agencies especially Children's Social Work Services, health agencies and the VSH to co-ordinate support for identified students.

## **7. THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY (LGB)**

- 7.1 The lead governor for safeguarding will have an overview of CLA/Previously CLA students.

- 7.2 The principal will report regularly to the LGB upon:

- The number of CLA/ Previously CLA students in the educational establishment
- A comparison of progress as a discrete group, compared with those of other students in the educational establishment and nationally
- A comparison of attainment measures as a discrete group, compared with those of other students in the educational establishment and nationally
- The attendance of students as a discrete group, compared to other students
- The level of suspensions/permanent exclusions
- Student destinations after leaving the educational establishment

## **8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

- 8.1 Each student in care will have a Care Plan that will include a PEP/ePEP that is developed jointly by the Social Worker and Designated Teacher. This will identify specific areas of focus and include targets and associated actions to improve performance, progress or educational achievement. Areas for consideration will include:

- Achievement Record (academic or otherwise)
- Development needs (short- and long-term development of skills, knowledge or subject areas and experiences)
- Long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations)
- Educational data so that progress may be easily tracked between Key Stages
- Effective use of the PP and evidence of impact
- Extended learning opportunities
- Involvement in extra –curricular activities
- Special Educational Needs and Disability, if any
- Attendance
- Behaviour

- 8.2 The ePEP will be updated and reviewed each term or at the point of any major change and contribute to the Statutory Reviewing Process carried out by the

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Independent Reviewing Officer.

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