



Looked After Children Policy

Date of Review: September 2018
Approved by: Trust Board
Next Review Date: September 2019

Introduction

At the Rodillian Multi Academy Trust, as part of the Corporate Parent responsibilities, we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of children and young people in public care. We believe that every child, whatever their background or their circumstances, will have the support they need to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and achieve economic well-being.

In this respect our aims are:

- to provide a safe and secure environment, which values education and believes in, the abilities and potential, of all children and young people;
- to bring the educational attainments of our children and young people in public care nearer to those of their peers;
- to identify our academy's role as a Corporate Parent to promote and support the education of our children and young people in public care.

This policy relates to the following students:

- a child 'looked-after by a local authority' 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 who is no longer looked after 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 person, 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.

The Role of the Governing Body

As required in the Children and Young Persons Act 2008, the Rodillian Multi Academy Trust Board and Local Advisory Group will:

- Have regard for the statutory guidance 'The designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children' issued by the DfE in February 2018;
- ensure each academy has an appointed a nominated staff member as a designated lead for children and young people in public care who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them with responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children, including those aged between 16 and 18 who are registered pupils at the school;
- ensure the designated lead is a qualified teacher and that they undertake the appropriate training including the appropriate induction period (if required) and is working as a teacher at the school;
- consider an annual 'looked after children' report from each academy and should, through the designated teacher, hold the school to account on how it supports its looked-after and previously looked-after children (including how the PP+ is used) and their level of progress;
- Work with the school leadership team to consider the report and act on any issues it raises so as to support the designated teacher and maximise the impact of the role;
- Appoint a nominated Governor for children and young people in public care.

Responsibilities of Nominated Governor

The Nominated Governor is: Jennifer East

Their responsibilities are to:

- take a lead in carrying out the actions of the governing body in relation to children and young people in public care.
- liaise with the nominated staff member in each academy and report to the Trust Board on an annual basis. The contents of this report will reflect that outlined in the Handbook for Schools/Academies and Education Services

Responsibilities of the Head of School

In partnership with the governing body, the Head of School and school leadership team will consider that the designated teacher:

- has appropriate seniority and professional experience to provide leadership, training, information, challenge and advice to others that will influence decisions about the teaching and learning needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children;
- has appropriate seniority and skills to work with the school's senior leadership and governing body to help ensure school policies and approaches appropriately reflect the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children and act as a champion for them;

- ensure the designated teacher has had training opportunities, including time away from commitments to acquire and keep up to date the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to respond to the specific teaching & learning needs of looked after and previously looked after students, including a good knowledge of SEND;
- contributes to the deeper understanding of everyone in the school who is likely to be involved in supporting looked-after and previously looked-after children to achieve;
- ensure that robust and clear monitoring arrangements are in place to review progress, attendance and exclusion data to guarantee that designated leads are providing appropriate support for the looked after children and previously looked after children on roll;
- Ensure that the impact of Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) has in supporting the education achievement of looked after and previously looked after children.

Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher

The designated teachers across the Trust are:

Alison Howarth – Rodillian Academy
 Carl Miller – The Featherstone Academy
 Michelle Ashby – BBG Academy
 Julie Pirie – Brayton Academy
 Dahna Miller – Southway

In partnership with the Head of School and school leadership their responsibilities are to:

- Have regard for the statutory guidance ‘The designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children’ issued by the DfE in February 2018;
- promote a culture of high expectations, aspirations the educational achievement of both looked after children and previously looked-after pupils who are no longer looked after because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order, or were adopted from ‘state care’;
- ensure that on admission or transfer all relevant information is obtained at the outset;
- ensure there are no unintended barriers to the admission of looked-after and previously looked-after children either at normal transition or any other point of the school year;
- ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise under achievement, and that early interventions address this;
- be a source of advice for staff about differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children;
- ensure that systems are in place to keep staff up-to-date and informed about children and young people in public care;

- ensure that children and young people in public care are listened to, has a voice in setting learning targets and have access to support from a trusted adult within the academy;
- maintain a register of all children and young people in public care, in line with recommendations in the statutory guidance;
- along with the social worker, have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of a child's Personal Education Plan (PEP) within school and ensure there is one in place for each child and young person that is looked after and that this is reviewed;
- ensure that someone from the academy attends the Statutory Care Review for each child or young person wherever possible, and/or always prepares a written report which promotes the continuity and stability of their education;
- ensure that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home and that school policies (e.g. Home School Agreements) are communicated with social workers and carers;
- monitor and review the progress, attendance and exclusion data to guarantee that looked-after and previously looked-after children have made the expected or better levels of progress over the past twelve months in line with their peers (i.e. educational, social and emotional progress) and that appropriate support is in place;
- ensure that any looked-after and previously looked-after children are identified as gifted and talented and how those needs are being met;
- ensure that any looked-after or previously looked-after children face additional safeguarding challenges of which the school's designated safeguarding lead should be aware;
- ensure that any looked-after and previously looked-after children that have special educational needs (SEND) are identified and that those needs are being identified and met at the appropriate level;
- ensure that any looked-after and previously looked-after children that have mental health needs are identified and met by ensuring appropriate screening tools and assessments are conducted and that other staff can identify signs of potential issues and understanding of how to support these;
- ensure that of looked-after and previously looked-after children have access to educational visit, additional educational support where needed, extra-curricular activities, work experience, careers guidance and extended school activities that support their educational achievement;
- ensure that all school staff have an awareness, training and skills specific to the needs of looked after and previously looked after children and how to support them;
- proactively build strong links and work closely with relevant colleagues and external professionals including SENCO, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Virtual School Head, local authority support services and adoption services.

Responsibilities of all staff and Governors

- Work in partnership with parents, carers and other agencies especially Social Care and the Health Department to co-ordinate support for children and young people in public care;
- Create an ethos of support and acceptance in the academy and an environment where children and young people who do not live with their birth families are equally accepted and valued;
- Maintain high expectations for children and young people in public care.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Designated Teachers will, with the Nominated Governor where appropriate, prepare an annual report for the governing body on the achievements of children and young people in public care. The report will contain information described in the statutory guidance.

The Designated Teacher in each academy will produce a termly monitoring and review document looking at the progress, attendance and behaviour data any looked-after and previously looked-after children on roll. They will present this to the Head of School and senior leadership and analyse it to ensure that appropriate support is in place.

The policy will be reviewed annually and presented to the Trust Board for ratification.

Equal Opportunities

Cultural diversity, religion, ethnicity, gender, ability, disability and age of pupils will be respected.