

# Looked After Children Policy

The Rodillian Multi Academy Trust is committed to a policy of celebrating diversity, promoting equality of opportunity, providing an inclusive workplace and eliminating any unfair treatment or unlawful discrimination. This overriding objective applies to all policies and procedures relating to staff and students. The Trust will comply at all times with the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 and associated guidance produced by the Department for Education.



# Looked After Children Policy

<b>Summary</b>	<b>See introduction</b>		
<b>Responsible Person/Author:</b>	<b>Saira Luffman</b>		
<b>Applies to:</b> (please circle/delete as appropriate)	<b>Staff</b> ✓	<b>Student</b> ✓	<b>Community</b>
<b>Ratifying Committee(s) and Date of Final Approval:</b>	<b>Trust Board – 20 January 2020</b>		
<b>Version:</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>Available On:</b>	<b>Metacompliance Library</b>		<b>Website</b> ✓
<b>Effective from:</b>	<b>January 2020</b>		
<b>Date of Next Formal Review:</b>	<b>January 2022</b>		

## DOCUMENT CONTROL

<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Amendments</b>
13 January 2020	1.0	Policy first implemented	N/A

## **1. Introduction**

At the Rodillian Multi Academy Trust 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 to promote and support the education of our children and young people in public care.

## **2. Policies statement**

There has been concern since the mid-Seventies that the education of children in care has been neglected. Conversely, from about the same time, attention was also being drawn to the important part that successful schooling could play in helping children escape from social disadvantage. In 1995 a joint report by the Social Services Inspectorate and Ofsted stated that the care and education systems were failing to promote the educational achievement of children in care / children looked after and drew attention to:

- Poor exam success rates in comparison with the general population
- A high level of disruption and change in school placements
- Lack of involvement in extra-curricular activities
- Inconsistent or no attention paid to homework
- Underachievement in further and higher education

It is, therefore, essential that our academies promote the achievement of such vulnerable children, who may also face additional barriers because of their race, ethnicity, religion and beliefs, sexual orientation or because they are disabled. All schools should have a policy for Children Looked After that is subject to review and approval by the Governing Body.

## **3. Scope of this policy and Who this policy applies to**

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.

#### **4. Dissemination and implementation**

This policy will be disseminated to RMA colleagues via the meta compliance library and via the website.

#### **5. Definitions used in this policy (optional – only use if necessary)**

Virtual school heads (VSHs) are in charge of promoting the educational achievement of all the children looked after by the local authority they work for.

#### **6. Roles and responsibilities**

##### **The Role of the Trust Board and Local Review Board**

As required in the Children and Young Persons Act 2008, the Rodillian Multi Academy Trust Board and Local Review Boards 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 students at the academy;
- 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 academy;
- consider an annual 'looked after children' report from each academy and should, through the designated teacher, hold the academy 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 academy 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 Trustee for children and young people in public care.

### **Responsibilities of Nominated Trustee**

The Nominated Trustee is: Ashley Hunter

Their responsibilities are to:

- take a lead in carrying out the actions of the Trust Board 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 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 academy's senior leadership and governing body to help ensure academy 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 academy 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. For students attending Southway, the responsibility of PP+ remains with the students' host school/academy.

### **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 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 students 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 academy 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 academy'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 academy activities that support their educational achievement;
- ensure that all academy 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.

### **Virtual Heads**

BBG Academy, Kirklees LA

Janet Tolley [kirklees.VirtualSchool@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:kirklees.VirtualSchool@kirklees.gov.uk)

Brayton Academy, North Yorkshire LA

Julie Bunn [Julie.Bunn@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:Julie.Bunn@northyorks.gov.uk)

The Featherstone Academy, Wakefield LA

Gary Stuart [gstuart@wakefield.gov.uk](mailto:gstuart@wakefield.gov.uk)

- Rodillian Academy, Leeds City Council  
Jancis Andrew [jancis.andrew@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:jancis.andrew@leeds.gov.uk).
- Southway, Leeds City Council  
Jancis Andrew [jancis.andrew@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:jancis.andrew@leeds.gov.uk).

### **Responsibilities of all staff**

- 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.

## **7. Training**

Updates of Academy and Local Authority personnel must be reviewed in line with change and potentially outside the policy review.

## **8. References**

This policy has been written in accordance with guidance from the Government Publications “The designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities February 2018, “Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children Statutory guidance for local authorities”. February 2018 and Keeping children safe in education Statutory guidance for schools and colleges September 2019



## Equality Impact Assessment

### Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening

As a Trust via the public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration. Please also take due regard of Equalities considerations.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provides a record of both the **process** and **decision**. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions. Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.
- whether or not equality, diversity, cohesion and integration is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an impact assessment.

<b>Organisation:</b> Rodillian Multi- Academy Trust	<b>Department responsible for the Policy:</b> Saira Luffman
<b>Lead Person:</b> Head of School, BBG Academy	<b>Contact Number:</b> 01924872252

<b>1. Title: Looked After Children Policy</b>
Is this a:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy
<b>If other, please specify</b>

<b>2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening</b>

<b>3. Relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration</b>		
<i>All the Trust's policies affect service users, employees or the wider community. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration. The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are. When considering these questions think about age, carers, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and any other relevant characteristics (for example socio-economic status, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background and education or skills levels).</i>		
<b>Questions</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Is there an existing or likely differential impact for the different equality characteristics?		x

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Have there been or likely to be any public concerns about the Policy or proposal?		x
Could the proposal affect how services are organised, provided, located and by whom?		x
Could the proposal affect our workforce or employment practices?		X
Does the proposal involve or will it have an impact on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment</li> <li>• Advancing equality of opportunity</li> <li>• Fostering good relations</li> </ul>		x

<b>4. Considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration</b>		
<i>If you can demonstrate you have considered how your proposals impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you have carried out an impact assessment. Please provide specific details for all three areas below (use the prompts for guidance).</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope of the proposal – staff and students.</li> <li>• Who is likely to be affected – staff, students, parents, the community.</li> <li>• Equality related information – is held on individual academy and Trust records, payroll records and gathered through Equal Opportunities Monitoring Forms.</li> <li>• Gaps in information and plans to address - the Trust intends to work to further improve processes relating to the gathering of equality related information across the organisation.</li> <li>• Consultation and engagement activities with those likely to be affected – ongoing feedback from staff, applicants, candidates and HR, the Policy is made available to staff and is on our website.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Key findings</b></li> </ul> <p>We have considered the potential positive and negative impact on different equality characteristics in relation to the Policy and do not believe that any groups will be adversely affected. The HR Team is vigilant in adhering to the appropriate legislation in relation to protected characteristics and to preventing discrimination. Managers are supported and trained in relation to these areas.</p> <p>The Policy has taken into account religious, racial and gender-specific clothing requirements and those of staff with disabilities in line with the Equality Act.</p> <p>We have considered the perception that the proposal could benefit one group at the expense of another and we do not believe that the Policy could be perceived to be discriminatory with regards to its wording or format.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Actions</b></li> </ul> <p>The Trust will continue to promote positive impact and remove/reduce negative impact through the application of this Policy within the organisation.</p>		

<b>5. Governance, ownership and approval</b>		
Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Job title</b>	<b>Date</b>

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**6. Publishing**

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

<b>Date screening completed</b>	January 2020
<b>Date agreed at Trust Board</b>	20 January 2020