

Looked After Children Policy

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Table of contents

Table of contents	2
Statutory framework	3
Related policies and documents	3
Definitions	3
Elliot Foundation Academies Trust Vision and Values	5
Policy statement and objectives	6
The role of the Principal	6
The role of the Trust	6
The role of the Designated Teacher for looked-after children and previously looked-after children	7
Admissions	8
Personal Education Plan (PEP)	8
Additional Educational Needs (e.g. SEN, G&T, Attendance & Behaviour)	8
Information Sharing	9
Exclusions	9

Statutory framework

From February 2018, statutory guidance ‘Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children’ from the Department for Education, issued under sections 20(4) and 20A(4) of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 means that the governing bodies of maintained schools, academy proprietors and the designated staff member at maintained schools and academies must have regard to it when promoting the educational attainment of looked-after and previously looked-after children.

Related policies and documents

- [Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children](#), DfE February 2018
- [The Role and responsibilities of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children](#), DfE February 2018
- [Improving the Attainment of Looked After Children in Primary Schools Guidance for Schools](#), DfE 2009
- [Information Sharing - advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers](#), July 2018
- [Children and Young Persons Act 2008](#)
- [TEFAT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#), Sept 2019
- [Pupil Premium, funding and accountability for schools](#), updated June 2019

Definitions

- Where the word 'Trust' is used in this document it refers to The Elliot Foundation Academies Trust.
- 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 fall into four main groups:
 - - children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
 - - children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
 - - children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
 - - children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21).
- The term ‘In Care’ refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the Court under Section 31 of the Children Act 1989 - they may live with Foster Carers, in a Children’s Home, in a Residential School, with relatives or with parents under supervision.

- Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are ‘accommodated’ by the local authority under Section 20 of the Children Act – they may live in foster care, in a children’s home or in a residential school.
- A child who is ‘previously looked-after’ is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales 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

Elliot Foundation Academies Trust Vision and Values

Vision

The Elliot Foundation was created as a safe place for children and teachers where all are nurtured to achieve beyond even their own expectations. Our motto, "Where children believe they can because teachers know they can" reflects our conviction that raising expectations for all children and teachers is at the heart of a successful and inclusive society.

Values

For children

We help children to discover themselves and aspire beyond any limitations that their context might appear to place upon them. We help them understand that they can be, 'Heroes of their own lives' building the foundations for healthy and successful lives.

For schools

In addition to the essential functional skills of reading, writing and mathematics, children need to learn how to learn and to believe that they can continue to do so. They must also possess the critical thinking skills to sift fact from fiction to be able to think for themselves, freely and creatively.

For success

To thrive, whatever their chosen path, children need confidence, curiosity and commitment. We will nurture these attitudes across all their learning experiences

For communities

Children at Elliot schools will be raised with an awareness of the world around them and their role in shaping a better future through volunteering and contributing in their communities.

1. Policy statement and objectives

- 1.1. The objective of the policy is to promote the educational achievement and welfare of looked-after pupils and previously looked-after pupils as defined under section 52 of the Children Act 2004.
- 1.2. This policy outlines our approach to meeting the requirements set out in The Children and Young Persons Act 2008 and 'Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children' DfE February 2018.

2. The role of the Principal

- 2.1. The Principal has lead responsibility for the educational provision and achievement of children looked-after and previously looked-after on roll. The Principal must:
 - Appoint a Designated Teacher for looked-after children and previously looked-after children even if there are none currently on the school roll
 - Ensure that the Designated Teacher has relevant and current training in order to ensure that the role is fulfilled to a high standard
 - Ensure that the Designated Teacher is in regular contact with the LA's Virtual School Head and receives appropriate support and guidance from the Virtual School Team
 - Meet regularly with the Designated Teacher to monitor attendance, progress and wellbeing of looked-after children and previously looked-after children and be informed of any barriers to learning
 - Ensure the Pupil Premium funding is used effectively to support and accelerate the achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children

3. The role of the Trust

- 3.1. Provide guidance through Trust wide related policies and documents (listed previously)
- 3.2. Monitor the provision, achievement and wellbeing of looked-after children and previously looked-after children through regular monitoring namely: annual TEFAT Safeguarding Audit completion, regular visits by Progress Partners and/or Regional Directors, monitoring of Academy Improvement Plans and self evaluation, ongoing TEFAT Strategic Risk Register and Assembly live data analysis

- 3.3. Liaise with the Principal, Designated Teacher and LA Virtual School Head/Team to ensure funding is allocated and used effectively

4. The role of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children

- 4.1. The designated teacher should have lead responsibility for helping school staff understand the things that affect how looked after children learn and achieve. The designated teacher should:
- Ensure attendance at appropriate training and Local Authority Virtual School updates
 - Promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how looked-after children and previously looked-after children learn
 - Be a source of advice for staff about differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children and in making full use of Assessment for Learning
 - Ensure children new to the school are supported and inducted appropriately and assessed in a timely manner
 - Make sure that looked-after children and previously looked-after children are prioritised in one-to-one tuition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home
 - Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of the child's personal education plan (PEP) within the school and liaise with outside agencies
 - Make sure the young person has a voice in setting learning targets
 - Have ultimate responsibility for leading the process of target setting for individual looked-after children and previously looked-after children in school and rigorously tracking their wellbeing and attainment progress
 - Implement and monitor pupil premium arrangements in accordance with DfE guidance to promote achievement
 - Liaise with LA Virtual School Head/Team and carers/parents to agree how pupil premium funding will be used
 - Coordinate and oversee record keeping for all looked-after children and previously looked-after children in school
 - Liaise and cooperate with appropriate partners and agencies, in particular the Virtual School Team in the Local Authority to support their role as corporate parents ensuring appropriate education provision is in place
 - Ensure any emerging concerns are followed up in a timely manner such as changes in behaviour, attendance issues
 - Values the views of carers and parents, corporate parents, residential care workers and other specialists/agencies
- 4.2. The named Designated Teacher for looked-after children and previously looked-after children for TEFAT is Caroline Oliver, Regional Director for East Anglia. The Deputy Designated Teacher is Travis Latham, Senior Regional Director for West Midlands. The TEFAT Trustee for looked- after children and previously looked-after children is Sue Nath.

5. Admissions

- 5.1. Academies will prioritise looked-after children in our Admissions Policies
- 5.2. Academies will ensure that looked-after children are admitted promptly after a request for a place has been made so as to avoid unnecessary disruption to the child's schooling
- 5.3. Request records from the pupil's previous school and promptly arrange a meeting with carer/parent/Social Worker as appropriate. This will provide information to inform the Personal Education Plan. An appropriate school induction will take place

6. Personal Education Plan (PEP)

- 6.1. All looked-after children (LAC) will have a current PEP
- 6.2. If a LAC joins the school without a PEP, the designated teacher should pursue the matter with the child's Social Worker who has a statutory duty to initiate the PEP
- 6.3. Academy will work alongside the assigned Social Worker to contribute to the education content of the PEP
- 6.4. 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

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

- 7.1. Any special educational needs must be promptly identified bearing in mind that looked-after children and previously looked-after children may have missed schooling
- 7.2. 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
- 7.3. Suitable learning support utilising the pupil premium funding, where appropriate, must be provided to secure this provision
- 7.4. The child's progress must be tracked carefully to evaluate which interventions are most effective in helping the child close any gaps in learning

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

8. Information Sharing

- 8.1. 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
- 8.2. 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

9. Exclusions

- 9.1. It is important to be especially sensitive in relation to exclusions where looked-after children and previously looked-after children are concerned. Every practicable means should be tried to maintain the child in school. In school we will find viable alternatives to fixed term/permanent exclusions in conjunction with the Local Authority. Exclusion of these children should be an absolute last resort.