

Cedar Mount Academy

Looked-after and Previously Looked- after children Policy

2022-24



Cedar Mount Academy
BRIGHT FUTURES EDUCATIONAL TRUST

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The school is dedicated to providing a positive, varied and enriched educational experience for all looked after and previously looked-after children and strives to ensure a high level of progress and achievement from our looked-after and previously looked-after cohort.

Children “looked-after by a local authority” and those previously looked-after by an authority are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational underachievement when compared with their peers. Cedar Mount Academy is dedicated to the personal development and welfare of all looked after and previously looked after children, and endeavour to support students in fulfilling their potential.

Nomenclature: throughout the document the abbreviation CLA will be used to signify children who are currently or previously looked after

1 AIMS

This policy for aims

- To promote and support the educational achievement and welfare of children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after.
- To ensure all staff are informed of the specific needs of children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after students.
- To ensure equality of opportunity for children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after.
- To achieve continuity and stability for children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after.
- To involve children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after students in their education.
- To support children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after students into appropriate further education, employment or training.
- Ensure the statutory guidance in the following documents is implemented in school:
 - ‘The designated teacher for looked after and children who were previously looked after: Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities’ (February 2018)
 - Promoting the education of children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after: Statutory guidance for local authorities to support children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after's aspirations to achieve in further and higher education (February 2018)

2 DEFINITION OF CHILDREN WHO ARE LOOKED AFTER AND CHILDREN WHO WERE PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER

2.1 CHILDREN WHO ARE LOOKED AFTER (CLA)

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by the local authority if s/he, is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than twenty-four hours by the Local Authority. They fall into four main groups:

- i. Children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents.
- ii. Children who are the subject of a legal care order, or interim care order.
- iii. Children who are the subject of an emergency order for their protection.

The term 'in care' refers only to children who are subject to a legal care order by the courts 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 1989. They may live in foster care, in a Children's Home or in a residential school. All these groups are said to be 'children who are looked after'.

2.2 PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

A previously looked after child 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 arrangement order. The Designated Teacher will satisfy themselves that the child is eligible for support by asking the child's parents for evidence of previously looked after status. Where parents are unable to provide clear evidence of their child's status, the designated teacher will use their discretion and contact the Virtual School Head (VSH), if necessary.

3 ENTITLEMENT OF CHILDREN WHO ARE LOOKED AFTER AND CHILDREN WHO WERE PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER

All children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after students will be entitled to:

- i. A dedicated mentor, in addition to a designated teacher and pastoral support.
- ii. Priority entry to extra-curricular clubs and activities.
- iii. Priority access to careers advice.
- iv. Priority places on educational school trips and visits.
- v. Funding from Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)

4 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

A designated teacher for children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after will be named in school. The Designated Teacher will:

- i. Be central point of initial contact within the school and manage the process of how the school engages with others (e.g. social workers, virtual school heads), works in a joined up way and minimises disruption to the student's education.
- ii. Act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after.
- iii. Ensure that the voice of the child is always heard.
- iv. Ensure that each student has a known and preferred member of staff in school that they can talk to.
- v. Cultivate and maintain a culture of high aspiration for children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after.
- vi. Be an advocate for children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after within the school.
- vii. Be aware of the social, emotional and mental health issues that children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after may face and draw upon specialist services e.g. counselling services and Educational Psychologists, where necessary.

- viii. Track and monitor achievement, progress, attendance and punctuality of children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after.
- ix. Actively encourage and promote out of hours learning and extra-curricular activities for children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after.
- x. Ensure that children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after receive priority support for their future plans, including careers advice and guidance and financial information.
- xi. Work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead regarding any safeguarding concerns.
- xii. Work closely with the SENCO regarding any individual needs of students.
- xiii. Communicate with parents/carers on entry to the school to establish whether students have 'previously-looked after' status and are therefore eligible for PP+.
- xiv. Offer advice and strategies to staff to ensure all children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after have high levels of achievement and attendance.
- xv. Ensure children who are looked after or children who were previously looked after are a priority for appropriate and quality one-to-one support, if required.
- xvi. Ensure confidentiality for individual students, sharing confidential and personal information on a need to know basis, bearing in mind the wishes of the individual student.
- xvii. Ensure that all children who are looked after have an a PEP (Personal Education Plan) that is quality assured as 'good' or better and that it is completed before their first statutory LAC Review from going into care and ensure that the student contributes to the plan.
- xviii. Lead on how the PEP is used as a tool in school to make sure the student's progress towards education targets is monitored. Ensure that the PEP is updated and available in time for the local authority review of the student's wider care plan.
- xix. Ensure that the PEP includes information about how the allocated pupil premium plus funding will be used to support and raise attainment, attendance and participation in school life.
- xx. Liaise with the VSH to agree how funding can most effectively be used to improve attainment for children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after.
- xxi. Ensure that PP+ funding for children who were previously looked after is managed and used appropriately to support and raise attainment, attendance and participation in school life.
- xxii. Attend and contribute information to statutory reviews of the care plan for looked after children.
- xxiii. Ensure all records/PEPs are kept in accordance with safeguarding procedures.
- xxiv. Attend relevant training about meeting the needs of children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after.
- xxv. Convene a multi-agency meeting if a children who are looked after or children who were previously looked after student is experiencing difficulties, or is at risk of exclusion.
- xxvi. Ensure speedy transfer of information, records and controlled assessment, in the case of a transfer to another educational placement.
- xxvii. Maintain links with the Virtual School Head if a child becomes previously-children who are looked after.
- xxviii. Report, at least annually, to the Governing body and inform relevant policy and practice development.
- xxix. Ensure that the needs of looked after and previously looked after children are central to all school policies.
- xxx. Promote good home-school links with carers, parents and guardians.

5 RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF

As with all students, have high aspirations and celebrate the educational and personal achievement of children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after.

Be aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation experienced by children who are looked after and previously-children who are looked after.

Be familiar with guidance on the education of children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings.

Liaise with the Designated Teacher when a children who are looked after or children who were previously looked after child is experiencing difficulty.

5.1 SUBJECT LEADERS SHOULD:

- i. Track children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after as key cohort.
- ii. Prioritise children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after for intervention and support.
- iii. Keep the Designated Teacher informed on student progress.

5.2 SENIOR LEADERS AND DEDICATED PASTORAL STAFF SHOULD:

- i. Provide additional support for children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after, where needed.
- ii. Keep the Designated Teacher informed of any pastoral concerns affecting the welfare, achievement and attendance of children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after.

6 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GOVERNING BODIES

Nominate a governor with responsibility for children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after who liaises with the Designated Teacher. In this school, the safeguarding link governor has responsibility for children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after.

The Governing Body should:

- i. Ensure there is a named, Designated Teacher for children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after who is allocated time to fulfil their role with children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after.
- ii. Ensure that the Designated Teacher is a fully qualified teacher who has completed the appropriate induction period and is working as a teacher in the school.
- iii. Ensure that the Designated Teacher is a fully qualified teacher in the school who has completed the appropriate induction period and has suitable seniority, professional experience and status.
- iv. Ensure the Designated Teacher undertakes relevant training.
- v. Receive regular reports from the Designated Teacher regarding attendance, progress and impact of PP+ funding
- vi. Ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritises children who are looked after and previously looked after children according to the latest Admissions Code of Conduct.

- vii. Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after.
- viii. Ensure that the school's policies and procedures give children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after equal access in respect of:
 - a. National Curriculum and public examinations.
 - b. Out of school learning and extra-curricular activities.
 - c. Work experience and careers guidance.
- ix. Review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually, and at least every three years.

7 ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

The school will ensure children who are looked after and children who were previously looked after are prioritised in the school's over-subscription criteria.

On admission, records will be requested from the children who are looked after or children who were previously looked after's previous school.

A meeting will be held with carers/parents/social workers, as appropriate, to complete the baseline information to inform the child's PEP.

A home/school agreement will be drawn up with the primary carer.

An appropriate school induction will take place.

8 ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES.

The DFE Guidance is clear that the Pupil Premium + Grant (PPG) for CLA, must be used by schools for the benefit of the child's educational needs as outlined in their PEP. The impact of the PPG+ must be measurable and evidenced.

9 TRAINING

The Principal, Designated Teacher and Vice Principal in charge of CPD will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the latest regulations and practices outlined in good practice and national guidelines documentation.

10 NAMED STAFF

The following staff are responsible for the development of the PEP for each CLA pupil.

- Principal: Kal Hodgson [overall responsibility]
- Designated teacher: Simon Platt [Operational responsibility]
- Deputy designated safeguarding lead: Maggie Prescott [co-ordination of PEP reviews]
- Assistant SENCO: Joanne Kay [co-ordination of PEP reviews]