



CORNWALL EDUCATION
LEARNING TRUST

Designated Teacher for looked after and previously looked after pupils.

Adopted by (body): **Full Board**
Approved (date): September 2022
Review date: September 2023

Context

At Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT) we believe that all Children in Care (CiC) and Post Looked After Children (PLAC) should have equitable access to excellent educational provision and achieve in line or better than all children from Cornwall and children nationally.

CELT aim to be champions and advocates for CiC and PLAC and will take a proactive approach to support their success and achievement, recognising that we have a vital role to play in promoting children and young people's social and emotional development and enhancing life outcomes.

Our Aim

To provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a steadfast belief in the abilities and potential of all children.

To support our looked-after and previously looked-after children and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential and enjoy learning and close the gap - bring the educational attainments of our CiC and PLAC in line or better to those of their peers.

To fulfil our schools' role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our looked-after and previously looked-after children by asking 'would this be good enough for my child?'
Ensure appropriate use of Pupil Premium Plus* to support education

Make sure that they have access to education appropriate to their age, ability and emotional understanding. This includes access to a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum.

Each school will:

- Nominate a Designated Teacher (DT) for our looked-after and previously looked after children who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them. They will have QTS and ideally be a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Nominate a school governor to ensure that the needs of our looked-after and previously looked-after children are prioritised at a school management level. The school governor will also support the Designated Teacher (DT) in their role as advocate and educational champion.
- Support the Designated Teacher (DT) in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend, at a minimum, statutory training provided by Cornwall Virtual School and external agencies.
- Ensure parents, carers and guardians who are aware of the identity of the designated teacher, how to contact them and what they are responsible for.

Legislation and statutory guidance

- School staff and Governors are aware of the 'Promoting the Education of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children', Feb 2018 dfe.
- There is a duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of cic and PLAC, under Section 52 of the Children's Act 2004 (still remains in place despite Act updates).
- There is a dedicated Governor or committee to champion and monitor the work of the school in supporting its CiC and PLAC as a part of a larger group of vulnerable children.
- Take a proactive approach in co-operating with, and supporting, the relevant Local Authority with regard to the education of cic and PLAC attending their school.
- Designated teachers and staff are aware of and enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively with the full support of the Head Teacher.
- The Children Act (2004) places a duty to safeguard children in care, to promote their educational achievement and to ensure each child can "achieve and reach their full potential."

- The collective responsibility of Local Authorities and schools to achieve this are set out under six principles:
 - prioritising Education
 - maintaining high expectations and aspirations
 - inclusion – changing and challenging attitudes
 - achieving continuity and stability
 - early intervention and priority action
 - listening to the child's voice at all stages of care and education planning.
- Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT) believes that, in partnership with Cornwall County Council, we have a special duty as Corporate Parents to safeguard and promote the education of CiC and PLAC

Key personnel

- Designated teacher for CiC and PLAC: Rachel Nile
- Second contact for CiC and PLAC if DT unavailable: Claire Bunting
- Nominated governor: Verity Wendon

Roles and responsibilities

The Designated Teacher (DT) will:

- Ensure the child receives a copy of their PEP.
- Act as an advocate for looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- Have high expectations of looked-after and previously looked-after children's involvement in learning and educational progress
- Monitor the educational progress of all looked-after and previously looked-after children to ensure they are reaching their potential and feel a part of the school community.
- Maintain an up-to-date record of all looked-after children who are on the school roll. This will include:
 - status i.e. care order or accommodated
 - type of Placement i.e. foster, respite, residential.
 - Name of Social Worker, area office, email address and telephone number.
 - daily contact and numbers e.g. name of parent or carer or key worker in children's home.
 - SEN Code of Practice
 - Child Protection information when appropriate
 - baseline information and all test results
 - attendance figures
 - exclusions
- Ensure that there is a termly Personal Education Plan (PEP) for each pupil which includes appropriate targets, the child's views and above information. This must be compatible with the pupil's Care Plan and where applicable include any other school plan, e.g. EHCP, SEND Support Arrangements etc. Each PEP meeting will be attended by either the DT or staff member with delegated responsibility with all possible sections of the PEP completed before the meeting date and uploaded onto SIMS in the welfare section.
- Ensure that if/when the pupil transfers school all relevant information is forwarded to the receiving school as a matter of priority. Where possible, the DT will attend the first PEP at the new school to assist transition and target setting.
- Ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when looked-after children are underachieving and have early interventions to improve this in line with existing school policy.
- Ensure that an appropriate staff member attends reviews and/or prepares a written report which promotes the continuity and stability of their education.

- Swiftly intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement or absence from school, taking action to communicate any difficulties as soon as possible.
- Be the named point of contact for staff seeking information on the educational, social, emotional and wellbeing needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- Be the named contact for liaising with carers, Children's Services and the Virtual School, ensuring the speedy transfer of information between key partners.
- Provide a programme of transition support, as appropriate, for any pupil leaving school in the middle or end of the academic year.
- Present regular reports to School Governors, including an Annual Report.
- Access statutory training events organised by the Virtual School (as a minimum requirement) and other external agencies. This includes ensuring all school staff are kept up to date with current legislation including DfE Statutory Guidance found here and its implication for the school in respect of looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- Cascade training to school staff and Governors as appropriate.
- Attend PEPs in the summer term for those who are going to transition to our school.

All staff will:

- Ensure that any looked-after or previously looked-after children are supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained.
- Be familiar with, and respond appropriately to, requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation as needed for review meetings.
- Ensure that looked-after or previously looked-after children are provided with a supportive environment so they are able to achieve stability within the school setting.
- As with all children, have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of looked-after or previously looked-after children.

The nominated School Governor will:

- Ensure the appointment of a fully-qualified (QTS) Designated Teacher.
- Champion the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children and young people, supporting the work of the Designated Teacher by ensuring they have access to all support and training needed to fulfil their role.
- Monitor the school's policies and ensure they are effective in reflecting the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of legal requirements and guidance on the education of children in care, including the DfE Statutory Guidance on Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children (publishing.service.gov.uk).
- Examine whether the school is making the fullest possible use of all available resources, including Pupil Premium Plus funding, to maximise progress and attainment.
- Ensure that looked-after and previously looked-after students are placed on school roll without delay, recognising the importance of re-establishing school stability for care experienced children and young people.

Whole school approach to supporting looked after or previously looked after children:

- Each school celebrates the achievements of CiC and PLAC.
- Teachers should have high expectations of the young person, encouraging achievement and ambition.
- Each CiC or PLAC pupil will have a special, trusted adult in school that is able to take time to listen to them and have access to support and counselling in school if required.
- Ensure there is clarity in relation to who is and is not allowed to collect the child from school.

- All teachers within the school are made aware of the needs of LAC and PLAC and actively promote their best interests.
- Adults in school will need to be sensitive to the young person's wishes over what is known and by whom regarding their care status.
- Effective assessment, recording and reporting practices are established.
- Ensure that systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about CiC and PLAC.
- The designated teacher ensures that positive messages about behaviour and achievement are shared within the school and between school, carers and outside agencies, and that high educational expectations are maintained.
- A nurturing and trauma informed approach and understanding of ACES will help to support CiC and PLAC.
- Support the engagement of CiC and PLAC in out of school hours learning.
- Staff work in partnership with carers and agencies and parents (where appropriate).
- Support carers to value educational achievement and improve attendance.
- Teachers can help the individual begin to feel that they are fitting in and offer them a safe haven and a sympathetic ear in a crisis.
- Staff are aware that being or becoming 'Child in Care' has a major impact on children's lives and that when considering children's learning and or behaviour, due consideration will be given.
- Teachers can be aware of a variety of emotional issues and trauma that may undermine the young person's ability to engage in the learning process, including feelings of loss, rejection, isolation, confusion and low self-esteem.
- Teachers need to be aware of possible unresolved feelings the young person may have about their own families and siblings, in addition to insecurity over their current homes and carers.

Special Educational needs:

- Any special educational needs are quickly identified and appropriate provision is made – early identification and action is key.
- Ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when CiC and PLAC are underachieving and have early interventions to improve this.
- Contact needs to be made with the Virtual School for CiC and PLAC as soon as concerns are raised.
- If the child or young person has a statement of special educational need or EHC Plan, then ensure the annual review coincides with one of the six monthly Statutory Care Reviews / termly PEP meetings; dates can be obtained from the social worker.
- Please refer to SEN Code of Practice for further information.

Admissions and transitions:

- CiC and PLAC have priority on school admission
- Prioritise CiC and PLAC within school's own admissions procedures and admit students as quickly as possible, recognising the importance of re-establishing school stability for CiC and PLAC.
- Adhere to Cornwall Council School Admission protocol.
- Awareness of 'Placement of pupils out of their chronological year group', Cornwall Council guide.
- Ensure that on admission or transfer all relevant information is obtained at the outset.
- We will forward appropriate documents, in a timely fashion, to any receiving school at point of transition where the receiving school is made known.
- Make every effort to provide continuity of schooling and educational experience.
- CiC are not part of the Fair Access process

Attendance:

- Send weekly report to Virtual School.
- Where attendance is a problem, a first day of absence procedure needs to be established.
- Inform Education Welfare Officer / Social Worker / Virtual School if any concerns about attendance.
- Acknowledge attendance in any education meetings, celebrating success and setting realistic targets if it is a concern.
- If a child is on a protection plan, ensure Social Worker and Carer are contacted if child is absent from school.
- CiC and PLAC should not be taken out of school for holidays, only for 'exceptional circumstances'.
- There should be no unauthorised absences for CiC and PLAC.
- Safety plans to be put in place where a CiC/ PLAC is on a reduced timetable or Children Missing Education or Children Missing Out of Education (CME/CMOE).

Multi-agency liaison:

- The Designated Teacher will need to liaise closely with carers, birth parents (if appropriate) and the pupil's social worker on a variety of issues including homework, kit and equipment required. It is important that positive messages about behaviour and achievement are shared.
- There should be a well-planned and co-ordinated approach to meeting the young person's educational and social needs, for example, whether potentially disruptive changes in school can be prevented.
- There needs to be clear understanding about the role and responsibility of school staff in relation to the young person and the roles and responsibilities of the other professionals involved.
- School staff will need to share positive perceptions and high expectations of the young person with other professionals but especially with the young person.
- The school should be aware of and sensitive to the appropriate role of the natural parents.
- Designated teachers should ensure that requests from the LA for statistical information held by the school are completed and returned on time to comply with statutory obligations.
- Encourage each child in care to access out of hours learning activities realising the positive impact this could have on their self-esteem and learning.
- Support the young person to have the opportunity to participate fully in planning and decision making.

At risk:

- Schools to be made aware/share information if they feel a CiC and PLAC is at risk in any way.
- Schools to be aware and have a safety plan in place with regards to absconding, going missing and or at risk of exploitation.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Exclusions
- SEN