



Looked After Children Policy

BASE Academy Trust

Policy Reviewed:	September 2023
Next Review:	September 2024
Signature of Chair of Trust Board: Craig Graham	Signature of Executive Headteacher: Lisa Whittaker

BASE Academy Trust understands that Looked After pupils both nationally and locally are known to significantly underachieve, have poorer educational outcomes and remain at greater risk of educational and social exclusion compared with their non-looked after peers. Therefore, in partnership with children's social care services we play a major role in ensuring that Looked After pupils are encouraged to achieve, to be healthy, to stay safe, to enjoy their lives and to have high expectations of their lives to come.

Whilst each school in the Trust is responsible for their own pupils and each has a designated teacher, and dedicated local governor who identify and champion the needs of Looked After young people, raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them, and ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible. Their approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children is based on the following principles:

Every looked after pupil has an up to date Personal Education Plan (PEP) which will:

- Be compiled within a multi-agency PEP meeting
- Monitor and promote good attendance;
- Involve the pupil in its planning
- Maintain high expectations for looked after pupils
- Identify areas of concern in the child's education and work proactively to address them
- In partnership with pupils, social workers and carers ensure the LAC Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) is spent efficiently and effectively on individual looked after pupils and that both its use and its effect is recorded within PEP minutes.
- Promote inclusion by challenging and changing stereotyped attitudes towards looked after children and the care system.
- Provide stability and continuity within pupils education.
- Intervene early in concerns and ensure all partner agencies are informed and involved.
- Be aware that looked after children may be experiencing emotional upset in their life
- Encourage them to seek practical and emotional support within the school, listen to them and if necessary signpost them to find additional help and support.
- Avoid permanently excluding looked after pupils by ensuring that all agencies have delivered their services and been fully consulted prior to consideration of such an exclusion.

The Trust, the local governing boards and each school is committed to helping every Looked After Child to achieve the highest levels they can, including supporting and promoting aspirations to achieve in their further and higher education.

Within each school in the trust, achievement will be measured by monitoring classroom attainment, achievements and attendance. These elements will be reported via the PEP and the Virtual School Portal. Schools will respond promptly and accurately to requests for attainment data and other relevant information requested by the Bolton LAC Virtual Schools.

Each school closely tracks provision and achievement of both looked after and previously looked after pupils. This is coordinated by the Designated teacher.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE KEY PROFESSIONALS

The Trust holds overall responsibility for the achievement of Looked After Pupils. Through regular contact and monitoring, the local governing board in each school ensures that all statutory requirements are fulfilled and each school is meeting the needs of its looked after pupils. The Local Governing Board reports its findings and any recommendations to the Trust.

THE LOCAL GOVERNING BOARDS OF EACH SCHOOL:

- Identify a nominated governor to represent the interests of Looked After Children and ensure that the governor is fully trained on the requirements of their role and associated legal issues.
- Be aware of and understand the [statutory guidance](#) applicable to the education of Looked After Children.
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335964/Promoting_the_educational_achievement_of_looked_after_children_Final_23-....pdf
- Ensure all school policies and procedures support looked after children's needs including the schools admissions and over subscription policy.
- Request performance data on Looked After pupils at every governors meeting
- Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school by looked after children
- Ensure that the school has an identified Designated LAC Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher has enough resource and authority to carry out his or her responsibilities. (It is strongly recommended that this person should be a member of the Senior Management Team). (*Free training for Designated Teachers will be available through the Bolton Virtual School designated teacher forum.*)
- Commission from the Designated Teacher, an annual report setting out the achievements/attendance etc of the schools looked after pupil population.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HEAD OF SCHOOL:

The Head of School has the following responsibilities. Where they are also the Designated Teacher they also have the responsibilities defined by that role.

- Identify a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children, whose role is set out as below. It is essential that another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or be away from school for any length of time.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusion of Looked After Children and take immediate action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Be able to report on the progress, attendance and achievements of Looked After Children.
- Ensure that staff in the school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related legislation and guidance.
- Report on the use of Pupil Premium for Looked After/ previously looked after pupils and the impact this has had.

THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER:

Government Guidance 2014 states that the statutory role of the designated teacher should be delivered by "someone with sufficient authority to make things happen... [who] should be an advocate for Looked After Children, assessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them" Designated LAC Teachers will:

- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their Carer, using the Personnel Education Plan to plan for their transition in consultation with the child's Carer, their social worker and associated professionals.
- Ensure that a Personal Education Planning meeting is held and actions from it inform the statutory care review.
- Track and monitor the academic progress of looked after children within the school and target support appropriately. Ensure relevant academic monitoring information is uploaded termly into the Bolton Virtual Schools Portal.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing sensitive personal information with teaching staff on a need to know basis.
- Encourage Looked After Children to join in extra-curricular activities and access out of school learning opportunities.
- Ensure (when appropriate) the attendance of pupils at their PEP and Looked After review meetings.

- Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of Looked After Children and informing the delivery of any sensitive course work (such as Family Tree lessons.)
- Liaise with all professionals and agencies who are working with the pupil
- Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and – if the pupil changes school – to a new school.
- Be pro-active in supporting transitions and associated planning when moving to a new phase in education.
- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life.
- Be aware that many Looked After Pupils say they are bullied, so will actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy.
- Ensure that requests for information that come from the Virtual Schools are responded to quickly.
- Ensure awareness of available grants and bursaries available to Looked After Children
- Ensure that all school staff have relevant training for Looked After Children's needs and of this policy, to enable them to positively promote their education.
- Act as a champion for Looked After Children and advocate for them in school.
- In consultation with the pupils Social Worker, ensure an informed Personal Education Planning meeting is held within 20 days of the child entering the school, a plan is designed, implemented and regularly reviewed twice per year for every Looked After Child, (*in line with Bolton's guidance on Personal Education Plans.*)

HOW WE WILL ENSURE THE EFFECTIVE USE OF FUNDING

The Pupil Premium will be clearly identifiable within the budget.

The Head of School, will decide in consultation with the social worker, how the Pupil Premium is spent for the benefit of the entitled pupils. Funding will be allocated following a needs analysis which will identify priority groups or individuals

The school will be accountable for how it has used the additional funding to support the achievement of those pupils covered by the funding.

The Executive Head teacher and Head of School will report to the trustees/local governors, social care, parents and carers on how effective the intervention has been in achieving its aims.

We will track the impact of the strategies put into place through the funding to ensure that we can show the value that has been added to the education of the entitled children.