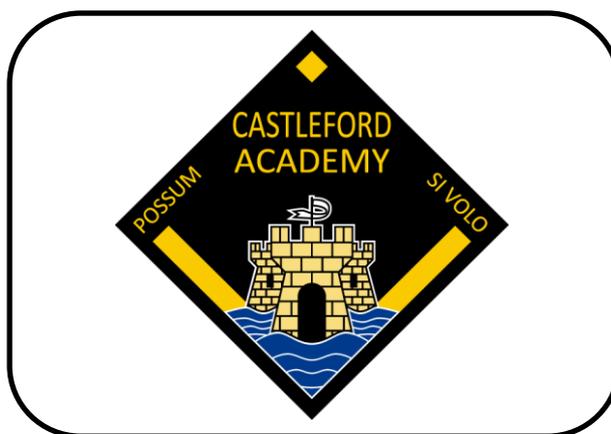




Castleford Academy



LAC (Looked After Children) Policy

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1. Definition, Background & Aims

For the purposes of this policy a 'looked after child' (LAC) is one who is looked after within the meaning of Section 22 of the Children Act 1989. A previously looked after child is one who is no longer looked after in England 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.

Castleford Academy recognise that 'Looked After Children' and 'Previously Looked After Children' may have very specific needs and may be coping with trauma, abuse or rejection, and are likely to experience personal distress and uncertainty.

Castleford Academy will ensure that Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) have access to excellent educational provision and are prioritised for additional support through academy-based interventions to achieve as well as possible, in accordance with the 'DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children' statutory guidance for schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children - 28th February 2018.

The academy recognises that education plays vital role in providing a stable base for LAC pupils and in promoting their academic, social and emotional development. The academy promotes whole staff training in their specific needs, so that all adults at this academy are sensitive to the barriers to learning that LAC pupils experience and feel able to support the children discretely and confidentially, as needs arise. The academy understands the need to work in a 'relationship-based' way so that children looked after and previously looked after feel valued and a part of our academy community. Our aim is to champion the needs of LAC to ensure they succeed both academically and personally.

2. Academy Commitment

Nationally, 'Looked After Children' (LAC) and 'Previously Looked After Children' (PLAC) significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Their academic and social progress is likely to be affected by their experiences, and compounded by instability in their personal circumstances. Helping LAC and PLAC pupils succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority in our academy.

Castleford Academy recognises that LAC and PLAC pupils can experience specific and significant disadvantage within education, and are committed to ensuring they reach their potential in all areas. The academy is aware that LAC and PLAC pupils may have specific difficulties in transport and attendance, doing homework, getting parental consent for activities, obtaining funding for extra activities, obtaining correct uniform and equipment, as well as stigma about their circumstances. Therefore, the academy is committed to enhancing the achievement and welfare of LAC and PLAC in a variety of ways listed below;

- Having high expectations for the child and ensuring equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Recording, monitoring, and improving the academic achievement of the child in addition to their health and wellbeing.
- Achieving stability and continuity.
- Prioritising reduction in exclusions and promoting attendance.
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes.
- Promoting good communication between all those involved in the child's life and listening to the child.
- Maintaining and respecting the child's confidentiality wherever possible.
- Ensuring staff awareness of, and sensitivity to, the difficulties and educational disadvantages of Looked After Children.
- Ensuring an appropriately trained Designated Teacher (Ms Page) is appointed, who will be responsible for all Looked After children.



- All LAC and PLAC will have a termly Personal Education Plan (PEP) drawn up between the academy, the child, and the child's social worker, which will identify the child's individual needs and the support they require

3. Roles & Responsibilities

3.1. The Governing Body

- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of LAC and PLAC pupils.
- Ensure the academy has an overview of the needs and progress of LAC and PLAC pupils.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of LAC and PLAC pupils.
- Ensure the academy's other policies and procedures support their needs.
- Ensure that the academy has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Support the Head teacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of LAC and PLAC pupils are recognised and met.
- Receive a report once a year setting out: The number of LAC and PLAC pupils on roll at the academy, their attendance (as a discreet group and compared to other pupils), their educational outcome and progress, the number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any), and the destinations of pupils who leave the academy. The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.

3.2. The Headteacher

- Ensure that the Designated Teacher for LAC pupils has qualified teacher status, appropriate seniority in the leadership team and time and experience to fulfil this statutory role and undertake sufficient training to remain fully informed.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusions of LAC and PLAC pupils and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Ensure that staff in the academy receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.
- Ensure that Pupil Premium funding is used to good effect.

3.3. The Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher for Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After is Ms Page. She is an Assistant Headteacher and a Designated Safeguarding Lead, and she will promote improved educational life chances for LAC and PLAC pupils by:

- Ensuring that the LAC or PLAC pupils have access to quality first teaching and learning.
- Tracking the progress of LAC and PLAC across the curriculum, prioritising them for additional support if required.
- Ensuring that the PP+ funding is used effectively and efficiently.
- Performing a coordinating role with academy staff and outside agencies, including social workers, carers and the Virtual School.
- Providing and attending training and offering advice to the staff body.
- Promoting a culture which is supportive, relationship-based and has high expectations for LAC & PLAC pupils.
- Regularly reporting to the Head and Governing Body on the attainment of LAC & PLAC pupils.

3.4. All Staff

All staff will promote improved educational life chances for LAC and PLAC pupils by:



- Attending relevant training.
- Providing accurate information and data when asked by the Designated Teacher.
- Referring to the Designated Teacher for advice.
- Playing their part in creating a positive culture and securing rapid progress for LAC and PLAC pupils by ensuring that they benefit from any additional support if required.
- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of LAC and PLAC pupils, as for all pupils.
- Maintain LAC and PLAC confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Promote the self-esteem of all LAC and PLAC pupils.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of LAC and PLAC pupils.

4. Personal Education Plans & Multi-Agency Working

The academy will ensure that every LAC on roll has a Personal Education Plan (or ePEP) meeting that is reviewed termly, within the statutory care planning framework, and in collaboration with the social worker, carer and other relevant professionals.

The academy will complete all educational sections to share our plan for improvement and development for LAC pupils and also to inform the Virtual School of the academy's policy and practice, to account for the efficient and effective spend of the PP+ funding.

The Designated Teacher and LAC Mentor will make every effort to develop positive professional relationships with colleagues from other agencies and facilitate their work. This will enable colleagues to successfully perform their roles and positively impact on the education and wider needs of LAC and PLAC pupils.

5. Academic & Personal Success

The academy will endeavour to champion the needs of LAC pupils to ensure they succeed both academically and personally. A safe and secure environment where educational progress and stability is always central to the planning and all adults understand the specific needs of LAC and PLAC pupils through the following means;

- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan (or ePEP) is completed with the child, the LAC mentor, the social worker, the carer and any other relevant people in a timely manner.
- Ensure that each LAC and PLAC pupil has 'open-door' access to the LAC mentor in order to provide sensitive, child-led support, adopting a relationship-based approach and with at least one key adult with whom the child or young person has a trusted relationship and who will act as an advocate for them and take a special interest in their progress in all classroom and extra-curricular activities.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately.
- Co-ordinate any support for the LAC and PLAC that is necessary within the academy.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
- Encourage LAC and PLAC pupils to join in extra-curricular activities.
- Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of LAC and PLAC.
- Set up timely meetings with relevant parties where the pupil is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion.
- Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and if the pupil leaves the academy to go to a new school and be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education.
- Promote inclusion in all areas of academy life.
- Ensure that attendance is monitored
- Narrow the gap between the attainment of LAC and PLAC pupils and their peers, ensuring accelerated and rapid progress
- LAC pupils will be advantaged within academy policies and procedures, with their needs explicitly considered and provided for.



- The academy behaviour policy maintains clear boundaries and expectations about behaviour

6. Admission & Transition

The Academy will ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan to plan for that transition in consultation with the child's social worker. The swift transfer of information between schools will ensure that LAC and PLAC pupils are prioritised at the point of admission. This may include early visits at times of transition, early identification of staff mentor and peer buddy, additional support and planning for LAC & PLAC pupils at times of transition or structured activities to 'say goodbye' (in recognition of the impact of broken attachments and loss).

7. Attendance

The academy attendance procedures reflect the specific needs of LAC & PLAC pupils to ensure outstanding attendance. Where there is a concern about attendance or punctuality the academy will contact the carer, social worker and other professionals including the Virtual School, as an early intervention, as outlined in our attendance policy.

8. Safeguarding

Academy staff will be vigilant for any safeguarding issues which can impact particularly on LAC pupils by: familiarising themselves with the academy's Child Protection Policy and the most recent 'DfE: Keeping Children Safe in Education'. Should there be any safeguarding concerns, staff will follow the academy safeguarding procedures accordingly.

9. Exclusions & Alternative Provision

9.1. Exclusions

The academy recognises that LAC pupils may have an increased risk of disengaging from education, due to their early experience of broken attachments and loss. Therefore, alternatives such as Internal Exclusion and a reduced number of days will be considered when applying the academy behaviour policy.

9.2. Alternative Provision

The academy will make every effort to ensure that any arrangements for provision alternative to daily attendance at our academy will be:

- A plan that will retain the LAC pupil on roll at the academy or clarify in writing which educational establishment will be responsible for essential reporting and accountable for the PP+
- Full time (25 hours) or contribute to full time attendance and be of high quality
- Meet the educational needs of the LAC or PLAC pupil
- Will provide the opportunity to make rapid progress in the course of study provided by the setting
- Will be monitored regularly and that PEPs/ePEPs will include the academy and the alternative provider.