



**CUCKOO HALL
ACADEMIES TRUST**

Looked After Children Policy

Primary and Secondary Academies

February 2016

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Looked After Children

Scope

As an academy forming part of Cuckoo Hall Academies Trust, we recognise that all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broad-based curriculum and aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in public care. Each academy and the governing body endorses Local Authority policy and welcomes Looked After Children (LAC) who may be looked after by our local authority or those who may be in the care of another authority but living in the Borough of Enfield.

The aim of this document is to demonstrate how we will meet the requirements set out in the [‘Promoting the education of looked after children’](#) guidance from the DfE and other associated guidance on the education of looked after children.

Rationale

We recognise there may be children in care who have suffered abuse or neglect. Despite having as broad a range of abilities as their peers, looked after children are particularly vulnerable to underachievement. Barriers to their progress include a high level of disruption and changes in school or academy placements, lack of motivation or involvement in extracurricular activities.

Cuckoo Hall Academy Trust believes that the educational experience of all children should be positive, powerful and aims to provide a learning environment in which every looked after child can be successful. We believe that each of our academies has a major part to play in ensuring the wellbeing of looked after children.

Aims

Each academies approach to encouraging and supporting the educational achievement of looked after children:

- prioritising education set within an inclusive context which makes reasonable adjustments to ensure a personalised curriculum.
- listening to the looked after child.
- working closely with home and external agencies
- promoting attendance through a programme of early intervention, priority action, reducing exclusions and promoting stability within a positive learning environment.
- identifying needs including social and emotional as well as learning needs or gifted and talented skills and abilities.
- targeting support including accessing resources from other agencies as well as provision from academy resources.

Admission arrangements

We are aware that due to care arrangements, looked after children may enter an academy mid-term and that it is important that they are given pre-entry visits, a positive welcome and additional support, where appropriate, to help them settle.

We recognise that looked after children are an '*excepted group*' and they will be prioritised in the academy's oversubscription criteria

Support and resources

The governing body of each academy will monitor the allocation of resources, including professional time and expertise, to ensure appropriate provision for looked after children is provided in order to meet our aims.

Role and responsibilities of the designated teacher

The duty of the Designated Teacher is the responsibility of the SENCo working in association with the Safeguarding Manager and their responsibilities will include:-

- ensuring that looked after children are welcomed into the academy, necessary meetings are held and arrangements are put in place to ensure their needs are identified and met. (This may include providing basic equipment and appropriate support in meeting uniform requirements if required).
- maintaining an up-to-date record of the looked after children in the academy, including those in the care of other authorities and ensuring all necessary information is passed to other staff as required.
- monitoring and tracking progress of the academy's looked after children and intervening if there is evidence of individual underachievement.
- holding a supervisory brief for all children being looked after and acting as advocate for them in the academy
- liaising with teaching and non-teaching staff in the academy (including those responsible for child protection) as well as pastoral and subject staff to ensure they are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantages looked after children may face
- establishing and maintaining regular contact with home and external agencies
- ensuring personal education plan (PEP) review meetings are held regularly and information passed to all those concerned
- attending training as required to keep fully informed of latest developments and policies regarding looked after children

Record keeping and information sharing

The SENCo will keep an up-to-date record of looked after children in the academy and will ensure that relevant information is made known to appropriate staff.

A personal education plan (PEP) will be initiated within 20 academy school days of the looked after child or young person starting at the academy or being taken into care and will be reviewed regularly and as necessary and appropriate to meet their needs. The PEP will provide a regular opportunity to review progress, note any concerns and ensure all relevant parties are informed accordingly.

Copies of reports and appropriate documentation will be sent to authorised carers and agencies involved with the child as well as any receiving school or academy at point of transition. It is vital that the looked after child is aware of information being recorded, in what circumstances and who will have access to it. How this is shared with them will depend on their age and level of understanding.

Exclusions

We recognise that looked after children could be vulnerable to exclusions. Where a looked after child is at risk of exclusion, the academy will explore every practicable means to ensure that child remains in the academy. A multi-professional meeting may be arranged, bringing together all those involved with the child to discuss strategies to minimise the risk of exclusion.

The child's personal education plan (PEP) will reflect strategies to support the child and, where relevant, those employed in the Pastoral Support Plan. All relevant measures and resources will be considered to provide support and perhaps alternative educational packages to prevent exclusion.

Staff development and training

Arrangements will be made to ensure that the SENCo is kept up to date with developments relating to the education and attainment of looked after children. Other staff will receive relevant training and support to enable them to work sympathetically and productively with looked after children, including those who are underachieving, at risk of underachieving or who have additional needs. These may include children with English as an additional language (EAL), being Gifted and Talented or having barriers to learning. Teachers with responsibility for SEN provision and for children who are Gifted and Talented will be informed of those looked after children who have particular gifts, talents or learning needs and will work with them appropriately.

Home-Academy liaison

The academy recognises the value of a close working relationship with home and we will work towards developing a strong partnership with parents / carers and care workers to enable looked after children to achieve their potential. Consultation evenings as well as personal education plan (PEP) and Care Plan review meetings provide opportunities to continue to develop this working partnership.

Links with other agencies

We recognise the value of working together with other agencies and organisations and will work closely with colleagues from services involved with the looked after child or young person including social care teams, community educational psychologists, health services, child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) and youth offending teams.