

# Model School Policy for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

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# Model Looked After Children Policy

## 1. Introduction

XXXXX aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of students in public care.

The Designated Teacher for looked after children is

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The Governor with responsibility for looked after children is

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The Governing Body is committed to providing quality education for all its students based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes. This policy includes requirements set out in “Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004” (Nov 2005), associated guidance on “Promoting the education of the looked after children” (July 2014) and “The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children” (February 2018).

## 2. Aims

The aims of XXXXXXXX are to:

- 2.1 Ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for looked after children as for all children.
- 2.2 Ensure that all looked after children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- 2.3 Provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual’s needs and ability.
- 2.4 Ensure that looked after children take as full a part as possible in all school activities.
- 2.5 Ensure that carers and social workers of looked after children are kept fully informed of their child’s progress and attainment.
- 2.6 Ensure that looked after children are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision and next steps in learning.
- 2.7 Set high aspirations for looked after children and expect them to make exceptional progress.

- 2.8 Provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual's needs and ability.

### 3. Who are looked after children

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They include the following:

- Children who are accommodated by the local authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20).
- Children who are the subject of a care order (section 31(1)) or interim care order (section 38); and
- Children who are the subject of emergency orders for the protection of the child (section 44 Under the Children Act 1989).
- previously looked after children are those no longer looked after by a local authority in England & Wales, because they are the subject of:
  - » An adoption.
  - » Special guardianship.
  - » Child arrangements order.
  - » Adopted from state care outside England & Wales.

### 4. Admissions

The Governing body endorses council policy. Camden Council believes that admissions criteria should not discriminate against looked after or previously looked after children students. The school understands that looked after children and previously looked after children have been given the highest priority within school admission arrangements.

Due to care placement changes, looked after children may enter school mid-term. It is vital that we give them a positive welcome. If necessary we may offer additional support and pre-entry visits to help the new student settle and a catch up meeting to review the settling in process.

### 5. Inclusion

This policy recognises that all students are entitled to a balanced, broadly based curriculum.

Our looked after children policy reinforces the need for teaching that is fully inclusive. The Governing Body will ensure the school makes appropriate provision for all looked after and previously looked after children.

In the case of exclusion or alternative education, discussions will have taken

place with the Virtual School Head prior to this occurring. This will be done in a way that ensures the Looked After Children's attendance, attainment and engagement is not impeded.

## **6. Allocation of resources**

The Governing Body will ensure that:

- 6.1 The school allocates resources to support appropriate provision for looked after children, meeting the objectives set out in this policy.
- 6.2 Pupil premium plus funding is appropriately used and shows an impact on the looked after children. Its use is also published on the school website annually.

## **7. Monitoring the progress of looked after children**

The social worker for the looked after children should initiate a Personal Education Plan (PEP) within 20 days of joining the school, or of entering care, and ensure that the young person is actively involved. It is vital that the school assesses each looked after children's attainment on entry to ensure continuity of learning.

The school will monitor and track the achievement and attainment of all students at regular intervals. Looked after children will require their PEP to

be reviewed termly and as initiated by the reviewing office or social worker, and the young person's views should be sought by the Designated Teacher and noted on the PEP. All provision should be attached to SMART targets in the PEP.

## **8. Record keeping**

The Designated Teacher will know all the Camden looked after children and previously looked after children in school and will have access to their relevant contact details including parents, carers and social worker (as appropriate).

The Designated Teacher will also know all looked after children from other authorities. It is important that the school flags looked after children status appropriately in the school's information systems so that information is readily available as required.

## **9. Staff development**

We encourage staff to attend courses that help them to acquire the skills needed to support looked after children. Part of the Designated Teacher's role is to develop awareness of issues associated with looked after children and previously looked after children.

## 10. Partnership with parents/ carers and care workers

At xxxx we firmly believe in developing a strong partnership with parents / carers and care workers to enable looked after children to achieve their potential. Review meetings are an opportunity to further this partnership working.

## 11. Links with external agencies/ organisations

We also recognise the important contribution that external support services make in supporting looked after children. Colleagues from the following support services may be involved with individual looked after children:

- 11.1 The Camden Virtual School.
- 11.2 Educational psychologists.
- 11.3 SEND services.
- 11.4 Medical officers/designated nurses.
- 11.5 CAMHS.
- 11.6 Education Welfare Officers.
- 11.7 Social care worker/ Community care worker/ Residential child care worker.
- 11.8 Youth Offending Service.

## 12. Looked After Children policy

We consider the looked after children and previously looked after children policy to be important and we undertake a thorough review of both policy and practice each year. The outcomes of this review inform the School Improvement Plan.

## 13. Roles & Responsibilities

Rationale for roles and responsibilities:

- Looked after children and previously looked after children are amongst the most vulnerable groups in society and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational underachievement when compared to their peers. For example, they may experience:
  - A high level of disruption and change in school placements.
  - Lack of involvement in extracurricular activities.
  - Inconsistent or no attention paid to homework.
  - Difficulties around attachment and trauma.

This may result in:

- Poor exam success rates in comparison with the general population.
- Underachievement in further and higher education.

## 14. The Designated Teacher

The designated teacher will:

- 14.1 Be an advocate for looked after children and previously looked after children within school.
- 14.2 Give regard to the impact of relevant decisions for looked after children on both the looked after children and the rest of the school community.
- 14.3 Know all the looked after and previously looked after children in school, including those in the care of other authorities, and ensure that all student details are accurately recorded on the school data base.
- 14.4 Act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to looked after children, seeking advice from the Virtual School team when appropriate.
- 14.5 Attend relevant training about looked after and previously looked after children.
- 14.6 Ensure that looked after children receive a positive welcome on entering school, especially mid-year and, if necessary, offer additional support and a pre-entry visit to help the new pupil settle and arrange a follow up meeting as necessary.
- 14.7 Ensure that all looked after children have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) within 20 days of coming into care and then every term after this while in care until the age of 18. The Designated Teacher will complete their section of the PEP in a timely manner and will ensure that the looked after child contributes to the PEP also. Previously looked after children do not require a PEP.



- 14.8 Keep PEPs and other records up to date including termly progress data which will be requested by the Virtual School.
- 14.9 Convene an urgent multi-agency meeting if a looked after children is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion. This includes contacting the Camden Virtual School.
- 14.10 Ensure confidentiality on individual children, sharing confidential and personal information on a need to know basis, bearing in mind the wishes of the individual pupil.
- 14.11 Act as the key adviser for staff and governors on issues relevant to looked after children.
- 14.12 Ensure that care and school liaison is effective including invitations to meetings and other school events.
- 14.13 Actively encourage and promote out of hours learning and extra-curricular activities for looked after children.
- 14.14 Ensure a speedy transfer of information, records and coursework, where appropriate, when a looked after children transfers to another educational placement.
- 14.15 Attend and contribute information to looked after children reviews as required.
- 14.16 Report to the Governing body on the attainment, progress and well-being of looked after children in the school and inform them of relevant policy and practice development.
- 14.17 Ensure carers are actively involved in Parents' meetings and liaison with staff.





- 14.18 Agree with the social worker the appropriate people to invite to parents' evenings etc.
- 14.19 Ensure that any Special Educational Needs are addressed in conjunction with the SENCO and in accordance with the Code of Practice for SEND. Looked after children are six to eight times more likely to have a Statement of Special Educational Needs / EHCP than the general school population.

## 15. The Report

The designated teacher will provide regular reports to the Governing Body regarding the progress of Looked After Children.

The Report is to include:

- 15.1 The number of looked after children on roll.
- 15.2 The confirmation that they have a Personal Education Plan each term, including the use and impact of Pupil Premium Plus.
- 15.3 Their attendance compared to other students.
- 15.4 Their attainment and progress (SATs/ GCSEs) compared to other students.
- 15.5 The number, if any, of fixed term and permanent exclusions.

- 15.6 The destinations of looked after children and students who leave the school.

## 16. All school staff

Good practice suggests that all school staff will:

- 16.1 Follow school procedures.
- 16.2 Keep the Designated Teacher informed about a looked after children's progress and developments.
- 16.3 Have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of looked after children.
- 16.4 Positively promote the raising of looked after children's self esteem.
- 16.5 Ensure any looked after children are supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained.
- 16.6 Be familiar with the school's policy and guidance on looked after children and respond appropriately to requests for information to support PEPs and review meetings.
- 16.7 Liaise with the Designated Teacher when a looked after child is experiencing difficulties.
- 16.8 Contribute to regular liaison with social care colleagues and other

appropriate professionals and keep carers fully informed at all times.

- 16.9 Keep appropriate records, as confidential as necessary, and make these available to other professionals/parents/carers/students as appropriate.
- 16.10 Be mindful of the effect that the curriculum and the time of year e.g. Christmas, Mother's Day, may have on looked after children and consult with the designated teacher if in doubt.

## 17. The Governing Body

Good practice suggests that the Governing Body will:

- 17.1 Ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritises looked after children according to the DfE admissions Code of Practice.
- 17.2 Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for looked after children.
- 17.3 Liaise with the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and all other staff to ensure the needs of looked after children are met.
- 17.4 Nominate a governor with responsibility for looked after

children who links with the Designated Teacher.

- 17.5 Receive regular reports from the Designated Teacher.
- 17.6 Ensure that the school's policies and procedures give looked after children equal access in respect of:
- » Admission to school.
  - » National Curriculum and examinations, both academic and vocational.
  - » Out of school learning and extracurricular activities.
  - » Work experience and careers guidance.
- 17.7 Annually review the effective implementation of the school policy for looked after children.
- 17.8 Ensure that the Designated Teacher and the Virtual School are invited to the exclusion meetings of looked after children.

## 18. Personal Education Plan

Each pupil in care will have a Care Plan that will include a Personal Education Plan (PEP) that is developed jointly by the Social Worker, Designated Teacher and Foster Carer. The PEP is quality assured by the Virtual School. This will identify specific areas of focus and include targets and associated action

to improve the student performance or educational achievement.

Areas for consideration will include:

- 18.1 Attendance and punctuality.
- 18.2 Achievement and Attainment Record (academic or otherwise).
- 18.3 Strengths and Weaknesses.
- 18.4 Development needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge or subject areas and experiences), and support required.
- 18.5 Long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations).
- 18.6 Extended learning opportunities
- 18.7 Involvement in Out of School Hours Activities.
- 18.8 Special needs or disability (if any).

18.9 Views of the Young person, the school, the foster carer, the parent (where appropriate).

18.10 Any need for additional provision to support student progress and any referrals to the Virtual School for Pupil Premium Plus.

The PEP will be updated and reviewed each term or at the point of any major change and contribute to the Statutory Reviewing process carried out by the Independent Reviewing Officer. The Designated Teacher is accountable for the implementation and review of the educational action to meet the targets within the Plan.



## Useful links

Statutory Guidance (July 2014):  
'Promoting the education of Looked After Children.'

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Statutory Guidance on Exclusion (Jan 2015):

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'Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England.'

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Pupil Premium: Pupil Premium 2014 to 2015: conditions of grant.

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Pupil Premium. Ofsted (Feb 2013):  
Analysis & challenge tools for schools.

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Pupil Premium Spend. Sutton Trust (October 2014): Teaching and Learning Toolkit.

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All-Parliamentary Group for Looked After Children and Care Leavers (September 2012):

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Education Matters in Care.

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Sutton Education Trust <http://www.suttontrust.com/about-us/education-endowment-foundation/>

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The roles and responsibilities of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children: Statutory Guidance for Governing Bodies.

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The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children" (February 2018).

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