

# Looked After Children Policy

Date Reviewed: June 2021  
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**Ready Respectful Safe**

Nationally, Looked After Children significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. We have a major part to play in ensuring that Looked After Children are supported to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic wellbeing.

Helping Looked After Children succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority for the school. This policy takes account of:

- Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children (LAC).
- The Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006.
- Relevant DfES guidance to Governing Bodies (*Supporting Looked After Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors*).

Digitech Studio School's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education.
- Promoting attendance.
- Targeting support.
- Targeted spending of Pupil Premium Plus money.
- Having high expectations.
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes.
- Achieving stability and continuity.
- Early intervention and priority action.
- Listening to students.
- Promoting health and wellbeing.
- Reducing exclusions and promoting stability.
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals.

### **Implications**

We are committed to helping every Looked After Child to achieve the highest standards they can, including supporting aspirations to achieve in further and higher education. This will be measured by progress, achievements and attendance.

- Ensure a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children is identified and enabled to carry out the responsibilities set out below.
- Ensure a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is put in place, implemented and regularly reviewed for every Looked After Child, in line with Bristol, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset guidance on PEPs.
- Identify an academy councillor as Designated councillor for Looked After Children.

### **RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ACADEMY COUNCIL**

- Identify a nominated Academy councillor for Looked After Children.
- Ensure that all councillors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Looked After Children.

- Ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Looked After Children.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of Looked After Children.
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.

#### **Digitech Studio School will:**

- Monitor the academic progress of Looked After Children, through an annual report created by the Designated Teacher (see below). This gets sent to the academy council and the local authority at the end of every academic year.
- Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school, by ensuring the school implements policies and procedures to ensure Looked After Children achieve and enjoy their time at the school, by recognising the extra problems caused by excluding them and by not excluding them except as a last resort.
- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Support the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of Looked After Children are recognised and met.
- Receive a report once a year setting out:
  1. The number of looked-after pupils on the school's roll (if any)
  2. Their attendance, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils.
  3. GCSE results, and other qualifications achieved, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils.
  4. The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any).
  5. The destinations of pupils who leave the school.
  6. The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.

#### **THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER**

Government Guidance says that the Designated Teacher should be "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".

#### **The Designated Teacher 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.
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people.
- Ensure that each Looked After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher, but should be based on the student's own wishes.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately.
- Co-ordinate any support for the Looked After Children that is necessary within school.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
- Ensure, as far as possible, attendance at planning and review meetings.
- Act as an advisor to staff and academy council, raising their awareness of the needs of Looked After Children.

- Set up timely meetings with relevant parties where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion.
- Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and – if the pupil changes school – to a new school.
- Be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately.
- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life.
- Be aware that 60% of Looked After Children say they are bullied, so actively monitor and prevent bullying in school.
- Check data is added to the PEP data and online tracking process for each local authority and ensure it is updated swiftly.

### **THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF**

All the staff will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children, as for all pupils.
- Maintain Looked After Children's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond positively to a pupil's request to be the named member of staff whom they can talk to when they feel it is necessary.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- Work to enable Looked After Children to achieve stability and success within Digitech Studio School.
- Promote the self-esteem of all Looked After Children.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of Looked After Children.

The Designated Teacher will ensure that all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

