



CHALFORD HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy for the Education of Children in Care / Looked After Children

Date of Policy: January 2026
Next Review Due: January 2029

Rationale

At the Chalford Hill Primary School we believe that all CIC/LAC, and those previously in care, should have equitable access to excellent educational provision and achieve at a similar level to all children. As a community we aim to be champions for CIC/LAC and take a proactive approach to support their success, recognising that we have a vital role to play in promoting their educational achievement and social and emotional development.

To do this we commit to:

- Supporting them to raise their aspirations;
- Giving them a sense of the control they have over their own lives;
- Fostering positive attitudes and behaviours;
- Providing continuity and 'normality' for those who may have been subject to emotional distress, abuse and disruption.

Definition: Who are our CIC/LAC?

Most CIC/LAC will be living in foster homes but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even be placed back at home with their parent(s) sharing parental responsibility with the Local Authority. Under the Children Act 1989, a child is in the Care of the Local Authority if he or she is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the Authority. This includes the following:

- a) Children who are accommodated by the Local Authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents;
- b) Children who are the subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order;
- c) Children who are the subject of Emergency Orders for the protection of the child.

Legal Framework

- From 1 September 2009 all Governing Bodies were required under the Children's and Young Persons Act of 2008 to appoint a Designated Teacher to promote the educational achievement of Children in Care.
- The Families Act of 2014 also required all Local Authorities to appoint a Virtual School Head Teacher to ensure that the educational achievement of Children in Care was seen as a priority and to ensure arrangements were in place to improve educational outcomes.
- Previous legislation and guidance from the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), Department for Education (DfE) and the Department of Health (DH) requires schools to have effective policies for supporting and promoting the education of Children in Care / Looked after Children.

Schools requirements:

- Ensure access to a balanced and broadly based education for all CIC/LAC
- Prioritise recording and improving academic achievement of CIC/LAC

- Prioritise a reduction in the number of exclusions / truancies for all CIC/LAC
- Ensure there is a designated Teacher to promote the educational achievement of all CIC/LAC who are on the school roll
- Develop effective systems of communications and protocols
- Promote attendance of CIC/LAC

OBJECTIVES

At Chalford Hill, to ensure support for CIC/LAC we will:

- Create a whole school ethos in which all staff understand their responsibility in supporting
- Provide a safe and secure environment, which values education and believes in the abilities and potential of all children;
- Bring the educational attainments of our CIC/LAC in line with those of their peers;
- Make sure that they have access to education appropriate to their age and ability. This includes access to a broad and balanced curriculum;
- Balance high levels of support and challenge;
- Have a Designated Teacher (DT) for CIC/LAC who will act as their advocate and coordinate support for them, liaising with carers, parents (as appropriate) and social workers on a wide variety of educational and care issues;
- Work alongside the Social Worker, Virtual School and other professionals to ensure that each CIC/LAC has a Personal Education Plan (PEP) in place
- To ensure that the needs of CIC/LAC are identified, assessed, provided for and regularly reviewed

Respect:	We respect ourselves, others and everything around us by making good choices.
Effort:	We take part and try our best in: school; our community and the wider world.
Achieve:	We ask questions and work hard to achieve our goals and reach our potential.
Challenge:	We look for ways to solve problems and improve even when we find things hard.
High Five:	We celebrate ourselves and each other; building positive relationships.

- To take the views and wishes of the child into account
- To ensure that children who have previously been CIC/LAC are identified, assessed, provided for and regularly reviewed;
- To work in partnership with Social Services, Foster Carers (and any other appropriate parties) to enable them to make an active contribution to, and have an understanding of, the education of the child;

This policy will be enhanced by:

In addition we will:

- Challenge negative stereotypes amongst children and staff;
- Closely monitor the social and personal progress of all CIC/LAC;
- Ensure discretion when addressing a child's care status and the background and family history of children who are in care, especially surrounding teaching and learning relating to the family;

Admissions and Transitions

We will:

- Ensure that admission criteria (Aided and Foundation) prioritise CIC/LAC, according to the Code of Practice on Admissions;
- Ensure a warm welcome to our school by providing appropriate induction for all CIC/LAC so that there is a smooth and successful transition which includes carers and parents where appropriate;
- Make sure that on admission or transfer all relevant information records are obtained at the outset;
- Forward appropriate documents, in a timely fashion, to any receiving school at the point of transition (where the receiving school is made known);
- Make every effort to provide continuity of schooling and educational experience.

Attendance

We will:

- Implement a first day of absence procedure for all CIC/LAC regardless of attendance percentage
- Inform the relevant bodies if there are any concerns about attendance;
- Acknowledge attendance in any education meetings, celebrating success and setting realistic targets if it is a concern.

Exclusion

We will:

- Actively follow the county council's Protocol for Reducing Exclusions of CIC/LAC and follow CIC/LAC Transfer Procedure if a child is at risk of permanent exclusion.

Multi-Agency Liaison

We will:

- Support the child to engage fully in planning and decision making;
- The Designated Teacher, or members of school staff, will liaise closely with carers, parents (if appropriate) and the child's Social Worker on a variety of issues, including homework, kit and equipment required
- There will be a clear understanding about the role and responsibility of staff in relation to the child and the roles and responsibilities of the other professionals involved;
- Our staff will share positive perceptions and high expectations of the child with other professionals but especially with the child;
- Be aware of, and sensitive to, the appropriate role of the parents.
- Ensure that requests from the Virtual Schools for statistical or other information held by the school are completed and returned on time, to comply with statutory obligations;
- To encourage our CIC/LAC to access out of hours learning activities realising the positive impact that this could have on their self-esteem and learning.

School Trips and Special Activities

We aim to ensure that CIC/LAC enjoy as many extra-curricular opportunities as possible. The responsibility for giving permission for school trips and enrichment opportunities is that of the Social Worker, sometimes delegated to Foster Carers.

Complaints

If a young person, parent or Social Worker wishes to complain about the provision or policy, they should in the first instance, raise it with the Designated Teacher, who will try to resolve the situation alongside the carer and Social Worker.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Body

The governing body will:

- Appoint a Designated Teacher for CIC/LAC
- Ensure the Designated Teacher has the opportunity to attend training & that school staff and governors are aware of the DfE Statutory Guidance
- Appoint a governor with specific responsibility for CIC/LAC who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body;
- Ensure that admission criteria (Aided and Foundation) prioritise CIC/LAC, according to the Code of Practice on Admissions.
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Looked After Children.
- Ensure that Designated Teachers and staff are aware of and enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively with the support of the Head Teacher;
- Ensure that there are arrangements in place to keep themselves informed about provision for, and attainment of, CIC/LAC.
- Support the Designated Teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend training to support CIC/LAC.
- For child protection and confidentiality reasons, ensure that information will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity, and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.
- Review the effective implementation of this policy at least every three years;
- Ensure that the school's other policies and procedures give CIC/LAC equal access to the curriculum as well as wider opportunities.

The Governor with Special Responsibility for CIC/LAC

What every Designated Governor for CIC/LAC needs to know:

- The number of CIC/LAC on the school roll;
- Overall attainment and progress of CIC/LAC in the school
- The number of CIC/LAC with SEND and with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)
- Authorised and unauthorised absence levels of CIC/LAC
- The level of fixed term / permanent exclusions for CIC/LAC
- Is the school making effective use of the Pupil Premium for its CIC/LAC?
- How the Virtual Schools support educational achievement of CIC/LAC?

The named Governor should be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that looked-after pupils have equal access to:

- the national curriculum
- public examinations

- additional educational support
- extra-curricular activities

The Role of the Head Teacher

The Head Teacher:

- designates a teacher for CIC/ LAC
- ensures that the designated teacher is given training time and administrative time
- ensures the designated teacher or other appropriate member of staff attends CIC/LAC reviews
- ensures that the school has monitoring systems for CIC/LAC
- ensures that confidentiality is maintained for the anonymity of CIC/LAC in the school setting and that it is clear who should have access to which part of the file
- ensures that reports are regularly provided to the Governing Body outlining the progress and achievements of CIC/LAC
- ensures this policy is available to pupils, teachers and parents.
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Designated Teacher for Looked-After-Children

The role of the Designated Teacher is to:

- act as an advocate for CIC/LAC and ensure that each pupil has a member of staff in school they can talk to
- Ensure a smooth and welcoming induction for the child and carer/s (and parent/s where possible).
- ensure children are supported through transitions
- enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their care plan
- intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy
- liaise with the member of staff responsible for monitoring children on the Child Protection Register
- ensure school links are made where necessary - e.g. with the SENDCo and teachers
- ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have an understanding of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by CIC/LAC and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them
- inform members of staff of the general educational needs of CIC/LAC, and to promote the involvement of these children in school clubs, extracurricular activities, school councils etc
- ensure that colleagues in school have relevant information/training on LAC to enable them to positively promote educational issues.

The Designated Teacher will:

- be the named contact for colleagues in Social Care and the Virtual School
- develop and monitor systems to ensure liaison takes place with carers, Social Workers and the Virtual School
- ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed (within 20 days of entering care or joining a new school). This should be prepared with the child and the carer/s (and parent/s if possible), in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies. Where appropriate, the PEP should take account of any My Plan (MP), Pastoral Support Plan (PSP), Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP), career plan or any other relevant plans. The PEP should inform and be reviewed.
- help co-ordinate education and CIC/LAC review meetings, so that the PEP can inform the child's Care Plan, along with the Social Worker and Learning Mentor from the Virtual School

- ensure that Reviews by Social Care colleagues for CIC/LAC pupils are seen as a priority and that the appropriate member of staff from the school attends and/or a report is sent to the meeting
- attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or to contribute in other ways to care planning meetings.
- ensure a list of LAC is kept up to date in the school,
- ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis.
- ensure the speedy transfer of information between schools, agencies and individuals
- to monitor the educational progress of LAC in order to inform school development plans
- monitor any possible exclusions amongst CIC/LAC
- develop knowledge of Vulnerable Children/Education Inclusion procedures by attending training events organised by the Local Authority
- ensure issues relevant to CIC/LAC are made available for other staff/governors
- ensure speedy transfer of educational information from the school to all appropriate other colleagues
- ensure, with the Head Teacher that a report, on the educational outcomes and circumstances of LAC, is provided to the Governing Body annually

The role of all those involved in supporting CIC/LAC is to:

- Ensure that all CIC/LAC are treated inclusively;
- Have high expectations of CIC/LAC's involvement in learning and educational progress
- Be aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation from birth families;
- Be aware of the reasons which may affect the behaviour of a CIC/LAC and understand that this is often a form of communication which may need a more personalised response or intervention;
- Understand how important it is to see CIC/LAC as individuals and not to publicly treat them differently from their peers;
- Appreciate the central importance of showing sensitivity about who else knows about a CIC/LAC's status;
- Understand what a PEP is and its importance in helping to create a shared understanding between teachers, carers and social workers and, depending on age and understanding, the child him/herself of what everyone needs to do to help them achieve their potential.
- Ensure entry to examinations for CIC/LAC
- Be familiar with the Guidance on CIC/LAC and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings.
- Liaise with the Designated Teacher where a CIC/LAC is experiencing difficulty.

Virtual School

The role of the Virtual School is to work in partnership with the child or young person's educational setting to ensure that they are supported to fulfil their potential at all stages of their education and to act as a champion to promote their progress and educational attainment – thus, supporting children and young people who are (or who have been) in care. The Children and Families Act 2014 requires Local Authorities in England to have a Virtual School Head (VSH) who monitors looked after children, previously looked after children and those children with a social worker as if they were in one school, the Virtual

School. In June 2021, the role of the VSH was extended to include non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of children with a social worker, as well as looked after children. This role includes identifying the Local Authority's looked after children and those with a social worker, and being the lead responsible officer for ensuring that arrangements are in place to improve their educational experiences and outcomes.

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/virtual-school/>