

City Academy Bristol

# CHILDREN IN CARE POLICY



Date of policy implementation: 30/11/2015

Approved by: LGB      Date: 26/11/2015

**Next Review: November 2016**

## Contents

<b>Section</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Page</b>
1	History of most recent policy changes	3
2	Context	4
3	Vision	4
4	Rationale	4
5	Definitions	5
6	Linked Policies	5
7	Key aims	5
8	Objectives	6
9	Roles and Responsibilities	6
10	Personal Education Plans (PEPs)	7
11	Pupil Premium	8
12	School Trips and Special Activities	8
13	Leaving Arrangements	8
14	Complaints	9



## 2 Context

City Academy is a 950 place mixed gender academy situated in East Central Bristol. It serves an area of high deprivation and take students mainly from the local community (Lawrence Hill, Barton Hill, Easton, St Pauls, St George and Whitehall). The student profile is multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-faith, with over 46 different languages spoken and 47.42% of students speaking English as an additional language. 34.3% are free school meals, 70.8% Pupil Premium and approximately 16.8% students are special educational needs.

Bristol is eighth largest city in the UK, with a population of approximately 437500. 18.7% are children with 28% of those being BME (Black Minority Ethnic).

## 3 Vision

City Academy is a warm, welcoming school where everyone is valued. We believe that **"Every student a graduate -Every student a leader"**, because we believe that each and every student has the talent and potential to succeed. At City Academy we aim to promote equality and tackle any form of discrimination, but more than that we believe in equity. We want to ensure that not only do our students have opportunities but they also have access to those opportunities. We seek to remove any barrier to access, progress, participation, achievement and attainment. We are able to do this by providing a broad and balanced curriculum both in and out of the classroom through structured lessons, Learning Family Time and assemblies. The learning experience we provide to our students aims to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relationships.

Our vision is built on the following values:

**Challenge** - We challenge our students in their lessons, we challenge ourselves around our performance and delivery.

**Trust** - We constantly build trust with our community by being honest, transparent and welcoming of external review.

**Commitment** - We demand the commitment of the staff to work with our students, the commitment of the students to their learning and the commitment of the community to work with the academy.

We are committed to fulfilling our duty to community cohesion. We promote the notion of pride in living in Britain alongside the British values of democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law and tolerance and respect for those who may have a different belief or culture.

## 4 Rationale

At City Academy, we recognise that we have a key role to play in improving the life chances of our young people, and particularly in the case of our Children in Care.

## 5 Definitions

The terms Looked After Child (LAC) and Child in Care (CiC) are interchangeable. For the purposes of this policy we are using the term CiC. Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They include the following:

- (i) children who are accommodated by the local authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents;
- (ii) children who are the subject of a care order or interim care order;
- (iii) children who are the subject of emergency orders for the protection of the child;
- (iv) children who are compulsorily accommodated. This includes remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement.

A looked after child may be in residential care, a foster placement or could be living with their parents. If living with their parents, this could be on a part time basis or possibly before returning home permanently after a care placement.

## 6 Linked Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the academy's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, the Behaviour Policy, the Additional Needs Policy, and the SEN Information Report.*

## 7 Our key aims are to:

- Provide a place where Children in Care can learn, feel supported and included, and be themselves;
- Improve the educational attainment and achievement of all our Children in Care and give them the greatest chance of success, both here and in life beyond school;
- Equip our Children in Care with the skills they will need to flourish in adult life.

### **In order to do this, we commit to:**

- Having high expectations of Children in Care;
- Giving our Children in Care 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, neglect, abuse and disruption;
- Supporting the needs of our Children in Care as individuals, regardless of how challenging this may be at times.
- Listening to the views of our Children in Care and ensuring that these are central to decision-making and are taken into account wherever appropriate and helpful to do so.
- Ensuring our teachers and support staff are aware of the specific needs of our Children in Care.

## 8 Objectives

We will support Children in Care by:

- Ensuring an effective induction when joining the school or when coming into care whilst already on the school roll;
- Balancing high levels of support with real challenge;
- Ensuring that each child has a high quality Personal Education Plan;
- Making it a priority to know the children well and to build strong relationships;
- Developing strong relationships with carers, and agencies including the Virtual School and other specialist agencies where appropriate;
- Encouraging and supporting Children in Care to aim high and to take responsibility for their learning;
- Engaging Children in Care in learning outside the classroom and after-school activities;
- Intervening promptly if a problem emerges such as with behaviour or attendance;
- Giving integrated but low profile support in school for each Children in Care so that they are not made to feel different from other children;
- Planning for future transitions in liaison with outside agencies.

## 9 Roles and responsibilities

The Role of the Governing Body:

- There will be a Governor with special responsibility for Children in Care;
- The governing body will ensure that the Designated Teacher and named governor undertake appropriate training;
- Governors will consider an annual report from the Designated Teacher covering attainment, attendance, progress, Personal Education Plans, CiC with Special Educational Needs or who are gifted and talented, impact on school development plans and how the school supports the work of The HOPE (Bristol's Virtual School for Children in Care).
- The governing body, Principal and school leadership team will act on any issues raised in the report and will ensure that:
  - The school has a clear overview of the educational needs and progress of CiC on roll;
  - The school's policies are effective in reflecting the needs of CiC;
  - Resources are allocated to support the designated teacher to carry out this role effectively for the benefit of CiC;

The Role of the Principal:

- To ensure that, in partnership with the Governing body, the Designated Teacher has the opportunity to acquire and keep up to date the necessary skills, knowledge and training to understand and respond to the specific teaching and learning needs of Children in Care;
- To make sure that the designated teacher role contributes to the deeper understanding of everyone in the school who is likely to be involved in supporting Children in Care to achieve;
- In partnership with the Governing body, monitor the effectiveness of the role of the designated teacher;
- Oversee the development of the policy on Children in Care;
- Evaluate the standards and achievement of Children in Care and report these termly

- to the governing body and discuss them at Core SIO/HOPE meetings.
- Ensure that all staff are given the opportunity to attend training courses etc that help them develop the skills and knowledge needed to support children in care.

The role of the Designated Teacher within the school:

The Designated Teacher in this school is Pippa Whittaker who holds the post of Curriculum Leader for Inclusion.

The Designated Teacher has lead responsibility for helping school staff understand the factors which affect how CiC learn and achieve. The Designated Teacher will:

- Promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how Children in Care learn;
- Promote the educational achievement of every Child in Care on the school's roll;
- Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies to ensure that they do not unintentionally put Children in Care at a disadvantage;
- Make sure, in partnership with other staff, that there are effective and well understood school procedures in place to support Children in Care's learning;
- Promote a culture in which Children in Care are able to discuss their progress and be involved in setting their own targets, have their views taken seriously and are supported to take responsibility for their own learning;
- Be a source of advice for staff about differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children;
- Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of the child's personal education plan (PEP) within the school;
- Set up systems to monitor and record the progress of all Children in Care and forward educational records to new schools to facilitate a smooth and speedy transfer;
- Have lead responsibility for helping school staff to understand the factors which can affect how children in care learn and achieve.

The role of all those involved in supporting Children in Care:

- Ensure that all Children in Care are made to feel welcome and included;
- Have high expectations of Children in Care's involvement in learning and educational progress;
- Be aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation from birth families;
- Understand the reasons which may be behind a Child in Care's behaviour, and why they may need more patience support than other children;
- Understand how important it is to see Children in Care 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 Child in Care's status;
- Understand what a PEP is and its importance in helping to create a shared understanding between teachers, carers, social workers and, depending on age and understanding, the child him or herself of what everyone needs to do to help them achieve their potential.

## **10 Personal Education Plans (PEPs)**

All Children in Care must have a care plan which is drawn up and reviewed by the local authority which looks after them. The care plan must include a Personal Education plan (PEP), which forms part of the child's official school record.

The school and the Local Authority have a shared responsibility for making sure that the PEP is a useful document and for helping Children in Care to achieve and enjoy. Discussion about how together they can make that happen through the content, implementation and review of the PEP should be done through a meeting involving the young person, carers, the social worker, a teacher and others such as, where appropriate, staff from The HOPE Virtual School for Children in Care.

The PEP should include challenging, curriculum-based targets and support the young person's educational progress. If the young person has a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan this should be reviewed annually and should, where possible, tie in with the PEP.

## **11 Pupil Premium**

All Children in Care in KS3 and KS4 are entitled to additional support to be funded by Pupil Premium. The aim of this support is to help improve their outcomes and narrow the gap between their outcomes and those of their peers. This support will most often include individual tuition in English and Maths.

The school is committed to ensuring effective use of this dedicated funding where available for all eligible Children in Care on roll to provide additional, personalised support to ensure accelerated progress in order to improve outcomes.

The appropriate use of allocated funding is to be assessed through the Personal Education Plan.

Children in Care in KS5 may be awarded a bursary to provide support with educational requirements, such as books and other materials.

## **12 School Trips and Special Activities**

We aim to ensure that Children in Care enjoy as many extra curricular opportunities as possible by reserving placements for them on trips or enrichment activities which they are eligible for and allowing sufficient time to gain the necessary consent. The responsibility for giving permission for school trips and enrichment opportunities is that of the social worker, although they often delegate this to foster carers. The person who may give permission will be clarified at the first PEP meeting. If in doubt we will always send consent forms to the social worker.

Given the delays that Children in Care experience in getting parental consent for school trips and activities, we will aim to ensure that Children in Care enjoy the same extra curricular opportunities as other children by reserving placements for them on trips or on activities.

## **13 Leaving Arrangements**

When a Children in Care leaves the school we will aim to ensure a positive ending, and one which provides a reassuring model of life change. We will share information with future providers, via Social Workers where appropriate, and will continue to be available to share further information such as this may be required in future.

## **14 Complaints**

If a young person, parent/carer 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 the social worker.

If the issue cannot be resolved within 10 days, the young person, carer or social worker can submit a formal complaint in writing to the Principal. The Principal will investigate the complaint and respond within 10 working days, unless the formal complaint is about the conduct of the Principal, in which case the complaint will go straight to the Chair of Governors.

Any issues that remain unresolved at this stage should be addressed through a meeting in order to assess the impact of any such complaint upon the young person's education. This meeting may include the named Governor and any other outside agency that both parties deem necessary to attend. This meeting should normally be held within 10 working days of the Principal's response.

**Policy to be reviewed: September 2016**