

## Looked after Children Policy

### Document Control

Date	Review and amendment details	By whom
Sept 2013	Adopted by TEFAT Board	Trustees
Sept 2019	Reviewed and Approved	Ops Group
May 2023	Reviewed and Approved	Ops Group
May 2023	Adopted by TEFAT Board	Trustees
May 2026	Proposed review date subject to any earlier identified statutory requirement to update	Ops Group

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## Elliot Foundation Academies Trust Values

### 1. Put children first

- a. We trust and value your professionalism
- b. We share the responsibility for the learning and welfare of all of our children
- c. Our purpose is to improve the lives of children

### 2. Be safe

- a. Don't assume that someone else will do it
- b. Look after yourself, your colleagues and all children
- c. We are all responsible for each other's safety and well being
- d. Discuss any concerns with an appropriate member of staff

### 3. Be kind & respect all

- a. People are allowed to be different as are you
- b. Kindness creates the positive environment we all need to flourish
- c. This kindness should extend to ourselves as well as to others

### 4. Be open

- a. If you can see a better way, suggest it
- b. If someone else suggests a better way to you, consider it
- c. We exist to nurture innovators and support those who take informed risks in the interests of children

### 5. Forgive

- a. We all make mistakes
- b. Admit them, learn from them and move on

### 6. Make a difference

- a. Making the world a better place starts with you
- b. Model the behaviour that you would like to see from others

## Statutory Framework

From February 2018, statutory guidance 'Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children' from the Department for Education, issued under sections 20(4) and 20A(4) of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 means that the governing bodies of maintained schools, academy proprietors and the designated staff member at maintained schools and academies must have regard to it when promoting the educational attainment of looked-after and previously looked-after children.

## Related policies and documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), DfE 2022

[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#), July 2018

[Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children](#), DfE February 2018

[The Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children](#), DfE February 2018

[Improving the Attainment of Looked After Children in Primary Schools Guidance for Schools](#), DfE 2009

[Information Sharing - advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers](#), July 2018

[Children and Young Persons Act 2008](#)

[TEFAT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Sept 2022](#)

School local safeguarding arrangements (available on each school's website)

[Pupil premium: virtual school heads' responsibilities](#), March 2015

## Definitions

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 fall into four main groups:

- Children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- Children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- Children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
- Children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21).

The term 'In Care' refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the Court under Section 31 of the Children Act 1989 - they may live with Foster Carers, in a Children's Home, in a Residential School, with relatives or with parents under supervision.

Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are 'accommodated' by the local authority under Section 20 of the Children Act – they may live in foster care, in a children's home or in a residential school.

A child who is 'previously looked-after' is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales. Children who were adopted from state care elsewhere in the world are also previously looked-after children, but do not qualify for the Pupil Premium Plus.

## **1. Policy statement and objectives**

- 1.1. The objective of the policy is to promote the educational achievement and welfare of looked-after pupils and previously looked-after pupils as defined under section 52 of the Children Act 2004.
- 1.2. This policy outlines our approach to meeting the requirements set out in The Children and Young Persons Act 2008 and 'Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children' DfE February 2018.

## **2. Roles and responsibilities**

### **2.1. The Trust**

- Provide guidance through Trust wide related policies and documents (listed previously)
- Monitor the provision, achievement and wellbeing of looked-after children and previously looked-after children through regular monitoring: annual safeguarding audit, regular visits by Regional Directors, monitoring of school improvement plans and self evaluation, risk register and MIS systems data analysis
- Liaise with the Principal, Designated Teacher and LA Virtual School Head to ensure funding is allocated and used effectively

## 2.2. The Principal

The Principal is responsible for the educational provision and achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after on roll. The Principal must:

- Appoint a Designated Teacher for looked-after children and previously looked-after children even if there are none currently on the school roll
- Ensure that the Designated Teacher has relevant and current training in order to ensure that the role is fulfilled to a high standard
- Ensure that the Designated Teacher is in regular contact with the LA's Virtual School Head and receives appropriate support and guidance from the Virtual School Team
- Meet regularly with the Designated Teacher to monitor attendance, progress and wellbeing of looked-after children and previously looked-after children and be informed of any barriers to learning
- Ensure the Pupil Premium funding is used effectively to support and accelerate the achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children

## 2.3. The Designated Teacher

- Ensure attendance at appropriate training and Local Authority Virtual School updates
- Promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how looked-after children and previously looked-after children learn
- Be a source of advice for staff about differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children alongside use of appropriate assessment systems
- Ensure children new to the school are supported and inducted appropriately and assessed in a timely manner
- Make sure that looked-after children and previously looked-after children are prioritised in one-to-one tuition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home
- Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of the child's PEP within the school and liaise with outside agencies
- Make sure the young person has a voice in setting learning targets
- Have ultimate responsibility for leading the process of target setting for individual looked-after children and previously looked-after children in school and rigorously tracking their wellbeing and attainment progress
- Implement and monitor pupil premium arrangements in accordance with DfE guidance to promote achievement
- Liaise with LA Virtual School Head and carers/parents to agree how pupil premium funding will be used
- Coordinate and oversee record keeping for all looked-after children and previously looked-after children in school
- Liaise and cooperate with appropriate partners and agencies, in particular the Virtual School Team in the Local Authority to support their role as corporate parents ensuring appropriate education provision is in place
- Ensure any emerging concerns are followed up in a timely manner such as changes in behaviour, attendance issues
- Values the views of carers and parents, corporate parents, residential care workers

and other specialists/agencies

- 2.4. The named Designated Safeguarding Lead for TEFAT is Caroline Oliver, Regional Director for East Anglia. The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is Travis Latham, Senior Regional Director for West Midlands. The TEFAT Trustee for Safeguarding is Allan Shephard.

### **3. Admissions**

- 3.1. Academies will prioritise looked-after children in Admissions Policies
- 3.2. Academies will ensure that looked-after children are admitted promptly after a request for a place has been made so as to avoid unnecessary disruption to the child's schooling
- 3.3. Request records from the pupil's previous school and promptly arrange a meeting with carer/parent/Social Worker as appropriate. This will provide information to inform the Personal Education Plan. An appropriate school induction will take place.

### **4. Personal Education Plan (PEP)**

- 4.1. All looked-after children will have a current PEP
- 4.2. If a looked-after child joins the school without a PEP, the designated teacher should pursue the matter with the child's Social Worker who has a statutory duty to initiate the PEP
- 4.3. The school will work alongside the assigned Social Worker to contribute to the education content of the PEP
- 4.4. When a child leaves the school, it is the duty of the designated teacher to ensure that the PEP is passed on to the next designated teacher

### **5. Additional Educational Needs**

- 5.1. Any special educational needs must be promptly and correctly identified bearing in mind that looked-after children and previously looked-after children may have missed schooling
- 5.2. Any additional needs must be addressed clearly in the child's PEP with clear steps and interventions to help the child catch up with their peers

- 5.3. Suitable learning support utilising the pupil premium funding, where appropriate, must be provided to secure this provision
- 5.4. The child's progress must be tracked carefully to evaluate which interventions are most effective in helping the child close any gaps in learning
- 5.5. The SENCO and Designated Teacher will be responsible for liaising with carers and other professionals, including the Virtual School Head

## **6. Information Sharing**

- 6.1. Appropriate and specific arrangements for sharing reliable data should be in place to ensure that the educational needs of looked-after children can be understood and met.
- 6.2. This is particularly important in relation to the tracking and monitoring of attainment data and notifications of where children, including those placed out-of-authority are being educated. The arrangements should set out:
  - who has access to what information and how the security of data will be ensured
  - how children and parents are informed of, and allowed to challenge, information that is kept about them
  - how carers contribute to and receive information
  - mechanisms for sharing information between relevant Local Authority departments and the school
  - how relevant information about individual children is passed promptly between the school and authorities, departments and new schools when children move

## **7. Suspension and Permanent Exclusion**

- 7.1. It is important to be especially sensitive in relation to suspensions and exclusions where looked-after children and previously looked-after children are concerned.
- 7.2. Every practicable means should be tried to maintain the child in school. Where a child is at risk of Permanent Exclusion the Local Authority and any other external agency supporting the child must be made aware. Permanent Exclusion of these children should be an absolute last resort.