
LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED-AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

Person(s) Responsible:	Mrs N Everson
Governors' Committee:	Student Welfare & Community
Last Review Date:	Spring 2024
Next Review Date:	Spring 2025
Status:	Statutory

Vision

Collingwood College is committed to providing high quality education for all its students, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) face many barriers that prevent them from achieving their potential and we are committed to improving their life chances and helping them to succeed in their education

Looked After Children (LAC) are those who have either been taken into Care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement) Most Looked After Children 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 natural parent(s).

Previously Looked-After Children are those that are no longer looked after in England and Wales because they are the subject of Adoption, Special Guardianship or Child Arrangements Order, or were adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales

Aims

- To bring the educational achievement of LAC or PLAC in line with all students
- To champion the needs of LAC or PLAC
- To raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes in order to maximise their attainment
- To prioritise their education, promote attendance and target support to achieve stability and continuity

Core Principles

The Governing Board is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in the Children Act 1989; the Children Act (2004); the Children & Young Person's Act 2008; The Designated Teacher (Looked-After Pupils etc.) (England) Regulations 2009; the DCSF 00523-2009 Improving the Educational Attainment of Children in Care (Looked After Children) 2009; and following amendments made by the 2017 Act, section 20A of the 2008 Act and Section 2E of the Academies Act 2010.

The Children Act 2004 places a duty to safeguard Looked-After Children, to promote their educational achievements and to ensure that they are able to "achieve to and reach their full potential". The Guidance recognises the collective responsibility of local authorities and schools to achieve good parenting and sets out six principles:

- prioritising education;
- having high expectations;
- inclusion (changing and challenging attitudes);
- achieving continuity and stability;
- early intervention & prioritising action; and
- listening to children.

Collingwood College is committed to co-operating with the Local Authority Virtual School Head (VSH) so that the Local Authority can track closely the progress of every child in care and ensure that they receive the support they need. (A VSH is someone appointed by the local authority to promote the educational achievement of all the children looked after by that authority.)

We are committed to prioritising a systematic, disciplined tracking of the education and care of LAC, with early identification and personalised support.

We will:

- Appoint a designated teacher to promote the education achievement of LAC/PLAC
- Ensure that the designated teacher is a member of the teaching staff with appropriate seniority, professional experience and status to provide leadership, training, information and advice to others that will influence decisions about the teaching and learning needs of LAC/PLAC
- Ensure that through their training and development 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 LAC/PLAC
- Ensure the designated teacher role contributes to the deeper understanding of everyone in the College who is likely to be involved in supporting LAC/PLAC
- Ensure that information will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respects the confidentiality of the students concerned
- Ensure that the College's other policies and procedures give LAC/PLAC equal access

Roles and responsibilities

The designated teacher will:

- Ensure a smooth and welcoming induction for the student, carer/s and parent/s, including recording and specific requirements, such as care status and dates on SIMS for Census information and data analysis.
- Be responsible for understanding the wider needs of the LAC student, including how the gaps in their learning and the emotional impact of their experiences may have become significant barriers to their progress.
- Work closely with the VSH to promote the education of the LAC/PLAC
- Ensure that a high quality and robust Personal Education Plan (PEP) is completed and reviewed termly. This should be prepared with the student, carer/s (and parent/s if possible), in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies.
- Provide written information to assist multi-professional planning/review meetings and ensure attendance at these meetings, as far as possible.
- Co-ordinate support for the student in the College and liaise with other professionals and carer/s as necessary, focusing on how everyone contributes to promoting the LAC/PLAC student's educational achievement.
- Be an advocate for LAC/PLAC and provide leadership to ensure focus on LAC/PLAC as a vulnerable group. This includes contributing to the development and review of whole College policies to ensure that they do not unintentionally put LAC/PLAC at a disadvantage. Also to make sure, in partnership with other staff, that there are effective and well-understood College procedures in place to support a LAC/PLAC's learning and well-being.

- Ensure confidentiality for individual LAC/PLAC, sharing personal information on a need to know basis, whilst equipping staff with information necessary for identification, differentiation if appropriate, achievement and success.
- Be a source of advice for teachers to enable them to understand the potential barriers to progress and/or the factors behind issues (such as negative behaviour) which ultimately affect how a LAC/PLAC student learns and achieves.
- Seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the student is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded.
- Be involved in any discussions related to decisions about potential exclusions and make sure that the Local Authority and the LAC/PLAC student's carer/s are involved in such a decision.
- Track attendance, behaviour and attainment on a termly basis, using this information to act as an advocate for LAC/PLAC in order to recommend interventions as appropriate.
- Assist with transition planning between Key Stages or educational establishments.

All staff will:

- Have high aspirations for LAC/PLAC;
- Support entry to appropriate examinations for LAC/PLAC;
- Be familiar with the LAC/PLAC procedures 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 LAC/PLAC is experiencing difficulty.

Governor Responsibility

The Governing Board of the College will:

1. Nominate a Governor who links with the designated teacher, receives regular progress reports, provides feedback to the Governing Board and engages in training.
2. Review the annual report on LAC/PLAC to make overall judgements about the designated teacher role in the context of wider College planning in relation to;
 - any workload issues arising as a result of the number of LAC/PLAC on roll at the College and the number of local authorities which are involved;
 - levels of progress made by LAC/PLAC who are currently, or have been, on roll within the past twelve months in relation to all children at the College;
 - whether the pattern of attendance and exclusions for LAC/PLAC is different to that of all children;
 - whether any are identified as gifted and talented and how those needs are being met
 - whether any have special education needs (SEN) and whether those needs are being met;
 - whether the College is making the fullest possible use of all available resources, such as one-to-one tuition and Pupil Premium Funding, in order to provide the maximum opportunity for LAC/PLAC;
 - whether any LAC/PLAC have mental health needs and whether those needs are being identified and met.
 - Whether the College policies are sensitive to the needs of LAC/PLAC, for example, out of hours learning, flexible Behaviour Management policy and meeting the needs of identified in the PEP.
 - What impact Pupil Premium Plus has in supporting the education achievement of LAC/PLAC
3. Ensure that the College's admission criteria prioritise LAC/PLAC according to the Code of Practice on Admissions and are aware of Local Authority responsibility for stability of schooling and the use of transport to ensure this.