



Cared for Children Policy

Approved by The Youth Engagement Schools Trust: April 2024

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PURPOSE OF A CARED FOR CHILDREN POLICY

The Raise Academy is committed to providing high quality education for all its students based on equality of access, opportunity and outcome.

Throughout this policy we refer to Cared for Children (CfC). CfC appertaining both Cared for Children (CfC) and Previously Cared for Children.

We aim to contribute towards achieving the five outcomes:

- Stay safe
- Be healthy
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well being

To that end the school will:

- Ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for CfC and previously CfC, as for all children
- Ensure that all CfC have a broad and balanced curriculum
- Provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual's needs and abilities
- Ensure that CfC take as full a part as possible in all school activities
- Ensure that carers and social workers of CfC are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment
- Enable CfC to achieve educational outcomes as good as their peers
- Ensure that CfC are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision.

DEFINITION OF CHILDREN IN CARE

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 courts 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. All these groups are said to be 'Cared for Children' - CfC. They may be looked after by our local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

However, whether a child/young person is subject to Section 30 or Section 21 does not affect where that child lives whilst being looked after by the local authority.

This can be with:

- Foster carers
- In the residential network
- In a residential school
- With kinship carers.

If a child/young person is in receipt of respite care which exceeds 20 days in one episode or is over 120 days in a year, that child is also considered to be an accommodated, looked after child.

ADMISSIONS

The Local Support Board (LSB) endorses LA's 'Guidance: Duty to Promote the Educational Achievement of Children in Care'. This appertains to the government guidance document [Promoting the education of looked-after](#)

[children and previously looked-after children: Statutory guidance for local authorities, February 2018.](#)

The Academy believes that admissions criteria should not discriminate against CfC students. Due to care placement changes, CfC may enter school mid-term. It is vital that we give them a positive welcome. If necessary, we may offer additional support and pre-entry visits to help the new student settle.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Rationale for Roles and Responsibilities

Cared for Children are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational underachievement when compared to their peers. For example, they may experience:

- A high level of disruption and change in school placements
- Lack of involvement in extra-curricular activities
- Inconsistent or no attention paid to homework

This may result in:

- Poor exam success rates in comparison with the general population
- Underachievement in further and higher education

These issues may also affect adopted young people.

The majority of children who remain in care are there because they have suffered abuse or neglect. To date the outcomes achieved by CfC have been unacceptably poor and the Government is committed to addressing this disparity. As corporate parents we all have a part to play in this by vigorously applying the principles of good parenting by:

- Giving priority to education
- Listening to children
- Providing stability and continuity
- Taking corporate responsibility
- Promoting inclusion

- Raising standards
- Intervening early
- Promoting early years' experiences
- Celebrating success.

THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED MEMBER OF STAFF

Be an advocate for CfC within the school.

- Promote positive support systems for CfC.
- Ensure co-operation between the school and the social worker takes place to produce and review the Personal Education Plan for each child in local authorities care.
 - Attend meetings where appropriate.
 - Maintain the register of Cared for Children.
 - Ensure school staff are aware of the Guidelines and Procedures.
 - Ensure the monitoring of the child's attainments and progress is undertaken.
 - Ensure data on a child's attainments and progress is maintained and readily available.
 - Ensure any SEN needs are met.
 - Intervene if there is evidence of individual under-achievement.
 - Inform members of staff of the general needs, including educational needs, of Cared for Children.
 - Ensure records are passed on if a CfC transfers schools.
 - Ensure Post 16 careers advice and support are implemented.
- Produce a short annual report for Associates of the board on the progress made by Cared for Children to ensure accountability of this area of the school's work.

THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED ASSOCIATE

The role of the School Associate, (link LSB Member) who acts as a champion, is to ensure that the policy and practice in school supports children in Halton care rather than having direct involvement with the children themselves.

The School Associate should monitor policy and practice in their school to ensure that:

- There is a Designated member of staff for Cared for Children.
- Cared for Children have equal access to all aspects of school life, including the National Curriculum, examinations, careers guidance, extra-curricular activities, work experience and additional educational support.
- There is an ethos of support and acceptance in the school for children who do not live with their birth families:
- Targets for cared for children are realistic but aspirations are high for these students.
- Where the child/young person is at risk of exclusion or excluded that they are treated in the same way and offered the same support as any other student. The Children in the Local Authorities Care Team can offer advice and support to School Associates who are champions of CfC.

Further guidance on the role of the Designated Associate for cared for Children can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683561/The_designated_teacher_for_looked-after_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE WHOLE SCHOOL

Be aware of their Corporate Parenting responsibility.

- Provide an ethos of acceptance and challenge negative stereotypes
- Ensure appropriately high expectations of Cared for Children
- Consult and involve children in the decisions taken about themselves if deemed age-appropriate
- Be aware that, for many Cared for Children, bullying is an issue; ensure that the school's anti-bullying policy operates
- Consider how extra academic and pastoral support can be provided for Cared for Children if it is needed
- Ensure that Cared for Children have every opportunity to participate fully in the national curriculum, examinations, careers guidance, extra-curricular activities, work experience and additional educational support

- Ensure there is sensitivity to the background of Cared for Children in teaching, especially in work on families and/or family trees
- Respect the confidentiality of Cared for Children and ensure that any information is shared strictly on a need-to-know basis
- Ensure that behaviour management policies recognise and make suitable provision for the needs and difficulties of Cared for Children
- Take appropriate action as soon as there may be any problems with behaviour or attendance
- Involve appropriate carers/parents in home/school arrangements
- Ensure that any Cared for Children who may have learning difficulties are appropriately supported/assessed/ resourced

REFERENCES

- [1989 Children Act](#)
- Ofsted – <https://socialcareinspection.blog.gov.uk/2017/04/12/the-education-of-children-in-care>
- [Children Act 2004](#)
- [Supporting Looked After Leavers: A Practical Guide for School Associates \(DfES 2005\)](#)
- LA's 'Guidance: Duty to promote the educational achievement of looked after children'
- https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683561/The_designated_teacher_for_looked-after_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf
- [Halton Virtual School](#)
- [St. Helens Virtual School](#)