

Designated Teacher for Looked After and previously Looked After Children Policy

Contents

Section	Page
1.0 Policy statement	3
2.0 Scope and purpose	3
3.0 Definitions	3
4.0 Barriers for a Child a who is Looked After	3
5.0 Role of the governing body	3
6.0 Role of the designated teacher for CLA and PLAC	4
7.0 Role and responsibilities of all staff	4



1.0 Policy statement

Dixons Academies Trust is fully committed to supporting Children who are Looked After or are a have previously been a Looked After Child. Department for Education guidance makes it clear that all schools have a statutory duty to ensure that students who fall into the categories above are well supported to ensure they achieve their potential at school, Dixons schools take this guidance seriously. As an Academy Trust whose mission is to tackle social and educational disadvantaged, supporting the most vulnerable is at the core of why the organisation exists.

2.0 Scope and purpose

- Identify a designated teacher in all academies to support a child who is looked after or previously looked after.
- Ensure that academies are clear on their responsibilities and take these seriously.
- Recognise the importance of staff training on the barriers a child who is looked after may face and how to support them with these barriers.
- Highlight the need for multi – agency work around the most vulnerable.
- Provide families with information on the duties and responsibilities of academies for a child who is looked after.
- The policy is underpinned by and compliant with:
 - Department for Education’s statutory guidance on the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after-children
 - Section 2E of the Academies Act 2010
 - Section 20 of the 2008 Act

3.0 Definitions

3.1 **Child Looked After (CLA)** are students that in the care of a local authority and / or provided with accommodation by a local authority for a continuous period of more than 24 hours.

3.2 **Previously looked-after children (PLAC)** are registered students that fall into either of these categories:

- They were looked after by a local authority but ceased to be as a result of any of the following:
 - a child arrangements order, which includes arrangements relating to who the child lives with and when they are to live with them
- a special guardianship order
- an adoption order

3.3 **Personal education plan (PEP)** is part of a looked-after child’s care plan that is developed with the school. It forms a record of what needs to happen and who will make it happen to ensure the child reaches their full potential.

3.4 **Virtual school head (VSH)** is a local authority officer responsible for promoting the educational achievement of their authority’s looked-after children, working across schools to monitor and support these students as if they were in a single school. The VSH is also responsible for providing information and advice to schools, parents.

4.0 Barriers for a Child a who is Looked After

4.1 Attainment data for looked-after and previously looked-after children shows that they do not perform as well at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 when compared to non-looked-after children.

4.2 Students will have suffered disrupted learning, may have missed extended periods of school, and many of them have special educational needs (SEN). The gaps in their learning and, in many cases the emotional impact of their experiences, are likely to have become significant barriers to their progress. The complexity of this fragmented educational experience with high incidence of SEN, needs careful assessment and planning and needs to involve a multi-agency approach.

4.3 The support that academies and designated teachers give to students should not be seen in isolation. Students will need a wide range of support mechanisms that will assist in promoting their educational achievement. The students’ foster carer (or residential care worker), social worker or, for previously looked-after children, parents or guardian, will have day-to-day responsibilities for the child. Within the local authority, the VSH will provide more strategic support or advice and information for both the child and the school.

5.0 Role of the governing body

5.1 The governing body of each academy will ensure that will have a designated qualified teach to oversee the education and support for CLA and PLAC. The governing body will ensure the designated teacher has appropriate seniority and profession experience and training to provide leadership, training, information, challenge and advice others to ensure the needs of the students are catered for.



6.0 Role of the designated teacher for CLA and PLAC

The designated teacher is the central point of contact within the academy for students who become CLA whilst on the academy roll or if a CLA is about to come onto roll. They will ensure that the academy plays its role to the full in making sure arrangements are joined up and minimise any disruption to a students' learning. Designated teachers in academies will:

- work with VSH and external agencies where needed to ensure students' needs are met through contributing to, monitoring and reviewing the PEP within statutory timescales
- ensure that academy staff understand the things which can affect how a CLA learns and achieve and how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these students
- promote a culture in which a CLA
 - is 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
 - is prioritised in any selection of students who would benefit from one-to-one tuition, and that they have access to academic focused study support
 - is encouraged to participate in academy activities and in decision making within the school and the care system
- liaise with curriculum staff to ensure that CLA is a priority for interventions and tailored lessons
- ensure that there are positive and productive relationships with home which foster the development of the student
- work closely with the academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that any safeguarding concerns are quickly and effectively responded to
- fully involve parents and guardians in decisions affecting their child's education, including any requests to the Virtual School Head for advice on meeting their individual needs

7.0 Role and responsibilities of all staff

Staff in each academy will work hard to ensure that a CLA achieves their potential and is supported by:

- having equally high expectations of all students but providing appropriate scaffolds and supports
- being aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation (attachment awareness) from birth families and understand that some children may find it difficult to build relationships of trust with adults because of their experiences, and how this might affect the child's behaviour
- understanding how important it is to see the student as an individual rather than as a homogeneous group, not publicly treat them differently from their peers, and show sensitivity about who else knows about their background