



**KINGSTONE ACADEMY TRUST
APPROVED POLICY DOCUMENT**

Looked After Children Policy 2019-2021

Relevant School/s:	KHS and KTPS
Policy Officer:	E. Vigus and R. Ruvino
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Looked After Children Policy

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1. Introduction and Context

Kingstone Academy Trust is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. Nationally, Looked After Children significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion, compared with their peers. Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that Looked After Children are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being.

Please refer to the Herefordshire Council website for specific information regarding the Virtual School for Looked After Children in Herefordshire:

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200227/support_for_schools_and_settings/484/herefordshire_virtual_school_for_looked_after_children

2. Definition

Who are Looked After Children?

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 'Looked After Children' -LAC. They may be looked after by Herefordshire local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

LAC reviews, involving the school, will take place up until an adoption order has been granted. However Pupil Premium Plus funding will continue for LAC until they are 16 years old.

3. Aims

Kingstone Academy Trust will:

- Provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children.
- Support our Looked After Children and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential, enjoy learning and take as full a part as possible in all school activities.
- Ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for LAC as for all children.
- Work with the Virtual School and ensure that carers and social workers of LAC pupils are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment.
- To fulfil our schools' role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our Looked After Children, by asking the question, '**Would this be good enough for my child?**'

Kingstone Academy Trust's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education
- Promoting attendance
- Targeting support
- Having high expectations and raising aspiration
- Promoting inclusion
- Achieving stability and continuity
- Early intervention and priority action
- Listening to children
- Promoting health and well-being
- Minimising exclusions and promoting stability
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals

4. Actions and Responsibilities

The role of Designated Teacher (DT) became statutory in September 2009 under the Children and Young Persons' Act 2008 (the 2008 Act). The designated teacher must be a qualified teacher or a member of staff who is likely to gain QTS by September 2014. Ideally, s/he should be a senior member of staff who has enough status and experience to advise and provide training to school staff on issues relating to LAC. They need to be able to influence decisions about the teaching and learning of these children.

The Executive Headteacher will ensure that:

- There is a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children, whose role is set out below. It is essential that another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take sick leave.

- Procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusion of Looked After Children and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Reports on the progress, attendance and conduct of Looked After Children are distributed to all parties involved.
- Staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

The Designated Teacher will:

- know who all the LAC are in school and ensuring that availability of all relevant details from school record-keeping systems as required.
- Attend relevant training about LAC and acting as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to LAC
- Promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how LAC should learn.
- Help school staff understand the issues that affect the learning of LAC such as differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children.
- Ensure that LAC are prioritised in intervention and transition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home.
- Removing the barriers to learning for LAC.
- Ensure any LAC new to the school are welcomed positively and assessed when they start at the school to identify strengths and weaknesses in their learning. This will be used to inform planning and teaching.
- Develop personalised learning packages for LAC in conjunction with the relevant teaching staff.
- Ensure that the LAC in their school have a voice in setting learning targets for themselves.
- Be a champion for LAC.
- Lead on developing and implementing the PEP / e-PEP within the school. The social worker is responsible for initiating the PEP process completing the front page of the PEP form.
- Monitor the child's progress against the targets on the PEP and extend these targets if they have been achieved.
- Ensure the child makes a smooth transition to the new school and that the child's records are transferred without delay.
- Liaise with the Virtual School in all aspects of the LAC progress and support.
- Convene urgent multi-agency meetings if a LAC is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion.
- Arrange for a mentor or key worker to whom the young person can talk to. Arranging for the LAC to be supported by its peers.
- Produce at least one annual report to the governing body which should include: current progress, attendance and exclusions (if any), any concerns regarding behaviour, how the PEP has been implemented and whether the actions put in place are effective in addressing the learning needs of LAC, how the Designated Teacher works in partnership with the LA, training undertaken for carrying out the role effectively. The report must not mention the children's names for confidentiality reasons.

- Promote good home-school links and the importance of education as a way of improving life chances for LAC.

The Trustees will ensure that:

- The DT is given the appropriate level of support in order to fulfil their role.
- In partnership with the head teacher, ensure that, through their training and development, the DT has the opportunity to acquire and keep up-to-date the necessary skills, knowledge and training to understand the respond to the specific teaching and learning needs of LAC.
- Trustees and the SLT should make sure that the DT role contributes to the deeper understanding of everyone in the school who is likely to be involved in supporting LAC to achieve.
- The Trustees, in partnership with the head teacher, are responsible for monitoring how well the role is working. As part of this monitoring an annual report will be received from the DT.

The responsibility of the all staff is to:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children, as for all pupils.
- Maintain Looked After Children's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- Work to enable Looked After Children to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all Looked After Children.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of Looked After Children.
- Be aware that nationally, a high proportion of Looked After Children say they are bullied so work to prevent bullying in line with the Academy's policy.

Confidentiality

Information on looked after children will be shared with school staff on a "need to know" basis The Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with which school staff at the PEP meeting. Once this has been agreed with the social worker, carer, young person, and other parties, complete confidentiality is to be maintained.

5. Notes to the Policy

This policy links with a number of other school policies including, but not restricted to:

- Equality Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Admission Policy

All Trustees have regard to the need of Looked After Children when reviewing all relevant policies and procedures.