

VOYAGE LEARNING CAMPUS



LOOKED AFTER CHILD POLICY

This policy has been adopted by the Management Committee on:	
Date adopted:	9 th May 2018
Signed:	
Next review due:	May 2020

Voyage Learning Campus (VLC) Looked After Children Policy and Guidance

1. General Policy Statement

At the Voyage Learning Campus (VLC) we strive to provide a safe, secure, caring environment where everyone is valued and respected equally. We aim to provide an inclusive education where children develop independent learning skills and are taught according to need whatever their age, gender, background, beliefs or abilities. National legislation regarding disabilities, special education needs, equality, race relations and related aspects underpin this policy which also reflects other national and Campus policies and guidance.

2. The Education of children looked after by the Local Authority (LA)

The VLC aims to maximise opportunity for every student to succeed. Children and young people who are looked after by local authorities are one of the groups most likely to underachieve nationally. The Campus is committed to supporting looked after students to achieve their full potential alongside other students, to enjoy their learning and to experience success in school.

3. Aims

- 3.1 To work together with the Local Authority, Vulnerable Learners Service and Virtual School for Looked After Children and all other stakeholders in an effective partnership to ensure that students' needs are met.
- 3.2 To contribute to the provision of a successful and integrated service for students who are looked after by the LA.
- 3.3 To ensure that children who are looked after have equality of opportunity in school, enabling them to access, experience and benefit from education in the normal way alongside peers and respecting their right to anonymity if this is their wish.
- 3.4 This policy recognises that all students are entitled to a balanced, broadly based curriculum. Our policy reinforces the need for teaching and learning that is fully inclusive. The Management Committee will ensure that the VLC makes appropriate provision for all Looked After Children (LAC).
- 3.5 To comply with the LA guidelines on the education and care of LAC and young people.
- 3.6 To ensure these aims are achieved the Campus will:
 - Identify a designated teacher in each of its separate provisions to co-ordinate the education of LAC, to ensure that staff in the provision are aware of any LAC, know each carer and understand individual circumstances including parental rights and access.

- Liaise effectively with other agencies involved with the child and attend review meetings
- Work in partnership with carers, parents and others with parental responsibility to ensure that LAC receive their full entitlements including provision and access to Campus news and information
- Ensure that all records are kept and maintained appropriately
- Provide information to the Management Committee and LA about the progress and outcomes of LAC on the campus roll

4. Monitoring the progress of Looked After Children

- 4.1 The VLC assesses each Looked After Child's attainment on entry to ensure continuity of learning. The VLC initiates a Personal Education Plan – PEP - within **10 working days** of the student joining the school, or of entering care, and ensures that the young person is actively involved. Following the initial PEP, the role of the Designated Teacher is to liaise with other agencies involved to arrange further PEP review meetings and provide copies of the PEP to the social worker, Carer (or other Virtual School, where the child is from another Local Authority) and other agencies.
- 4.2 Ensure the Designated Teacher attends relevant training and that they are fully aware of statutory responsibilities and procedures for LAC.

5. Staff Development

We encourage staff to attend courses that help them acquire the skills needed to support a LAC. Part of the Designated Teacher's role is to raise awareness of issues associated with LAC within the school and disseminate information.

6. Roles and Responsibilities within the Campus

6.1 The Management Committee

Committee members will fulfil their responsibilities to LAC through:

- Ensuring that this policy is implemented;
- Nominating a committee member to maintain interest in the well being of looked after children with the Head of the Virtual School as a committee member;
- Ensuring that the Management Committee takes up suitable training opportunities;
- Monitoring appropriate training for Campus staff.

6.2 The Vice Principals and Senior Assistant Vice Principals

6.2.1 Have day to day responsibility for the management and organisation of their individual sites and are the first point of contact for any matters relating to the students.

6.3 The Principal

6.3.1 The **Principal** will fulfil responsibility to LAC through:

- Ensuring that this policy is approved by the Management Committee and that it is reviewed on a regular basis;
- Ensuring that any practical guidelines needed to ensure the well being of any particular child are identified;
- Nominating a teacher in each setting to take pastoral responsibility and ensure the well being and education of LAC;
- Monitoring and informing of the legal position with regard to parental access, provision of Campus reports;
- Promoting the role of key workers and carers;
- Ensuring sensitivity relating to the child's past experiences;
- Managing any other relevant information.

6.3.2 The **Principal** should report periodically to the Management Committee on:

- The admission of any Looked After Children
- Progress and achievement of Looked After Children
- Significant issues, events or incidents involving Looked After Children
- The level of attendance in relation to school averages

6.3.3 The **Principal** should ensure appropriate training opportunities are taken up and promote and maintain good working relationships with other key personnel on other agencies

6.4 The Designated Teachers (DT)

The DT will fulfil their responsibility to the LAC through:

- Liaising with the Senior Management Team (SMT), foster carers/carers and other agency workers as requested to ensure a coherent approach across services;
- Being aware of the care plan for each child;
- Contributing to the development and maintenance of a personal education plan in partnership with other relevant professionals;

- Knowing who has parental responsibility for the child;
- Knowing who are the primary carers;
- Ensuring that information is provided for those who are entitled to receive it;
- Working sensitively with information to ensure that LAC are not exposed to inappropriate or intrusive attention from staff or pupils;
- Establishing good relationships and lines of communication with key workers and foster carers;
- Contributing to or attending meetings as requested;
- Maintaining an overview of the experiences and education of the child;
- Participating in appropriate training to develop the skills and knowledge needed to support the LAC.
- To maintain an up to date register of LAC and inform colleagues on a need to know basis. Sensitivity and confidentiality are critical.
- Working with the SLT to jointly coordinate / deliver training to staff and Management Committee members, so they are aware of complex issues and educational disadvantage affecting many LAC.
- To ensure all teachers in the particular provision know when there is a LAC in their class and what the child's specific needs are.
- To be the first point of contact for other professionals working with LAC.
- To ensure that the student has an up to date Personal Education Plan (PEP) and ensure that actions identified in the plan are implemented and received at least annually.

6.5 VLC Staff

All school staff will;

- positively promote the raising of a LAC's self-esteem
- have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of LAC
- keep the Designated Teacher informed about a LAC's progress
- ensure any LAC is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained

- follow school procedures
- be familiar with the VLC's policy and guidance on LAC and respond appropriately to requests for information to support PEPs and review meetings
- liaise with the Designated Teachers where a LAC is experiencing difficulties
- keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to the Designated Teacher

Due to the vulnerability of the students at the Pupil Referral Unit and in order to meet our students Health and Safety needs and meet our safeguarding responsibilities, all students at the Voyage Learning Campus are required to be living with an adult with parental responsibility.