



**KINGSTONE ACADEMY TRUST
APPROVED POLICY DOCUMENT**

Children Looked After Policy 2023-24

Relevant School/s:	KHS and KTPS
Policy Officer:	E. Vigus and R. Williams
Approved By:	Board of Trustees
Date of Review:	September 2023
Next Review:	Annually
Distribution:	Public, on website

Children Looked After Policy

Kingstone Academy Trust aims to provide a fair, transparent, equally-applied and auditable admissions policy for all pupils, whatever their time of joining the school, and to provide a method for appeals and complaints to be heard fairly, and in a timely manner.

Elissa Vigus: Designated Teacher for Children Looked After – KTPS

Rowena Williams: Designated Teacher for Children Looked After – KHS

Maureen Douglas: Designated Trustee for Children Looked After - KAT

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, Children Looked After significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion, compared with their peers. Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that Children Looked After 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 Children Looked After in Herefordshire:

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

2. Definition

Who are Children Looked After?

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

CLA reviews, involving the school, will take place up until an adoption order has been granted. However Pupil Premium Plus funding will continue for CLA 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 Children Looked After 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 Children Looked After, as for all children.
- Work with the Virtual School and ensure that carers and social workers of Children Looked After are kept fully informed of their progress and attainment in school.
- To fulfil our schools' role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our Children Looked After, by asking the question, '**Would this be good enough for my child?**'

Kingstone Academy Trust's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Children Looked After 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 CLA. They need to be able to influence decisions about the teaching and learning of these children.

The Chief Executive Officer will ensure that:

- There is a Designated Teacher for Children Looked After, 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 Children Looked After and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Reports on the progress, attendance and conduct of Children Looked After 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 CLA are in school and ensuring that availability of all relevant details from school record-keeping systems as required.
- Attend relevant training about CLA and acting as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to CLA
- Promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how CLA should learn.
- Help school staff understand the issues that affect the learning of CLA such as differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children.
- Ensure that CLA are prioritised in intervention and transition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home.
- Removing the barriers to learning for CLA.
- Ensure any CLA 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 CLA in conjunction with the relevant teaching staff.
- Ensure that the CLA in their school have a voice in setting learning targets for themselves.
- Be a champion for CLA.
- 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 CLA progress and support.
- Convene urgent multi-agency meetings if a CLA 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 CLA 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 CLA, 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 CLA.

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 CLA.
- Trustees and the ALT 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 CLA 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 all staff is to:

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

Confidentiality

Information on Children Looked After 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 Children Looked After when reviewing all relevant policies and procedures.

Policy Established: February 2019

Date for Review: Annually