



# CHILDREN WHO ARE LOOKED AFTER POLICY

**September 2021**

Date for Review: September 2022

## **Important coronavirus (COVID-19) update**

This policy has been updated in line with the current guidance from the UK government. The JMAT and its schools are following all COVID-secure measures in line with both national and local information. Visitors to school are expected to observe all measures.

All PEP meetings and LAC reviews may be conducted remotely either via online platforms or telephone

The DfE coronavirus helpline is: 0800 046 8687 Monday to Friday 8 am to 6 pm, weekends is 10 am to 4 pm.

## Statement of intent

Educational achievement and subsequent life chances for looked after children are of real concern. Children and young people who are looked after require special treatment and positive discrimination in their favour in order to improve their situation.

The **James Montgomery Academy Trust (JMAT)** endeavours to provide positive experiences and offer stability, safety, continuity and individual care and attention for all our pupils. With this in mind, we aim to:

- Encourage pupils to reach the highest standards of which they are capable and to make good progress from what they are currently already able to do.
- Ensure that pupils enjoy high quality teaching and are enjoying a curriculum which meets their needs and the requirements of legislation.
- Plan realistically and using the school's resources efficiently in order to ensure the school meets the needs of the children.
- Promote a positive approach in all aspects of school life.
- Help pupils develop their cultural, moral and social understanding.

## Legal framework

This policy has due regard to legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Children Act 1989
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- The Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Coronavirus Act 2020

## Definitions

Children and young people who are looked after are defined as, children or young people who are subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989.

This definition applies to children who are placed in foster care, children's residential homes, with relatives or friends, in semi-independent or supported independent accommodation.

If a child is subject to a Care or Interim Care Order whilst placed with a parent, they are classed as looked after, since the LA has parental responsibility.

Children who are not subject to an order, but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents, are regarded as looked after.

**Previously-CLA"** are defined as:

- Children who are no longer looked after by an LA in England and Wales because they have either been adopted or are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order.
- Children who were adopted outside England and Wales from 'state care' (care that is provided by a public authority, religious organisation, or other organisation whose main purpose is to benefit society).

## **Personal education plans (PEPs)**

Every child who is looked after must have a personal education plan (PEP), which is used to support the child in fulfilling their educational potential:

- The PEP is an evolving record of what needs to happen for the child to enable them to make their expected progress.
- The PEP will reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning which meets the identified educational needs of the child.
- All the relevant bodies, such as the LA, the designated teacher and other teachers, will work with the child in creating the PEP.
- The PEP will include access to nursery provision that is appropriate to the child's age.
- On-going, catch-up support will be made available for children who have fallen behind with work.
- If a child is not in school because of suspension or exclusion, suitable education will be provided by the LA.
- If a child is moving to a new school, transitional support will be provided and will be factored into their PEP.
- School attendance and behaviour support, where appropriate.

Support will be provided to help the child meet their aspirations, including:

- Support to achieve expected levels of progress for the relevant national curriculum key stage and to complete an appropriate range of approved qualifications.
- Careers advice, guidance and financial information about further education, training and employment.
- The PEP will include extended services such as after school clubs, study support and leisure interests.
- Support will be provided for improving attendance and behaviour.

## **The designated teacher**

Under the Children and Young Persons Act 2008, all maintained schools are required to have a designated teacher for children who are looked after.

The primary duty of the designated teacher is to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after at the school.

It is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure the designated teacher has received adequate training for the role.

The designated teacher must submit an annual report to the governing body, which details the progress of children who are looked after. The designated teacher will:

- Promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations.
- Ensure the child is involved in setting their targets.
- Advise staff on teaching strategies for looked after children.
- Ensure that looked after children are prioritised for 1 – 1 tuition.
- Take responsibility for developing and implementing PEPs.

## **Communicating with agencies**

The school will ensure that copies of all relevant reports are forwarded to the looked after children's social workers, in addition to carers or residential social workers.

The school will co-ordinate their review meetings, for example, hold their annual review of looked after children with their statutory care review.

The school will work with other agencies to exchange information such as changes in circumstances, exclusions or attendance issues.

### **Headteacher responsibilities:**

- It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to oversee this policy and monitor its implementation.
- The Headteacher will make all members of staff aware that the support of children who are looked after is a key priority.
- The Headteacher will allow the designated teacher the time and facilities to succeed in carrying out their duties.
- The Headteacher will lead in actively challenging negative stereotypes of children who are looked after
- Ensuring PP+ for previously-CLA is managed effectively.

### **Staff responsibilities:**

- Staff will be aware of children who are looked after in their classes and provide them with support and encouragement.
- Staff will preserve confidentiality and show sensitivity and understanding.
- Staff will be vigilant for signs of bullying
- Staff will promote the self-esteem of children who are looked after.

### **DSL responsibilities:**

- Keeping up-to-date records of CLA's respective social worker and VSH.
- Where a child ceases to be looked after and becomes a care leaver, keeping up-to-date contact details of their LA personal advisor and liaising with the advisor as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.
- Ensure documents are shared with relevant agencies.

### **SENDCO responsibilities:**

- Ensuring they are involved in reviewing PEP and care plans for CLA and previously looked after.
- Liaising with the class teacher, designated teacher, specialists and parents when considering interventions to support the progress of previously-CLA.
- Ensure that staff are appropriately trained and informed
- Interact with mental health services if needed.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Policy review**

The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the JMAT schools.

This policy will be assessed for its implementation and effectiveness **annually** by the **DSL** and the **Safeguarding Director**.

The scheduled review date for this policy is **September 2022**.