

## The HOPE Virtual School

### Exemplar Children in Care and Previously Looked After Children's Policy

#### 1. Definition

For the purposes of this policy a **child in care** is one who is looked after within the meaning of section 22 of the Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

A **previously looked after child** is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales. A child is in 'state care' outside of England and Wales if s/he is in care of or accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.

This school recognises that CIC and PLAC are likely to have experience of **trauma** and a high number of **adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)**.

'ACEs are highly stressful, and potentially traumatic, events or situations that occur during pregnancy, childhood and/or adolescence and can have an impact on physical and mental health throughout life.' (Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership)

#### 2. Statutory guidance and requirements-

This policy should be read in conjunction with current statutory guidance. The Designated Teacher, Head Teacher and CIC/PLAC Governor will have fully read the statutory guidance and will implement requirements as necessary. Provision for CIC/PLAC will be reflected in all other policies in the school.

#### 3. Statement of commitment

Children who are in care or previously looked after children who have experienced adverse childhood experiences are highly likely to significantly underachieve in both their academic and social progress without significant and robust levels of interventions and support. Our aspiration for CIC and PLAC is for them to achieve their full potential through academic, personal, social, emotional development and to belong in our school and wider community. They will have a clear pathway for moving through their educational career with high aspirations for the future.

We at (school name) will do for CIC and PLAC what we do for all children only more so. We will ensure that CIC/PLAC excel. We will overcome their barriers to learning and enable them to leave us happy and secure in themselves, understanding that they do have control over their destiny and that education does matter. We will listen to what CIC/PLAC tell us about what they want from their education and try to address any concerns or issues raised through various means including the Children in Care Council and surveys from The HOPE, Bristol's Virtual School.

(school name) strives to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school are such that, whatever the heritage and origins of members of the school, pupils should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and celebrate diversity.

**4. (school name) will support CIC and PLAC by:**

- ensuring an effective induction when joining the school or when coming into care whilst already on the school roll
- balancing high levels of support with real challenge
- ensuring that each CIC has a high quality Personal Education Plan in line with statutory requirements
- ensuring that PLAC have a high quality Education Plan that is regularly reviewed.
- ensuring that every CIC/PLAC has a trusted adult identified within school
- making it a priority to know the children well and to build strong relationships
- developing strong relationships with families, carers, local authorities including the Virtual School Team and specialist agencies
- encouraging and supporting CIC /PLAC to take responsibility for their learning
- engaging CIC /PLAC in learning outside the classroom and after-school activities
- understanding that behaviour is communication and using a trauma informed approach
- supporting promptly if concerns emerge such as with mental health or attendance
- giving integrated but low profile support in school for each child so that they are not made to feel different from other children
- identifying and planning for all transitions e.g. change of phase, cover teacher.
- regularly monitor academic progress and attendance and report to relevant parties as required

**5. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Headteacher will:

- Identify, or be, the Designated Teacher for CIC and PLAC, whose role is set out below. It is essential that appropriate person has the capacity, support and training to complete the role.
- Ensure that should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take sick leave then another person is identified to hold the role immediately.
- Ensure that appropriate support and supervision for the designated teacher is in place to promote their wellbeing.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusions of CIC and PLAC and that timely actions are put in place if concerns arise.
- Report on the attainment, progress, attendance and inclusion of CIC to all relevant parties.
- Ensure that all staff in school receive appropriate training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.
- Ensure that Pupil Premium funding is used appropriately, evidenced and monitored within the PEP/Education plan and agreed with all parties.

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of CIC and PLAC.
- Ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of CIC and PLAC.
- Ensure that the headteacher allocates appropriate resources and staff capacity to meet the needs of CIC and PLAC

- Ensure the needs of CIC/PLAC are reflected the school's other policies and procedures.
- Support the Head teacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of CIC and PLAC are recognised and met.
- Receive a report once a year setting out
  - The number of CIC and PLAC students on the school's roll
  - Their attendance, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils.
  - Their progress, attainment, SEND and inclusion data
  - The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any)
  - The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned

Our Designated Teacher will:

- Ensure that each CIC and PLAC has an identified, trusted, member of staff that they can talk to and who will check in with them regularly. This need not be the designated teacher, but should be based on the child's own wishes.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately.
- Co-ordinate and monitor any support for the CIC and PLAC that is necessary to promote their educational progress
- Meet regularly with appropriate professionals to discuss CIC and PLAC eg DSL, SENDCo, Attendance Lead, Headteacher
- Ensure appropriate levels of confidentiality for individual children are in place.
- Encourage CIC and PLAC to join in extra-curricular activities and out of school learning.
- Ensure that the child's voice is represented and acted upon
- Ensure all meetings for the child are facilitated so that everyone involved, especially the child, feels able to attend and contribute fully.
- Act as an advocate for all CIC and PLAC within the school, providing advice to staff, senior leaders and governors.
- Set up timely meetings with relevant parties where there are concerns or pupil is at risk of exclusion.
- Ensure the appropriate transfer of information between individuals, agencies and if the pupil changes school
- Be proactive in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education.
- Ensure that the induction for CIC and PLAC is well planned and supported by the PEP/ Education Plan
- Promote inclusion for CIC and PLAC in all areas of school life.
- Ensure high expectations for attendance, that attendance is carefully monitored and any concerns addressed.
- For CIC ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed with the child, the carer, the social worker and any other relevant people, at least two weeks before the Care Plan reviews.
- For PLAC ensure that an Education Plan is completed and reviewed in partnership with families.

**Government Guidance says that the Designated Teacher should be "someone with sufficient authority to make things happen, who should be an advocate for CIC and PLAC assessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high**

**expectations for them.” It is strongly recommended that this person should be a member of the Senior Leadership Team.**

All our staff will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of CIC and PLAC, as for all students.
- Maintain CIC and PLAC confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond promptly to the designated teacher’s requests for information.
- Work to enable CIC and PLAC to achieve stability and success within school.
- Carry out any actions necessary as agreed in the PEP/Education Plan
- Promote the self-esteem of all CIC and PLAC.
- Have received appropriate training to support CIC and PLAC eg attachment, trauma, Adverse Childhood Experiences.