



Cabot
Learning
Federation

**Children in Care
and Previously
Looked After
Children Policy**

Date Adopted: February 2024

Implementation Date: September 2026

Next Review Date: September 2028

History of most recent Policy changes

Date	Page	Change	Origin of Change e.g. TU request, Change in legislation
Date	E.g., Whole Document	Detail of change	Reason for change
Jan 2024	Whole Document	Creation of new Policy based on HOPE School template	
Sept 2026	Whole document	No change	

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Children in Care and Previously Looked After Children Policy

1. Background

Children in Care (CIC) (previously called Looked After Children) often have to face and overcome significant barriers and instability in their lives. For these reasons they often underachieve and are at greater risk of suspension and exclusion compared with their peers. Schools and academies have a major part to play in ensuring that Children in Care are supported to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to their school and to society, and achieve economic wellbeing.

For the purpose of our policy and procedures, we will also incorporate Previously Looked After Children (PLAC), recognising however, that not all statutory functions apply to them but, in the main, the barriers do.

City Academy Bristol recognises that CIC and PLAC pupils are likely to have experienced 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)

At City Academy we intend to have policies and procedures in place that support CIC and PLAC pupils to excel academically to the best of their ability and to enjoy their educational experience, and we will provide the pastoral support they need to develop positive mental health and resilience.

We recognise that CIC and PLAC pupils may have a range of professionals in their lives and may have had to endure a number of changes in home and in the people who support them. For these reasons, it is particularly important that the Academy provides them with a safe and secure environment with a range of trusted adult relationships.

We recognise that the needs of CIC and PLAC pupils can easily be overlooked and that they can feel marginalised and different from their peers, and so we will prioritise their safety and well-being in all of our strategic and operational work on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

2. Definitions

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 Order 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.

3. Statutory Guidance and Requirements

This policy should be read in conjunction with current statutory guidance. The Designated Teacher, Principal and CIC /PLAC Councillor will have fully read the statutory guidance and will implement requirements as necessary.

Provision for CIC /PLAC will also be reflected in all other policies in the Academy.

This Policy takes account of:

- Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children (LAC).
- The Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006.
- Relevant DfES guidance to Governing Bodies (*Supporting Looked After Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors*).

4. Statement of Principles

Our aspiration for CIC and PLAC pupils is for them to achieve their full potential through academic, personal, social, emotional development and to feel they 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.

However, we also recognise that due to likely adverse childhood experiences, CIC and PLAC pupils may underachieve in both their academic, developmental and social progress without significant and robust levels of targeted interventions and support.

At CAB, we will do for CIC and PLAC pupils what we do for all pupils, only more so. We will ensure that CIC /PLAC pupils excel. We will support them to 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 pupils tell us about what they want from their education and try to address any concerns or issues raised and we will encourage them to be part of Pupil Voice initiatives and relevant extra-curricular activities. WE will also hear the views of the cohort, and act on them, through various means including the Children in Care Council and surveys from the HOPE, Bristol's Virtual School.

CAB strives to ensure that the culture and ethos of the Academy is such that, whatever their heritage, protected characteristics or home circumstances, all pupils are valued, and their backgrounds celebrated. They are provided with the opportunity to experience and understand diversity. We will take particular care to ensure our CIC and PLAC pupils develop

a positive self-identity and feel that they are belong in the Academy and their experience is valued.

We recognise that we may need to adjust procedures such as our Behaviour Policy or Suspensions Guidance for individual pupils to reflect the trauma that CIC or PLAC pupils may have faced.

We also recognise that CIC and PLAC pupils may need enhanced Careers Information, Advice and Guidance to successfully transfer into post-16 and we will support this along with mentoring where possible.

City Academy's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Children in Care and Previously Looked After Children is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education.
- Having high expectations
- Promoting good attendance.
- Targeting support.
- Targeting spending of Pupil Premium Plus money for CIC (with 80% spent on literacy and numeracy, as directed by Bristol Local Authority).
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes.
- Achieving stability and continuity.
- Early intervention and priority action.
- Listening to students.
- Promoting health and wellbeing.
- Reducing exclusions and promoting stability.
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals.
- Promoting careers support and advice.

CAB will specifically support CIC and PLAC pupils by:

- Ensuring they have an effective induction when joining the Academy or when coming into care whilst already on the school roll.
- Balancing high levels of support with real challenge.
- Ensuring that each Child in Care has a high-quality Personal Education Plan in line with statutory requirements.
- Ensuring that PLAC pupils have a high-quality Education Plan that is regularly reviewed.
- Ensuring that every CIC/PLAC pupil has a trusted adult identified within Academy.
- Making it a priority to know the pupils well and to build strong relationships.
- Ensuring that CIC and PLAC pupils feel safe in school and that any bullying or harassment is tackled immediately.
- Ensuring that CIC and PLAC pupils have access to high quality Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance, including mentoring where possible.
- Developing strong relationships with families, carers, local authorities including the Virtual School Team and specialist agencies.
- Encouraging and supporting CIC /PLAC pupils to take responsibility for their learning.

- Engaging CIC /PLAC pupils in learning outside the classroom and after-school activities, school trips and other enrichment activities.
- Understanding that behaviour is communication and using a trauma informed approach.
- Supporting promptly if concerns emerge such as with mental health or attendance.
- Providing integrated but low-profile support in school for each child so that they are not made to feel different from other pupils.
- Identifying and planning (with the young person and their carers) for all transitions e.g. change of phase, cover teacher.
- Regularly monitoring academic progress and attendance for individual pupils and the cohort as a whole and reporting to relevant parties as required.
- Monitoring the progress of the cohort through an Annual Report created by the Designated Teacher (see below).
- Working to prevent suspensions and exclusions and reducing time out of school, by ensuring the CAB implements policies and procedures to ensure CIC achieve and enjoy their time at the school, by recognising the extra problems caused by excluding them, and by not excluding them except as a last resort.
- Ensuring that the school has a Designated Teacher and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Supporting the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of CIC and PLAC pupils are recognised and met.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Principal will:

- Ensure the needs of CIC and PLAC pupils are a priority within strategic planning in the Academy.
- Identify the Designated Teacher for CIC and PLAC, and ensure that the appropriate person has the capacity, support and training to complete the role (set out below).
- 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 suspensions or exclusions of CIC and PLAC pupils 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 the Academy receive appropriate training and are aware of their responsibilities under this Policy and related guidance.
- Ensure that Pupil Premium funding for CIC is used appropriately, evidenced and monitored within the PEP/Education plan and agreed with all parties.
- Work to prevent any suspension or exclusions of CIC or PLAC pupils.

The Academy Council will:

- Identify a nominated Councillor for CIC and PLAC and ensure they undertake the relevant training.

- Ensure that all Academy Councillors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Children in Care and Previously Looked After Children.
- Ensure the Academy Council has an overview of the needs and progress of CIC and PLAC pupils.
- Ensure that resources are allocated to meet the needs of CIC and PLAC pupils and monitor the targeted Pupil Premium spend, ensuring the money is effectively allocated to individual pupils.
- Ensure that when other Academy policies and procedures are reviewed, the needs of CIC and PLAC pupils are considered.
- 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 the Principal allocates appropriate resources and staff capacity to meet the needs of CIC and PLAC.
- Support the Principal, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of CIC and PLAC are recognised and met, through receiving and discussing the termly report from the Link Councillor.
- Receive an Annual Report 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 compared to other pupils.
 - Their destination data compared to other pupils.
 - 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:

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.

The Designated Teacher will:

- Prepare the Annual Report and termly updates for the Council.
- Ensure that each CIC and PLAC pupil 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- often but not exclusively a member of the Pastoral Year Team.
- For CIC, ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan to plan for that transition in consultation with their social worker.
- Coordinate with pastoral staff and the Safeguarding Team to ensure CIC and PLAC pupils are being supported within the Academy by the people that work most closely with

them. This includes their involvement in the running of PEPs and day-to-day communication and procedures e.g. attendance monitoring.

- For CIC ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed with the child, the carer, the social worker, Virtual School 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.
- Track the academic progress of individual pupils and the cohort overall 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 e.g. DSL, SENDCo, Attendance Lead, Principal.
- Act as an advisor to staff and Academy Councillors, raising their awareness of the needs of CIC and PLAC pupils.
- Report any safeguarding concerns regarding CIC or PLAC pupils to the DSL.
- 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 pupil's voice is represented and acted upon.
- Ensure all meetings for the young person are facilitated so that everyone involved, especially the young person, 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 councillors.
- 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 or leaves 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.
- Promote inclusion for CIC and PLAC pupils in all areas of school life.
- Actively monitor and prevent bullying of individual pupils in school.
- Check data is updated swiftly.

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 pupils to achieve stability and success within Academy.
- 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 e.g. attachment, trauma, Adverse Childhood Experiences.

6. Monitoring and Review

This Policy will be reviewed at least every three years by the Designated Teacher in the light of any changes to legislation and Guidance and will be taken to the Academy Council for approval.