



MacIntyre Academies

Venture Academy

Children Looked After Policy

Version	Purpose/Change	Responsibility	Date
1		Principal	November 2020
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of Policy• Reference to KCSIE 2021 added• Designated Teachers added• Exclusion paragraph added	Principal	January 2022

Person responsible:	Principal
Type of policy:	Non-statutory
Date of first draft:	Sep 2020
Date of staff consultation:	
Date approved by LAB:	Nov 2020
Date of implementation:	
Date reviewed:	N/A
Date of next review:	Jan 2023

Children Looked After Policy

Note: 'Children Looked After' (CLA) has been recommended as the preferred term by accommodated children and children in care to the commonly used term 'Looked After Children'. Both terms have the same meaning.

Statement of Intent

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of Children Looked After and who have previously been Children Looked After within our school.

Children Looked After (CLA) are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. The majority of Children Looked After have suffered abuse or neglect and it is nationally recognised that considerable educational underachievement exists when compared to their peers.

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 Court 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 the Local Authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in Warwickshire or another local authority area.

In addition to this Venture Academy recognises the developmental and social impact of being formerly looked after and then returned to birth family or adopted. Venture Academy aims to promote the educational **attainment, achievement and welfare** of Children Looked After and formerly Children Looked After in both policy and practice.

The Designated Teacher for Children Looked After is a shared role at Venture as follows:

- Pupils up to and including year 7
- Pupils in years 8-11

The Liaison at Warwickshire County Council is through the Virtual School and with individual social workers or family support officers where applicable. We additionally link to other virtual schools for out of county places.

The names of the above post holders can be found in Appendix 1.

The Academy's Local Advisory Board (LAB) is committed to providing a quality education for all its students based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes. This policy includes requirements set out in "Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of Children Looked After under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004" (Nov 2005) and associated guidance on the education of Children Looked After.

Implementation

The duty of our Academy is:

To ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for Children Looked After as for all children.

To ensure that all Children Looked After have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. To achieve this, we provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual's needs, ability and lived experiences to ensure that Children Looked After take as full a part as possible in school activities.

To ensure that carers and social workers of looked after students are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment.

To ensure that looked after students are involved, where possible, in decisions affecting their future provision.

Admissions

The Local Advisory Board (LAB) endorses the Warwickshire County Council Policy for the admission of Children Looked After and formally Children Looked After. Due to changes in care placements, Children Looked After may enter school at any time in the term. At Venture Academy we believe that it is vital that all new students receive a positive welcome and full support for their inclusion in our learning community.

Inclusion

This policy recognises that all students are entitled to a balanced, broadly based curriculum. Our Children Looked After Policy reinforces the need for teaching and learning that is fully inclusive. The LAB will ensure the school makes appropriate provision for all looked after students, through scheduled monitoring and where required appropriate scrutiny and challenge.

Exclusion

Venture Academy try to avoid the use of exclusion as a 'consequence' for looked after children. That is not to say that it will never have to be considered, as risk assessment may suggest otherwise, but that it is always considered very carefully in the context of the child's lived experience and needs, particularly in terms of attachment. If viable alternatives to exclusion are available they will always be considered first.

Allocation of Resources

The LAB will ensure that the academy allocates resources to support appropriate provision for Children Looked After, meeting the objectives set out in this policy and those identified in

EHCPs. We will work in partnership with Warwickshire County Council Virtual School for Children Looked After and other Virtual Schools for students who are from other Local Authorities, to ensure that Children Looked After receive the full range of support to which they are entitled to enable them to make progress and achieve.

Monitoring the progress of Children Looked After

Venture Academy assesses each Child Looked After's attainment on entry to ensure continuity of learning. The social worker for the Child Looked After initiates a Personal Education Plan (PEP) within 20 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, specialist teacher from the virtual school and other agencies. The allocation and purpose of the Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) will be included within the PEP. All PEPs are completed electronically through the online system provided by ePEP.

Record Keeping

The Designated Teacher knows all the Children Looked After in school and has access to their relevant contact details including parents, carers, Warwickshire County Council Virtual School specialist staff, teacher/support worker and social worker. The status of Children Looked After is identified within the school's information systems so that information is readily available to all classroom teachers and relevant associate staff. Children Looked After are identified as a vulnerable group when tracking, monitoring and reporting on attainment and progress.

Staff Development

The Designated Teacher(s) must ensure that staff receive appropriate training that will support them to better support Children Looked After and formerly Children Looked After.

The Designated Teacher must engage in training offered by the virtual school that is relevant to the Children Looked After cohort of the school.

All Venture Academy staff share in the schools aim to learn about the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE), Trauma and attachment on the learning potential and opportunities for our pupils who are Children Looked After or formally Children Looked After.

Partnership with parents/carers and care workers

Venture Academy understand that supporting Children Looked After and Formerly Children Looked After requires a partnership approach where the child feels at the centre of decision making and equally has some agency in decision making and the development of plans. Review meetings, PEP meetings and professionals' meetings where called are an opportunity to further this collaboration and partnership working.

Links with external agencies/organisations

External support services make an important contribution in supporting Children Looked After. Colleagues from the following support services may be involved with individual Children Looked After or formerly Children Looked After:

- Social care worker/ Family Support Officers/ Community care worker/ Residential child care worker
- Virtual School for Children Looked After (Children Looked After in Education Team)
- Other Virtual Schools for Children Looked After from other Local Authorities

- Adoption Central England
- Educational psychologists and others from Local Authority SEN services
- Medical officers
- School nurses
- CAMHS
- Education Welfare Officers
- Youth Offending Service
- External Learning Providers

The Impact of Our Support for Children Looked After and Formerly Children Looked After

Venture Academy aims to close the gap in attainment between Children Looked After and Formerly Children Looked After and their peers by adhering to the contents of this policy. Through monitoring academic and pastoral measures, such as personal development and EHCP outcomes, it will be possible to monitor progress and celebrate the success of Children Looked After and Formerly Children Looked After in their time at Venture Academy and beyond.

This policy has been written in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2021 [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/92482/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_-_KCSIE_2021.pdf)

Appendix 1

Designated Teacher for Pupils up to and including year 7: Katy Griffin

Designated Teacher for Pupils in years 8-11: Gary Pearcy

Liaison at Warwickshire County Council: Felicity Bromfield (Virtual School)