



Designated Teacher Policy

(Children and Young People in Care-CYPIC and previously in care and other young people with a social worker or who have ever had a social worker)

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1. Aims

The Trust aims to ensure that:

- A suitable member of staff is appointed as the designated teacher for Children and young people in care (CYPIC) and previously in care at each school (previously known as LAC/PLAC)
- The designated teachers promotes the educational achievement of CYPIC and previously in care children, and supports other staff members to do this too
- Staff, parents, carers and guardians are aware of the identity of the designated teacher at each school, how to contact them and what they are responsible for

Elston Hall Learning Trust believes that as educators and corporate parents and in partnership with key stakeholders, we have a legal, moral and professional duty to safeguard and promote the education of our most vulnerable pupils, particularly children and young people in care and previously in care, and other children and young people with a social worker or who have ever had a social worker.

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's [statutory guidance on the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children](#).

It also takes into account [section 20](#) and [section 20A](#) of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

The statutory duties of the Designated Teacher for children and young people in care were extended to include children and young people previously in care by the Children & Social Work Act 2017. The DfE then further extended the role of the Virtual School Head (VSH) in 2021 to all children with a social worker. Given the overlap between these cohorts, and the fact that they are consistently among our most vulnerable children, we feel that it is appropriate and useful to have a joint school policy to help ensure that they are properly prioritised and supported. To promote the inclusion, well-being and achievement of CYPIC, Previously in care, and of children with a social worker, in our schools.

3. Definitions

CYPIC – Children and Young People in Care are registered pupils that are:

- In the care of a local authority (with family members, foster carers or in a residential care home), or
- Provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services functions, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours
- They also include those placed in care through a care order under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 or by a voluntary agreement with the child’s parents under section 20 of the Act. The terms can also be used to refer to children entered into police protection and those involved in the youth justice system

Previously in care are registered pupils that fall into either of these categories:

- They were looked after by a local authority but ceased to be as a result of any of the following:
 - A child arrangements order, which includes arrangements relating to who the child lives with and when they are to live with them
 - A special guardianship order
 - An adoption order

Other Children with a Social Worker –

- Used to refer to all children who were assessed as needing a social worker at any time due to safeguarding and/or welfare reasons, which includes all those subject to a Child in Need plan or a Child Protection Plan. This includes children aged from 0 up to 18 in all education settings.

Personal education plan (PEP) is part of a CYPIC’s care plan that is developed with the school. It forms a record of what needs to happen and who will make it happen to ensure the child reaches their full potential.

Virtual school head (VSH) is a local authority officer responsible for promoting the educational achievement of their authority’s looked-after children, working across schools to monitor and support these pupils as if they were in a single school. The VSH is also responsible for providing information and advice to schools, parents and guardians in respect of previously looked-after children.

4. Identity of our designated teachers

Our designated teachers takes lead responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of Children and young people in care and those previously in care at our schools. They are your initial point of contact for any of the matters set out in the section below.

	Headteacher	Designated Teacher	Safeguarding Lead	Deputy Safeguarding Lead	Chair of Governors
Elston Hall office@elston.org.uk	Miss E Foster	Mrs S Bennett	Mrs S Bennett	Miss E Foster	Mr G Hawkins
Palmers Cross office@palmers.org.uk	Mr D Nicholls	Mr D Nicholls	Mr D Nicholls	Mrs S Harper Mrs A Walker-Laver	Mrs K Parsons
Edward the Elder Office@edwardtheelder.org.uk	Mrs B Highman	Mrs B Turner	Mrs B Highman	Mrs B Turner Miss L Taylor	Mrs T Ralph

Goldthorn Park office@goldthorn.org.uk	Mrs R Purshouse	Mrs J Clapp	Mrs R Purshouse	Mrs J Clapp	Mrs J Ahir
Pheasey Park Farm postbox@pheasey.org.uk	Mrs S Arnold	Mrs N Willis	Mrs N Willis	Mrs S Arnold Mrs S Mayou	Mr M Perkins
Tipton Green headteacher@tiptongreen.sandwell.sch.uk	Mr D Rowe	Mrs J Wise	Mrs J Wise	Mrs D Caddy Mr Shane Bevan Mr D Rowe	Mrs P Meredith
CEO – Mr K Grayson					
Executive Leader for Teaching & Learning – Mrs L Dollery					

Other Safeguarding Contacts

Role		Name	Contact
Wolverhampton	Wolverhampton Virtual School Head	Darren Martindale	01902 551039 Darren.Martindale@wolverhampton.gov.uk
	Wolverhampton MASH	Social Care	01902 555392
	Wolverhampton Social Care – Out of Hours	Social Care	01902 552999
Sandwell	Sandwell Virtual School Head	Balwant Bains	0121 569 2770
	Sandwell MASH	Social Care	0121 569 8144
	Sandwell Social Care – Out of Hours	Social Care	0121 569 3100 0121 569 2355
Walsall	Walsall Virtual School Head	Lorraine Thompson	01922 652816 Lorraine.thompson@walsall.gov.uk
	Walsall MASH	Social Care	0300 555 2866
	Walsall Social Care – Out of hours	Social Care	0333 555 2922 / 0333 555 2836

5. Role of the designated teacher

5.1 Leadership responsibilities

The designated teacher will:

- Act as a central point of initial contact within the school for any matters involving CYPIC, previously looked-after children and other children and young people with a social worker or who have ever had a social worker.
- Promote the educational achievement of every CYPIC and previously in care child on roll by:
 - Working with VSHs
 - Promoting a whole school culture where the needs of these pupils matter and are prioritised
- Take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand:

- The things which can affect how CYPIC and previously in care children learn and achieve
- How the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils
- Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies to ensure they consider the needs these key children.
- Promote a culture in which CYPIC and previously in care children are encouraged and supported to engage with their education and other school activities
- Act as a source of advice for teachers.
- Work directly with the key children and their careers, parents and guardians to promote good home-school links, support progress and encourage high aspirations
- Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of PEPs
- Work closely with the school's designated safeguarding lead to ensure that any safeguarding concerns are quickly and effectively responded to.
- Involve parents and guardians in decisions affecting their child's education

5.2 Supporting CYPIC children

The designated teacher will:

- Make sure PEPs meet their needs by working closely with other teachers to assess each child's specific educational needs
- Have overall responsibility for leading the process of target-setting in PEPs
- Monitor and track how looked-after children's attainment progresses under their PEPs
- If a child is not on track to meet their targets, be instrumental in agreeing the best way forward with them in order to make progress, and ensure that this is reflected in their PEP
- Ensure the identified actions of PEPs are put in place
- During the development and review of PEPs, help the school and relevant local authority decide what arrangements work best for pupils
- Ensure that:
 - A PEP is reviewed before the statutory review of their care plan – this includes making sure the PEP is up to date and contains any new information since the last PEP review, including whether agreed provision is being delivered
 - PEPs are clear about what has or has not been taken forward, noting what resources may be required to further support the child and from where these may be sourced
 - The updated PEP is passed to the child's social worker and VSH ahead of the statutory review of their care plan
- Transfer a looked-after child's PEP to their next school or college, making sure it is up to date and that the local authority responsible for looking after them has the most recent version

5.3 Supporting CYPIC, previously in care child and children and young people with a social worker or who have ever had a social worker.

The designated teacher will:

- Ensure the specific needs of the children are understood by staff and reflected in how the school uses pupil premium funding
- Work with VSHs to agree how pupil premium funding can most effectively be used to improve their attainment
- Help raise the awareness of parents and guardians of previously in care children about pupil premium funding and other support for these children
- Play a key part in decisions on how pupil premium funding is used to support previously in care children

- Encourage parents' and guardians' involvement in deciding how pupil premium funding is used to support their child, and be the main contact for queries about its use
- Ensure teachers have awareness and understanding of the specific needs of the children and young people in areas like attendance, homework, behaviour and future career planning
- Be aware of the special educational needs (SEN), and make sure teachers also have awareness and understanding of this
- Ensure the [SEND code of practice](#), as it relates to CYPIC, is followed
- Make sure PEPs work in harmony with any education, health and care (EHC) plans that a CYPIC child may have
- Ensure that, with the help of VSHs, they have the skills to identify signs of potential SEN issues in CYPIC and previously in care children, and know how to access further assessment and support where necessary
- Ensure that they and other staff can identify signs of potential mental health issues in key children and understand where the school can draw on specialist services
- Put in place robust arrangements to have strengths and difficulties questionnaires (SDQs) completed for looked-after children, and use the results of these SDQs to inform PEPs
- Put in place mechanisms for understanding the emotional and behavioural needs of previously in care children

5.4 Relationships beyond the school

The designated teacher will:

- Proactively engage with social workers and other professionals to enable the school to respond effectively to the needs of the children
- Discuss with social workers how the school should engage with birth parents, and ensure the school is clear about who has parental responsibility and what information can be shared with whom
- Be open and accessible to parents and guardians of previously in care children and encourage them to be actively involved in their children's education
- Proactively build relationships with local authority professionals, such as VSHs and SEN departments
- Consider how the school works with others outside of the school to maximise the stability of education CYPIC , such as:
 - Finding ways of making sure the latest information about educational progress is available to contribute to the statutory review of care plans
 - Ensuring mechanisms are in place to inform VSHs when looked-after children are absent without authorisation and work with the responsible authority to take appropriate safeguarding action
 - Talking to the child's social worker and/or other relevant parties in the local authority regarding any decisions about changes in care placements which will disrupt the child's education, providing advice about the likely impact and what the local authority should do to minimise disruption
 - Making sure that, if a CYPIC moves school, their new designated teacher receives any information needed to help the transition process
- Seek advice from VSHs about meeting the needs of individual previously in care children, but only with the agreement of their parents or guardians
- Make sure that for each CYPIC child:
 - There's an agreed process for how the school works in partnership with the child's carer and other professionals, such as their social worker, in order to review and develop educational progress
 - School policies are communicated to their carer and social worker and, where appropriate, birth parents
 - Teachers know the most appropriate person to contact where necessary, such as who has the authority to sign permission slips
- Where a CYPIC is at risk of exclusion:
 - Contact the VSH as soon as possible so they can help the school decide how to support the child to improve their behaviour and avoid exclusion becoming necessary

- Working with the VSH and child's carers, consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to address the causes of the child's behaviour
- Where a previously in care child is at risk of exclusion, talk to the child's parents or guardians before seeking advice from the VSH on avoiding exclusion

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Trust's Executive Team. At every review, it will be approved by the Trust Board.

7. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Exclusions
- SEN
- Supporting pupils with medical needs