Looked-After Children Policy

Name of policy	Looked-After Children Policy
Date approved	November 2026
Date to be reviewed	November 2028

Introduction

At Trinity Academy we believe that all Looked-after Children (LAC) should have equitable access to excellent educational provision, enriching life opportunities and support for academic and social development. Nationally, LAC and those children who have been previously looked after (PLAC) are disproportionately more likely to achieve poor educational outcomes – including poor exam results, lack of involvement in co-curricular activities and poor attendance and punctuality. This policy sets out how Trinity Academy supports the education of LAC and previously LAC. It also incorporates the statutory guidance set out in Promoting the Education of Looked-After Children and Previously Looked-After Children 2018 along with associated legislation.

Principles

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.

This includes:

- Children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents
- Children who are the subjects of a care order or interim care order
- Children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection
- Children who are compulsorily accommodated (including when remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement)

Trinity Academy will support LAC and previously LAC by:

- Providing a safe and secure environment, which values education and believes in the abilities and potential of all children

- Making sure LAC have access to a structured and challenging curriculum and have opportunities for intellectual and cultural enrichment beyond the classroom.
- Monitoring the educational outcomes for this group compared to their peers at every stage of their education, and intervening where possible and necessary to narrow the gap between LAC/PLAC and their less disadvantaged peers.
- Nominating a Designated Teacher for LAC who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them, liaising with carers, natural parents (as appropriate) and social workers on a wide variety of educational and welfare issues.

All staff and governors are committed to ensuring improved educational life chances for Looked After Children by ensuring that the relevant personnel have reasonable support and time to complete tasks and responsibilities. Also, to establish and maintain appropriate reporting and monitoring procedures both within the school and other agencies.

Processes

Designated Teacher for LAC

The school will have a Designated Teacher for LAC. He or she will be charged with maintaining a register of all LAC. This will include a record of:

- The contact person in the relevant LAC Education Team
- Status i.e care order or accommodated
- Type of placement e.g foster, respite, residential
- Name of social worker, area office, telephone number
- Daily contact and telephone numbers of those to be contacted in an emergency
- Share child protection/ disability information which could be shared with other members of staff, if appropriate
- Relevant health information
- Baseline information and all test results

The designated teacher will also ensure that the pupil premium funding for LAC is used effectively and efficiently, and will coordinate between staff and outside agencies for Personal Education Plans (see below).

Governors

Governors must be aware of the guidance to promote the educational achievement of LAC. A dedicated governor will champion and monitor the work of the school and the Designated Teacher for LAC in supporting LAC as part of a larger group of vulnerable children.

School Staff

Trinity staff will:

- Celebrate the achievement of LAC
- Have high expectations of the young person, encouraging achievement and ambition
- Be aware of the needs of LAC and actively promote their best interests
- Reinforce positive messages about behaviour and achievement within the

school and between school, carers and outside agencies and that high educational expectations are maintained
- Work in partnership with parents, carers and agencies.
- Support carers to value educational achievement and improve attendance.
- Be aware that being or becoming 'Looked After' has a major impact on children's lives and that when considering children's learning and or behaviour, due consideration will be given. Teachers can be aware of a variety of issues that may undermine the young person's ability to engage in the learning process including feelings of loss, rejection, isolation, confusion and low self esteem.

SEN

Any special educational needs are quickly identified and appropriate provision is made. The School's SENDCo and the designated teacher for LAC will make sure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when LAC are underachieving and have early interventions to improve this.
If a LAC has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), then the annual review should coincide with one of the biannual care planning reviews.

Admissions and Transitions

When enrolling at, or leaving, Trinity Academy, the School will:

- Ensure all relevant information is obtained regarding LAC
- Forward appropriate documents to any receiving school at point of transition where the receiving school is made known
- Make every effort to provide continuity of schooling and educational experience
- Prioritise LAC within the schools admissions policy and admit students as quickly as possible recognising the importance of re-establishing school stability for LAC

Attendance

In monitoring and intervening with poor attendance of LAC, the School will follow the Trust's Attendance Policy. In particular:

- When a LAC is absent for three consecutive days or more, the social worker will be informed via email or a phone call.
- The schools Attendance Officer will communicate with agencies who contact schools for LAC data.

Exclusion

Once potential excludable offences involving LAC have been committed, the school will follow its Exclusion Policy. In particular:

- Ensure in the case of a fixed term, or permanent exclusion that the carer and the social worker have been spoken to and within one day a letter has been sent specifying the period and the reasons for the exclusion, date of return, outline the rights of the carers to make representations to the governing body where appropriate and details of arrangements made to enable the child to continue his or her education.

- Make sure the local authority LAC team are made aware of any exclusions and the reasons for the exclusion. Information regarding a LAC who is at risk of exclusion will be passed onto the LAC Education Team, social worker and relevant professionals to put proactive strategies in place to minimise the risk of further exclusion, including permanent exclusion.

Personal Education Plans (PEP)

The school will support the development and monitoring of PEP. This may include:

- Hosting PEP meetings within the school (when appropriate) and liaising promptly with outside agencies
- Ensuring that appropriate targets are generated in PEP meeting
- Adhering to any appropriate and feasible educational recommendations
- Designated Teacher attending Designated Teacher Hub meetings where possible.
- All PEPs will be reviewed every six months.

The Headteacherl/Designated Teacher will ensure all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

Policies linked to the Looked-After Children Policy

- Attendance Policy
- SEND Policy
- Exclusion Policy
- Academic Enrichment Policy