



New City College

Title:	Supporting Looked After Children and Care Leavers Policy	
Reviewed / updated by:	Miranda Gay	
Document Owner:	Narzny Khan	
Date approved:	November 2023	
To Be reviewed:	November 2024	
Approval Committee:	SMT	
Publication:	Intranet	✓
	VLE	x
	Website	x

Induction

New City College have a number of Looked After Children (LAC) and Care leavers (CL) from various Local Authorities. Children's Services have a duty to support LACs until the age of 18, care leavers from 18 until the age of 21 or 25 if in full time education or if they have an Education, Health and Care Plan.

New City College aims to:

- a) [Promote the educational progress and attainment of looked-after children and care leavers](#)
- b) Close the attainment and progress gap between looked after children and their peers
- c) Maintain an up-to-date record of looked after children
- d) Monitor educational progress and attendance of LAC studying at the college
- e) Communicate effectively with Virtual Schools and other local authority professionals
- f) Safeguard and promote the welfare of all Students

New City College, recognises the importance of creating a culture of high aspiration for looked after children and aims to follow statutory guidance set by the DfE in Promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children published in February 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023).

Identifying Looked after Children	<p>At enrolment, it is important that LACs and CLs are aware of the support available and they can identify the central contact within the college from the earliest stage possible. Student Services should be integral and supporting this process at the earliest stage.</p> <p>All curriculum areas are sent a central list of Looked after Children (LAC) and it is visible and flagged on the student monitoring system (eTrackr and pro solution) that a student is looked after, so that attendance can be closely monitored and interventions put in place as appropriate. All identified LACs and CLs are shared with the Safeguarding Team.</p> <p>Difficulties can arise if students do not disclose, they are a LAC. If at any stage it becomes apparent that a student is or may be a LAC, safeguarding must be informed to ensure records are up to date and support is in place.</p>
Virtual Schools	<p>Local Authorities have a Virtual School to support and monitor LAC students through education training and employment. Most Virtual Schools are able to seek extra opportunities for LACs, such as work experience and further training. Good and timely communication with Virtual Schools is vital to support the achievement of looked after Children in education.</p>

	<p>Working closely with Virtual Schools helps identify the Looked after Children with in the college.</p>
<p>Attendance Monitoring</p>	<p>Managers and tutors must monitor attendance and progress and also prepare to contribute to Personal Educational Plans (PEPS and E-PEPS). PEPs take place on a termly basis.</p> <p>If staff have concerns regarding attendance of a LAC student, <u>they must inform their manager / the manager of the student's area and LAC administrator immediately</u>. Attendance and attainment go hand in hand. Support can be put in place; targets can then be set and it can be monitored closely. The social worker, placement/carer and where necessary the virtual school must also be informed of any concerns.</p> <p>Welfare calls Many Local Authorities also utilise Welfare call, an organisation that monitors the attendance of LAC. The current system in place within the college works well. Where welfare call is in place (for that particular LA) contact administrators via phone or email, requesting regular attendance data the college holds for students. <u>If an administrator recognises concerns for attendance they also must inform the SCM.</u></p>
<p>Personal Educational Plans</p>	<p>PEPs are a statutory requirement for looked after children to help track and promote their achievements. PEPs and E-PEPS are usually held termly until a child reaches the age of 18. Some local authorities do request a post 18 PEP depending on circumstances and vulnerability.</p> <p>A separate detailed PEP process is in place with the responsibilities of tutors and managers of the studnets' curriculum area and designated safeguarding persons in supporting LACs.</p> <p>Quality and Quantity</p> <p>Virtual school quality assure the PEPS. They are expected to be of high quality with clear targets that provide an appropriate level of stretch and challenge for young people to work towards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The whole document must be completed • PEPS must be typed not handwritten. Some local authorities use an online portal for PEPs to be complete (E-PEPS). • Progress of the targets must be monitored on an ongoing basis <p>E-PEP training is available if necessary from the relevant local authority.</p>

Financial Support

Looked after children on a full-time courses are entitled to the vulnerable bursary and Free School meals. Bursary forms are available via student services.

A signed letter from the social worker confirming they are Looked after and dated within 3 months has to be submitted back to Student Services.

Care leavers need to provide evidence of household income.

All students must have a bank account of their own to receive bursary.

The non-attendance of a student does affect a student receiving their bursary.

Exceptions are made with:

- Medical appointments
- Home office appointments
- Court hearings
- Meetings with social workers

Students are required provide evidence to student services who can make adjustments where valid.

<p>Disciplinary/ Exclusions</p>	<p>Due to LACs being identified as a vulnerable group, DfE guidance suggests that, wherever possible exclusions should be avoided. Other avenues should be fully explored and it should be a last resort.</p> <p>When a LAC student is at risk of or may be withdrawn or excluded (in line with the College’s disciplinary procedures), the Virtual school and Social Worker must be informed at the earliest stage and if possible present at the disciplinary meetings. This allows timely support to be put in place, regardless of the outcome and if they leave the college and begin studying elsewhere.</p> <p>Following a withdrawal or exclusion, it is good practice to complete a termly PEP review, if one has not been completed during the college term.</p> <p>The appeals process should also be disclosed to students and carers (in line with the College’s disciplinary procedures).</p> <p>If a student is invited to a disciplinary at any stage, the carer, virtual school and social worker must be informed to ensure the young person is supported at the meeting. It is good practice to attach the letter to an email to the social worker.</p> <p>The LSA or learning mentor supporting the student at college should be available to support any identified support needs either at or after the meeting.</p> <p>At the final stages of a disciplinary a further option to explore is a 6-week trial with monitored targets. It is good practice to ensure a student has been given every opportunity to avoid being withdrawn or excluded.</p>
<p>Additional Learning support</p>	<p>LACs can access additional learning support via the Learning Zones including: dyslexia support, in class support, support for a disability, extra time in exams, study skills support and any support that continues from school.</p> <p>Additional English and maths support is also available and should be prioritised for LACs and CLs.</p> <p>Students with Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs) are also supported via ALS They are also responsible for contributing to the annual review and should be invited to the PEP meeting.</p>

<p>Pastoral support</p>	<p>All staff are available to support LACs and ensure they are being supported and happy during their time at college.</p> <p>LACs can access pastoral support via their tutor for various reasons including:</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns with college • One to one guidance • Advocacy • Bullying • Domestic abuse • Signposting with bursary/ benefits • Concerns with housing/placement • Sign posting to other services <p>The college also has a qualified College Counsellor and Mental Health Advisor available. A student can self-refer or can be referred by any member of staff.</p>
<p>Careers advisor</p>	<p>All LAC students should have access via their Virtual School to a careers advisor. Careers advice should be discussed at a student's PEP.</p> <p>Appointments can be made with the Careers Advisor who can share current opportunities available and give advice on any questions regarding possible choices for the future. They are also able to support with regards to employment, university, UCAS applications or further training, assist in supporting job applications and CV writing skills.</p>
<p>Enrichment</p>	<p>All students can benefit from the college enrichment programme which aims to encourage learning outside of the classroom. Learning takes place through weekly activities, trips, awareness events, social events, Student Council and much more. There is also access to a sexual health clinic and a no smoking clinic.</p> <p>To support LAC students on the journey to independent living the following sessions delivered by Enrichment could be particularly beneficial; Cooking, Finance, Healthy Eating and Theory lessons.</p>

<p>14 -16 Looked After Children</p>	<p>All of the above applies to 14-16 year olds other than some alterations:</p> <p>14-16 year olds are not eligible for the bursary. They do have access to pupil premium. This is usually discussed at the PEP review and is allocated to the home school if the pupil is attending alternative provision. If the pupil is direct entry, then pupil premium will be allocated to the college via the relevant Virtual School. Pupil Premium is ring-fenced for the individual LAC and should be used to support educational progress and attainment. Spend of the Pupil Premium should be identified and reviewed at each PEP meeting. It is the Virtual School or Local Authority that have the final decision on suggestions made.</p>
	<p>A 14-16 is never excluded but will be supported with a 'managed move' to an alternative education provision.</p> <p>When a 14-16 LAC is at risk of being placed on a fixed term exclusion, managed move or displays concerns regarding behaviour, progress or attendance, both virtual school, and social worker must be informed immediately.</p>
<p>Care Leavers</p>	<p>Local authorities provide care leavers with a Personal Adviser where they wish to resume education and training up to age 25. It is important to recognise all though they are 18 they are still considered a vulnerable group and do require additional support. Personal advisors that support CLs often communicate with the college.</p>