



DESIGNATED TEACHER POLICY

December 2023

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Policy Review

This policy is reviewed in full by the Governing Board on an annual basis.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Board on 11th December 2024.

It will be reviewed again on December 2025.

Approved

Signature:  Head Teacher Date: 11th December 2024

Signature:  Co Chair of the Governing Board Date: 11th December 2024

Policy control

Date	Amendments / additions	Reason
Sept 2021	Addition of number 7 - Safeguarding	Policy update
Dec 2022	Section 1 – Dates changed – policies names amended	New guidance
	Section 3.6 and 3.6 reworded	Policy update
	Section 10.1 reworded	Policy update
Dec 2023	Update to framework	Statutory legislation updates
	7.3 updated	
	Wording in section 9 updated plus additional point	
Dec 2024	Legal framework dates amended	Change to legislation
	Addition of point 4.7	Policy update
	Addition of point 7.7	Policy update

Statement of intent

Educational achievement and subsequent life chances for Children in Care (CiC) and previously CiC are of real concern. Pupils who are looked after require special treatment and additional attention in order to improve their situation.

Queensgate Foundation Primary School endeavours to provide positive experiences and offer stability, safety, and individual care and attention for all our pupils. With this in mind, we aim to:

Encourage pupils to reach their potential and to make good progress in relation to their professional, social and emotional development

Ensure that pupils enjoy high quality teaching and a curriculum which meets their needs and the requirements of legislation

Plan support for CiC realistically and use the school's resources efficiently to ensure the school meets their needs

Promote a positive culture in all aspects of school life

Help pupils develop their cultural, moral and social understanding

1. Legal framework

- 1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

Children Act 1989

The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010

Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000

Children and Young Persons Act 2008

Children and Families Act 2014

Children and Social Work Act 2017

DfE (2018) 'Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children'

DfE (2018) 'The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children'

DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'

DfE (2023) 'Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement'

DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'

- 1.2 This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies and documents:

Admissions Policy

Behaviour Policy

Home School Agreement

Anti-Bullying Policy

Equal Information and Objectives Policy

2. Definitions

2.1. “Children in Care (CIC)” or “Looked after children (LAC)” are defined as:

Children or young people who are the subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989

Children who are placed in foster care, children’s residential homes, with relatives or friends, in semi-independent or supported independent accommodation

Children subject to a Care or Interim Care Order whilst placed with a parent, where the LA has parental responsibility

Children who are not subject to an order, but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents

2.2. “Previously-CIC” are defined as:

Children who are no longer looked after by an LA in England and Wales because they have either been adopted or are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order

Children who were adopted outside England and Wales from ‘state care’ (care that is provided by a public authority, religious organisation, or other organisation whose main purpose is to benefit society)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1. The governing board is responsible for:

Ensuring the school has a coherent policy for CIC and previously-CIC

Reviewing the school’s policies and procedures in conjunction with legislation and statutory guidance

Ensuring the designated teacher for CIC and previously-CIC has received the appropriate training

Ensuring that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to each looked after child’s:

Legal status (i.e. whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.

Care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the LA.

Ensuring that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep CIC and previously-CIC safe

Ensuring CIC and previously-CIC have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and that, reasonable adjustments are made, if necessary

Reviewing the report produced by the designated teacher to evaluate the progress of CIC in the school

Nominating a link governor to visit the school regularly, to liaise with the Headteacher and the Designated Teacher

3.2. The virtual school head (VSH) is responsible for:

Monitoring the attendance and educational progress of the children their authority looks after; this includes children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders, or who were adopted from state care outside of England and Wales

Ensuring that arrangements are in place to improve the education and outcomes of the authority's CIC, including those placed out-of-authority

Building relationships with health, education and social care partners, as well as other partners, so they and the designated teachers understand the support available to CIC and previously-CIC

Working with the school to ensure all CIC in attendance are fully supported in reaching their full potential

Acting as the educational advocate for CIC

Acting as a source of advice and information to help parents of previously-CIC as effectively as possible

Managing the school's allocation of pupil premium plus (PP+) for CIC

Ensuring there are effective systems in place to:

Maintain an up-to-date roll of the CIC who are in school settings, and gather information about their educational placement, attendance and progress

Inform the headteacher and designated teacher if they have a pupil on roll who is looked after by the LA

Ensure social workers, schools, designated teachers, careers and independent reviewing officers understand their role and responsibilities regarding a pupil's PEP

Ensure that up-to-date and effective PEPs that focus on educational outcomes are maintained for all CIC

Avoid delays in providing suitable educational provision

Ensure the education achievement of CIC is seen as a priority by everyone who has responsibilities for promoting their welfare

Report regularly on the attainment, progress and school attendance of CIC through the authority's corporate parenting structures

3.3. The headteacher is responsible for:

Appointing the designated teacher for CIC and previously-CIC

Allowing the designated teacher, the time and facilities to succeed in carrying out their duties

Overseeing this policy and monitoring its implementation, feeding back to the governing board annually on the following:

The number of CIC and previously-CIC in the school

An analysis of assessment scores as a cohort, compared to other pupil groups

The attendance of CIC and previously-CIC, compared to other pupil groups

The level of fixed term and permanent exclusions, compared to other pupil groups

Ensuring all members of staff are aware that supporting CIC is a key priority

Ensuring PP+ for previous CIC is managed effectively

Promoting the advantages of actively challenging negative stereotypes of CIC

3.4. The designated teacher for CIC and previously-CIC is responsible for:

Ensuring all CIC and previously-CIC children and their carers receive a positive and smooth induction into the school

Building relationships with health, education and social care partners and other partners so that they and the VSH understand the support available to CIC and previously-CIC

Promoting the educational achievement of CIC and previously-CIC at the school; this includes those that left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or were adopted from state care outside England and Wales

Acting as the main contact for social services and the DfE

Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations.

Ensuring CIC are involved in setting their own targets

Advising staff on teaching strategies for CIC

Ensuring that CIC are prioritised for one-to-one tuition and support

Leading on how the child's PEP is developed and used in school to ensure the child's progress towards targets is monitored

Liaising with the SENCO to ensure all pupil needs are met

Working with the child's VSH and social worker to develop and implement their PEP

Working with the VSH to discuss how funding can be used to support the child's progress and meet the needs identified in their PEP

Working with the headteacher to submit an annual report to the governing board, which details the progress of all CIC and previously-CIC

Working closely with the nominated link governor and that they are kept up to date

3.5. The DSL is responsible for:

Keeping up-to-date records of CIC's respective social worker and VSH.

Where a child ceases to be looked after and becomes a care leaver, keeping up-to-date contact details of their LA personal advisor and liaising with the advisor as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

3.6. The SENCO is responsible for:

Ensuring they are involved in reviewing PEP and care plans for CIC, where a Special Education Need and Disability exists, and previously-CIC

Liaising with the class teacher, designated teacher, specialists and parents when considering interventions to support the progress of previously-CIC

3.7. Staff are responsible for:

Being aware of CIC and previously-CIC and providing them with support and encouragement

Preserving confidentiality, where appropriate, and showing sensitivity and understanding

Being vigilant for any signs of bullying towards CIC and previously-CIC

Promoting the self-esteem of CIC and previously-CIC

Feeding into the PEP and CIC documents

4. Personal Education Plan (PEP)

- 4.1. All CIC must have a care plan; PEPs are an integral part of this care plan.
- 4.2. The PEP is an evolving record of what needs to happen for a pupil to enable them to make the expected progress and fulfil their potential.
- 4.3. The PEP will reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning which meets the identified educational needs of the child.
- 4.4. The school with other professionals and the child's carers will use the PEP to support the child's educational needs, raise the child's aspirations and improve their life chances.
- 4.5. All relevant bodies, such as the LA, the designated teacher and carers, will involve the child in the PEP process at all stages.
- 4.6. The PEP will address the pupil's full range of education and development needs, including:
 - On-going catch-up support, which will be made available for children who have fallen behind with work
 - Suitable education provided by the LA, where the child is not in school because of suspension or exclusion
 - Transitional support where needed, such as if a child is moving to a new school
 - School attendance and behaviour support, where appropriate
 - Support to help the child meet their aspirations, which includes:
 - Support to achieve expected levels of progress for the relevant national key stage and to complete an appropriate range of approved qualifications
 - Careers advice, guidance and financial information about FE, training and employment, that focusses on the child's strengths, capabilities and the outcomes they want to achieve
 - Out-of-school hours learning activities, study support and leisure interests
- 4.7. The Isle of Wight Local Authority use Assetforschools.com for their PEP record keeping

5. Working with agencies and the VSH

- 5.1. The school will ensure that copies of all relevant reports are forwarded to the CIC social workers, in addition to carers or residential social workers.
- 5.2. The school will coordinate their review meetings to meet deadlines set out by the Virtual school.
- 5.3. The school will work with other agencies to exchange information, such as changes in circumstances, exclusions or attendance issues, taking prompt action, where necessary, to safeguard CIC and previously-CIC.
- 5.4. Behaviour management strategies will be agreed between the VSH and the school, to ensure challenging behaviour is managed in the most effective way for that individual child.
- 5.5. The designated teacher for CIC and previously-CIC will communicate with the VSH and child's social worker to facilitate the completion of the PEP.
- 5.6. Through the designated teacher, the school will work with the VSH, social worker and other relevant agencies to monitor any arrangements in place so that actions and activities recorded in the child's PEP are implemented without delay.

- 5.7. The designated teacher will communicate with the VSH and agree on how pupil premium plus (PP+) can be used effectively to accommodate the child's educational attainment and progress.
- 5.8. PP+ for previously-CIC will be allocated directly to, and managed by, the school.
- 5.9. The school will work with the VSH to manage allocation of PP+ for the benefit of our cohort of CIC, or previously-CIC, and according to their needs.
- 5.10. If deemed necessary, the school will allocate an amount of funding to an individual to support their needs.
- 5.11. The designated teacher will ensure consistent and strong communication with the VSH regarding CIC who are absent without authorisation.
- 5.12. The school will share their expertise on what works in supporting the education of CIC and previously-CIC.

6. Training

- 6.1. The designated teacher and other school staff involved in the education of CIC and previously-CIC have received the appropriate training, this includes information about the following:

School admissions arrangements

SEND

Attendance

Exclusions

Managing and challenging behaviour

Promoting positive educational and recreational activities

Supporting pupils to be aspirational for their future education, training and employment

Safeguarding

Attachment and Trauma Aware Programme

7. Safeguarding

- 7.1 The school recognises that many CIC and previously-CIC have experienced trauma, abuse or complex family circumstances that have led to them being placed in care, and will ensure that all staff are aware that experiences of adversity such as these can leave pupils vulnerable to further harm or exploitation.
- 7.2 All staff will be trained to recognise signs and indicators of safeguarding concerns and will ensure that extra vigilance is practiced in observing and identifying these indicators amongst CIC and previously-CIC as soon as possible.
- 7.3 Where a CIC or previously-CIC has a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding, e.g. responding to absence from education where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

- 7.4 The headteacher will implement appropriate pastoral support services in PCiC throughout the school to ensure that the welfare of CiC and previously-CiC can be adequately protected to the extent that reflects their increased vulnerability.
- 7.5 Staff will be encouraged to report to the DSL any concerns they have over CiC or previously-CiC in line with the processes outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- 7.6 Staff will be regularly encouraged to look for signs of bullying and report to the designated teacher if they believe a CiC or previously-CiC is being bullied, as this can have a particularly negative impact on pupils who have early experiences of rejection or abandonment.
- 7.7 When there is a reasonable cause to suspect that a CiC or PCiC is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm, the school will collaborate in the multi-agency strategy discussion, where appropriate to determine the pupil's welfare and plan rapid further action as necessary. The school's representative at any strategy discussion meetings will be sufficiently senior, skilled and experienced, and authorised to make decisions on the school's behalf. Information and analysis about the pupil and their family will be provided as required.

8. Pupil mental health

- 8.1. CiC and previously-CiC are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues which can impact their behaviour and education. Designated teachers will have awareness, training and skills regarding a child's needs and how to support them in relation to behaviour management and mental health.
- 8.2. The designated teacher will work with the VSH to ensure the school is able to identify signs of potential mental health issues, understand the impact issues can have on CiC and previously-CiC, and knows how to access further assessment and support, where necessary.
- 8.3. A strengths and difficulties questionnaire will be used on a regular basis to help social workers and other relevant professionals to form a view about CiC and previously-CiC's current emotional wellbeing. Teachers will complete their element of the questionnaire to assist social workers in their assessment.
- 8.4. The School's Senior mental health lead will work alongside the designated teacher to promote the wellbeing and mental health of CiC and previously CiC, and will always either be a member of, or be supported by the senior leadership team and could be the pastoral lead, SENDCO or DSL.

9. Exclusions

Past experiences of CiC and PCiC will be considered when designing and implementing the school/s Behaviour Policy and Suspension and Exclusion Policy.

- 9.1. The school will have regard to the DfE's statutory guidance 'Exclusions from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England' and, as far as possible, avoid excluding any CiC.
- 9.2. Where the school has concerns about a child's behaviour, the VSH will be informed at the earliest opportunity.

- 9.3. Exclusion will only be used as a last resort, after the school and VSH have considered what additional support can be provided to prevent exclusion, and any additional arrangements to support the pupil's education in the event of exclusion.
- 9.4. Where a looked-after child is at risk of being suspended or permanently excluded, the school will engage with the designated teacher and the pupil's parents, or other individuals involved in the pupil's care. The designated teacher will contact the VSH as soon as possible to work together and with the other relevant individuals, to consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to help the school address the factors affecting the pupil's behaviour and reduce the need the suspension or permanent exclusion.
- 9.5. The school will inform parents that they can seek the advice of the VSH on strategies to support their child to avoid exclusion.
- 9.6. Where a looked-after child is excluded, the school will document the provision of immediate suitable education in the pupil's PEP.

10. Pupils with SEND

- 10.1. Support for CIC with SEND, who do not need an EHC plan, will be covered as part of the child's PEP and care plan reviews, as well as having a pupil passport.
- 10.2. The SENCO, class teacher, designated teacher and specialists will involve parents when considering interventions to support their child's progress.
- 10.3. If appropriate, the VSH will be invited to comment on proposed SEND provision for previously-CIC.

11. Information sharing

- 11.1. Appropriate and specific arrangements for sharing reliable data are in place to ensure that the education needs of CIC and previously-CIC are understood and met.
- 11.2. The arrangements set out include:
 - Who has access to information on CIC and previously CIC and how data will remain secure.
 - How pupils and carers are informed of, and allowed to challenge, information that is kept about them.
 - How carers contribute to and receive information.
 - Mechanisms for sharing information between the school and relevant LA departments.
 - How relevant information about individual pupils is passed between authorities, departments and the school when pupils move.
- 11.3. School staff will be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of pupils. This will include sharing information about any adults with whom a pupil has contact, which may impact the pupil's safety or welfare, where necessary.
- 11.4. Staff members will ensure that fear of sharing information does not stand in the way of their responsibility to promote the welfare and safety of CiC and PCiC. If staff members are in doubt about sharing information and data protection legislation, they will speak to the DSL.
- 11.5. The school will aim to be as transparent as possible by telling families what information they are sharing and with whom, provided that it is safe to do so.