



**HIGHFIELD LITTLEPORT ACADEMY**  
*An Active Learning Trust School*



**HIGHFIELD ELY ACADEMY**  
*An Active Learning Trust School*

# HIGHFIELD ACADEMIES

## CHILDREN IN CARE POLICY

THIS POLICY WAS APPROVED:	AUTUMN 2024
THIS POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED:	AUTUMN 2026
MEMBER OF STAFF WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR REVIEW:	YVONNE SKILLERN

The Local Authority is the corporate parent for all Children in Care (CiC). This means that any actions which Highfield Academies would usually involve seeking parental / carer and Local Authority permission. As academies we are committed to support the Local Authority in their corporate parenting role and to do all that we can to promote the educational achievement and well-being of Children in Care.

The Designated Teachers for Children in Care are:

Highfield Ely:

Danny Mills

Highfield Littleport:

Yvonne Skillern

The Designated Governor for Children in Care is Lorna Robinson.

This policy describes our approach to meeting the requirements set out the Statutory Guidance of Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 (Duty on Local Authorities to Promote the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children); Care Matters: Time for Change 2007 Guidance (Chapter 4 “A First Class Education”). The Children and Young person’s Act 2008 (Duty on Schools to appoint a Designated Teacher for Children in Care) and Improving the Educational Attainment of Children in Care (Looked After Children). Promoting the education of looked after children, statutory guidance for Local Authorities July 2014.

The school recognises that the provisions outlined in this policy must be in place regardless of whether there are any Children in Care currently on the school roll.

<p><b>1.</b></p>	<p><b>Local Governing Body and School commitment to enhanced support for Children in Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Local Governing Body and School will ensure that high quality learning opportunities and education are provided for all our pupils.</li> <li>• We will ensure equality of access to opportunities and learning outcomes for all.</li> <li>• We recognise that Children in Care can be especially vulnerable and are sometimes ‘at risk’ of failure in the learning context.</li> </ul> <p>Therefore with specific reference to this cohort of children we will strive to achieve the following aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children in Care achieve at least as well as the remainder of the pupil population.</li> <li>• Our Children in Care access further study or employment upon leaving appropriate to their ambitions and current rate of progress.</li> <li>• Our Children in Care have improved life chances and develop their confidence to play a meaningful part in society.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.</b></p>	<p><b>Aims for our Learners who are in Local Authority Care or Care Experienced</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that all Children in Care and Care Experienced students have access to a broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum.</li> <li>• To provide personalised learning and curriculum appropriate to needs and ability.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support and monitor social progress ensuring key adults prioritise respectful and responsive relationship building with individual children and provide appropriate support for social development within the peer group.</li> <li>• To ensure that Children in Care receive a full 32.5 hours of education each week, as well as opportunities to enrich their curriculum.</li> <li>• To ensure that Children in Care take as full a part as possible in all school activities and strive to reduce and eliminate any barriers that may stop them from taking part.</li> <li>• To ensure that carers, social workers and parents (as appropriate) of Children in Care are involved and kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment.</li> <li>• To ensure that wherever appropriate Children in Care are involved in decisions affecting their learning, the plans for progress and future provision.</li> <li>• To ensure that success is appropriately recognised and reinforced.</li> <li>• To ensure that any emerging concerns are followed up in a timely way with skill and sensitivity (e.g. changes in patterns of behaviour and attendance).</li> <li>• To liaise and cooperate with appropriate partners, in particular the Virtual School, to ensure that all plans complement and support the promotion of the educational achievement and well-being of Children in Care.</li> <li>• To ensure all school policies and procedures are followed sensitively for Children in Care.</li> <li>• All Children in Care will have a Fagus Assessment (or similar) carried out at least on a yearly basis to establish attachment and developmental behaviours that can be appropriately planned and differentiated for due to their previous experiences.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p><b>Admissions to our School</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Governing Body supports the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 in that 'Children in public care have the highest priority in their admission arrangements.'</li> <li>• Our school will ensure that Children in Care are named as a priority within our school written admissions criteria.</li> <li>• The Governing Body supports the statutory guidance Promoting the Education of Children in Care 2015.</li> <li>• Sometimes care placement changes lead to Children in Care entering school mid-term or mid-year if this is thought to be in the best interests of the child. This school will ensure that in these circumstances Children in Care will be admitted to the school in a timely manner, even if this would mean that this would increase class sizes above the recommended maximum. As necessary, we will give a positive welcome, plan entry, offer additional support and pre-entry visits to help pupils settled into school.</li> <li>• The Virtual School will work with the school when a pupil is leaving to ensure that it is made as positive an event as possible e.g. leaving events, farewells, information transfer etc.</li> </ul>

<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Inclusion and Allocation of Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our policy recognises that all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broadly based, and stimulating curriculum and learning programme.</li> <li>• For Children in Care there can often be a need to develop learning opportunities emphasising personalised planning and planned inclusive approaches.</li> <li>• The Local Governing Body will ensure our school makes all appropriate learning provision for Children in Care. Resources are allocated to support Children in Care in line with this policy and with our wider school teaching and learning policies and good practice.</li> <li>• The Pupil Premium Plus funding allocated by the Head of the Virtual School for CiC will be used to support the individual learning programmes of the CiC in the school. This will be monitored as part of the PEP process to show impact on learning.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>Monitoring the Progress of Looked After Children</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress for Children in Care in school is identified, monitored and supported and is guided by school policies for teaching and learning.</li> <li>• We will monitor and track the achievement and attainment of Children in Care pupils at least termly. This will be formally reported to the Virtual School for looked after children. In house systems of assessment will scrutinise this data more often for students on the Yellow and Green pathway.</li> <li>• We will ensure that the school makes an assessment of the pupil's needs and attainment on entry, to ensure continuity of learning.</li> <li>• The PEP is key to the planning and monitoring of education for a Child in Care and governors are aware that they are statutory school documents.</li> <li>• The Designated Teacher, working with the Virtual School, will ensure there is a PEP in place for all Children in Care at school.</li> <li>• The Designated Teacher will support the Virtual School to ensure a PEP meeting takes place within statutory timelines and ensure the attendance of appropriate staff.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>Attendance and Exclusion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school will monitor the attendance of Children in Care and will notify all appropriate partners at an early stage if there is an indication that problems with attendance might occur.</li> <li>• Cambridgeshire County Council has a contract with Welfare Call Limited. A member of the Welfare Call team will call all schools with Cambridgeshire Children in Care daily to ascertain attendance. The school will ensure this information is provided promptly and accurately.</li> <li>• The school will take all reasonable steps to ensure that exclusion is rarely used for Children in Care and then is always only as a last resort, after all other avenues have been explored. The school will advise the Virtual School if there is a possibility of exclusion and discuss options with the Cambridgeshire Local Authority.</li> <li>• The school will make arrangements for first day provision for any excluded looked after child as it would for any pupil after day 6 of exclusion.</li> </ul>

7.	<p><b>Record Keeping and Information Sharing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Designated Teacher will coordinate record keeping for all Children in Care at school. This will involve consultation with the Virtual School who will be able to advise on specific and appropriate contacts.</li> <li>• Records will include up to date progress and attainment records, PEP planning records and personalised information relating to care context as appropriate as well as individual school systems tracking progress towards EHCP Outcomes. These records will be maintained in a single place, having regard to the statutory nature of some of these documents and the confidential information that they contain.</li> <li>• Child in Care status is appropriately ‘flagged’ in school management information systems, ensuring information and planning records are readily available as required.</li> <li>• The DT will ensure there is ready access to information and up to date contact details for carers, parents (where appropriate), social worker and the named contact in the Virtual School.</li> <li>• All appropriate records will be forwarded to the receiving school promptly if there is a transfer to another school.</li> <li>• Sensitivity is a priority in sharing information with members of the school staff team. We are guided by best practice and use a ‘need to know’. Wherever possible pupils’ wishes are taken into account in sharing information within the staff team.</li> <li>• Any incidents of bullying of the CiC or by the CiC will be formally recorded and noted in the PEP and review processes.</li> </ul>
8.	<p><b>Appointments within Staff and Governing Body</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school will adhere to the statutory requirement to appoint a Designated Teacher for Children in Care. This person will be a qualified teacher and ideally a senior person within the school.</li> <li>• All staff and governors have a responsibility for the educational achievement and well-being of Children in Care. The work of the Designated Teacher with responsibility for Children in Care is to lead in this area, but they do not hold sole responsibility.</li> </ul>
9.	<p><b>Staff and Governors’ Development and Training</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Designated Teacher makes particular efforts to develop good awareness and understanding of issues, guidance and developments associated with the Child in Care context. The Designated Teacher disseminates knowledge and skills to colleagues in school as appropriate and necessary. Partnership working and collaboration with the Local Authority and the Virtual School is essential here.</li> <li>• There is a specific statutory expectation that the Designated Teacher for Children in Care will be released to attend a programme of training as appropriate to maintain and extend their personal expertise.</li> <li>• A Designated Governor will, where possible, attend appropriate briefings and relevant development opportunities provided by the Local Authority and the Virtual School.</li> </ul>

**10. Partnership Working**

- The school values the views of carers and parents, corporate parents, residential care workers and other specialists to enable pupils to achieve their potential.
- We will develop close relationships and collaborative work to promote the learning and well being of individual children, both in and out of school.
- PEP meetings, other school liaison and consultation processes and informal day to day dialogue are all seen as good opportunities to enhance our partnerships.
- We recognise the essential contributions that external support services make in supporting Children in Care. We commit to developing positive partnerships with all involved. Our partnerships with community partners are extensive; some of our key partners for these children include:

The Virtual School, Social Care, Family Workers and our Family Liaison Worker, Communication and ASC TAs, Centre 33 bought in support, Play Therapy, Music Therapy, Education Psychologists, SEND teams, CAMH, Education Welfare Officers, youth offending service, locality teams and advocacy services.