Southerly Point Co-operative Multi-Academy Trust
EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IN CARE and PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN [PLAC] POLICY

Equality Impact Assessment

The EIA has not identified any potential for discrimination or adverse impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken.*	✓
The EIA has not identified any conflict with the Trust's co-operative values and the Church Schools' values.	✓
Adjust the policy to remove barriers identified by the EIA or better promote equality.	✓

*Inclusive of protected characteristics

Provenance	Date
Working Party	July 2018
HR checks	
Union Consultation	
Staff Consultation	Oct 2020
Trustees' Ratification	Oct 2020
Implementation	Nov 2020

Review Date
October 2020. Minor changes and rewording throughout. Key changes / additions are: DT's Guide to Completing a PEP - Overview [P1]; Expectations of a DT [now at end - P4]; Tips [P4]
October 2021. Minor addition to section on Exclusions.
April 2022. Layout reformatted to better reflect the Cornwall Virtual School's policy on which this is based.
March 2024

To be read in conjunction with:	**Keeping Children Safe in Education** **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** **SEND Policy** **Attendance Policy** **Admissions Policy** **Exclusions Policy**

Designated Teacher [DT] for CiC-

Second contact for CiC if DT unavailable -

Southerly Point Co-operative Multi-Academy Trust

EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IN CARE AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

We believe that all Children in Care and PLAC should have equitable access to excellent educational provision and achieve in line or better than all children from Cornwall and children nationally. We, as a school community, aim to be champions and advocates for Children in Care and PLAC, and will take a proactive approach to support their success and achievement, recognising that we have a vital role to play in promoting children and young people's social and emotional development and enhancing life outcomes.

School staff and Governors are aware of the 'Promoting the Education of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children', Feb 2018 DfE:

- There is a duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of CiC and PLAC, under Section 52 of the Children's Act 2004 [still remains in place despite Act updates].
- There is a dedicated Governor or committee to champion and monitor the work of the school in supporting its CiC and PLAC as a part of a larger group of vulnerable children.
- Take a proactive approach in co-operating with, and supporting, the relevant Local Authority with regard to the education of CiC and PLAC attending their school.
- Designated teachers and staff are aware of and enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively with the full support of the Head Teacher.

Our Aims to Support Children in Care and PLAC

- Provide a safe and secure environment, which values education and believes in the abilities and potential of all children.
- Close the gap - bring the educational attainments of our Children in Care and PLAC in line or better to those of their peers.
- Ensure appropriate use of Pupil Premium Plus* to support education
- Make sure that they have access to education appropriate to their age, ability and emotional understanding. This includes access to a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum.
- Identify our school's role to promote and support the education of our Children in Care and PLAC.
- Always ask the question: 'Would this be good enough for my child?'
- All settings are required to have a Designated Teacher [DT] for Children in Care and PLAC who will act as their advocate and coordinate support for them, liaising with carers, birth parents [as appropriate], social workers and health on a wide variety of educational and care issues. This person will be required to make financial decisions in the best interest of the child.
- All staff and governors are committed to ensuring improved educational life chances for Children in Care and PLAC 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 with other agencies.

Whole School Approach

- The school celebrates the achievements of Children in Care and PLAC.
- Teachers should have high expectations of the young person, encouraging achievement and ambition
- The young person will need to have a special, trusted adult in school that is able to take time to listen to them and have access to support and counselling in school if required.
- For Children in Care and PLAC, there should be clarity in relation to who is and is not allowed to collect the child from school.
- All teachers within the school are made aware of the needs of Children in Care and PLAC and actively promote their best interests.
- Adults in school will need to be sensitive to the young person's wishes over what is known and by whom regarding their care status.
- Effective assessment, recording and reporting practices are established.
- Ensure that systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about Children in Care and PLAC.
- The designated teacher ensures that positive messages about behaviour and achievement are shared within the school and between school, carers and outside agencies, and that high educational expectations are maintained.
- A nurturing and trauma informed approach and understanding of ACES will help to support Children in Care and PLAC.
- Support the engagement of Children in Care and PLAC in out of school hours learning.
- Staff work in partnership with carers and agencies and parents [where appropriate].

- Support carers to value educational achievement and improve attendance.
- Teachers can help the individual begin to feel that they are fitting in and offer them a safe haven and a sympathetic ear in a crisis.
- Staff are aware that being or becoming 'Child in Care' 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 emotional issues and trauma 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.
- Teachers need to be aware of possible unresolved feelings the young person may have about their own families and siblings, in addition to insecurity over their current homes and carers.
- CIC have access to Pupil Premium Plus – from September, £350 will be allocated to every child from day one of being in care by the Virtual School head. School will receive this at the end of each term. A bid can be made via the EPEP to top this up by a further £350 if required. See Education Endowment Fund / Sutton trust for guidance on use, good practice and impact of PP+.
- PLAC have access to Pupil Premium Plus [£2345/year] by declaring their status in each October Census.

Expectations of a Designated Teacher [DT]:

- To ensure the child receives a copy of their PEP.
- To advise the Virtual School if the DT is going to change/leave the school. Or if you change your email address. [GDPR]
- To liaise with your finance department with regards to fixed rate & additional PPP payments you are expecting.
- To attend PEPs in the summer term for those who are going to transition to your school/establishment.
- To submit your PEP within 10 working days of the PEP meeting being held.
- To complete a PEP every term [at the very least].
- If there is a change of date for a PEP meeting you will ensure the date is amended on Welfare Call to reflect this.
- To inform the Virtual School of any changes you require or if there are any issues in order for them to be resolved at an early stage.
- It is a statutory requirement for a DT to attend one training session [Induction/Network/Conference] with the Virtual School per year. This will be entered on the S157/175 annual safeguarding return.

Governors

Every Designated Governor for CIC and PLAC should know:

- Number of CIC AND PLAC on school roll.
- Number of CIC with up to date PEPs.
- Overall attainment & progress of CIC and PLAC in the school / performance compared to peers and national.
- Number of CIC and PLAC with SEN and statements / EHC Plans- level of support in place.
- Authorised and unauthorised absence levels of CIC and PLAC.
- Risk assessments if not in school.
- Number of CIC and PLAC who have been excluded in previous 12 months.
- How LA supports educational achievement of CIC and PLAC.
- Use of Pupil Premium Plus spend and impact on attainment.

The Governing Body should ensure the DT has the opportunity to attend training.

Special Educational needs - see Cornwall SEND graduated response document

- Any special educational needs are quickly identified and appropriate provision is made – early identification and action is key.
- Ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when Children in Care and PLAC are underachieving, and have early interventions to improve this.
- Contact needs to be made with the Virtual School for CIC and PLAC as soon as concerns are raised.
- If the child or young person has a statement of special educational need or EHC Plan, then ensure the annual review coincides with one of the six monthly Statutory Care Reviews / termly PEP meetings; dates can be obtained from the social worker.
- Please refer to SEN Code of Practice for further information.

Admissions and transitions

- CIC and PLAC have priority on school admission.
- Prioritise Children in Care and PLAC within schools own admissions procedures and admit students as quickly as possible, recognising the importance of re-establishing school stability for Children in Care and PLAC.
- Adhere to Cornwall Council School Admission protocol.
- Awareness of 'Placement of pupils out of their chronological year group', Cornwall Council guide.
- Ensure that on admission or transfer all relevant information is obtained at the outset.
- We will forward appropriate documents, in a timely fashion, 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.
- CiC are not part of the Fair Access process.

Attendance

- Send weekly report to Virtual School.
- Where attendance is a problem, a first day of absence procedure needs to be established.
- Inform Education Welfare Officer / Social Worker / Virtual School if any concerns about attendance.
- Acknowledge attendance in any education meetings, celebrating success and setting realistic targets if it is a concern.
- If a child is on a protection plan, ensure Social worker and Carer are contacted if child is absent from school.
- Children in Care and PLAC should not be taken out of school for holidays, only for 'exceptional circumstances'.
- There should be no unauthorised absences for CIC and PLAC.
- Safety plans to be put in place where a CIC/ PLAC is on a reduced timetable or Children Missing Education or Children Missing Out of Education [CME/CMOE].

Exclusion

- Identify any Child in Care who is at risk of exclusion and contact the Virtual School Education Welfare Officer, Social Worker and relevant professionals to put proactive strategies in place to avoid the Child in Care missing days from school.
- Ensure in the case of a fixed term exclusion that the carer [or persons holding parental responsibility] 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 of the rights of carers to make representations to the governing body where appropriate and details of arrangements made to enable the excluded pupil to continue his/her education.
- Make sure in the event of any exclusion, contact is made with the Virtual School with details of the exclusion outlining the reasons why the child has been excluded so that an appropriate response can be made.

Multi-agency liaison

- The CIC and PLAC Designated Teacher will need to liaise closely with carers, birth parents [if appropriate] and the pupil's social worker on a variety of issues including homework, kit and equipment required. It is important that positive messages about behaviour and achievement are shared.
- There should be a well-planned and co-ordinated approach to meeting the young person's educational and social needs, for example, whether potentially disruptive changes in school can be prevented.
- There needs to be clear understanding about the role and responsibility of school staff in relation to the young person and the roles and responsibilities of the other professionals involved.
- School staff will need to share positive perceptions and high expectations of the young person with other professionals but especially with the young person.
- The school should be aware of and sensitive to the appropriate role of the natural parents.
- Designated teachers should ensure that requests from the LA for statistical information held by the school are completed and returned on time to comply with statutory obligations.
- Encourage each child in care to access out of hours learning activities realising the positive impact this could have on their self–esteem and learning.
- Support the young person to have the opportunity to participate fully in planning and decision making.

At Risk

- Schools to be made aware / share information if they feel a CIC and PLAC is at risk in any way.
- Schools to be aware and have a safety plan in place with regards to absconding, going missing and or at risk of exploitation.

Tips

Don't miss out on information and training sessions.

- Create a Cornwall Learning Online account where you can book onto the courses
  www.cornwalllearningonline.co.uk
- Cornwall Virtual School link from Cornwall Council website - http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/

The Headteacher or Designated Teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.