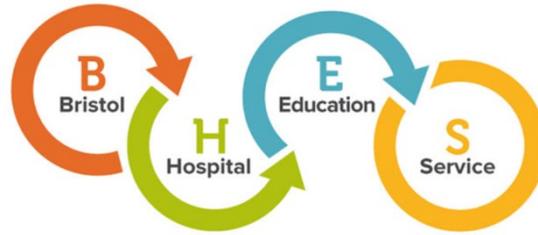


Bristol Hospital Education Service



Children in Care Policy

Review

Review Cycle	Date of Current Policy	Author(s) of Current Policy	Review Date
Annual	January 2018	Gwen Bennion	January 2021
	January 2022	Gwen Bennion	March 2023

Ratification

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Chair of Management Committee			
Head Teacher			

Details of Policy Updates

Date	Details
March 2022	Management committee Link Governor for Children in Care needs to be added when appointed
March 2022	PEP meeting structure added Mental Health objectives added BHES's objectives for all students added

Bristol Hospital Education Service

Established over thirty years ago, Bristol Hospital Education Service is an Outstanding educational provision designed to support young people who are unable to access mainstream education because of medical needs.

Ethos and values

Our aim and purpose is to reduce the impact that chronic illness has on students life chances.

We provide education to students when their illness stops them from attending their on-roll school.

We work in partnership with health, education and social care colleagues to deliver co-ordinated intervention plans.

Our goal for all of our students is that they return to their on roll school as soon as possible.

We believe that students make the best progress when they are fully aware of the purpose of the work that we do with them.

Ensuring students understand the journey that they will make through our service and what their next steps are is key to our work.

We make sure that this happens through involving students and parents in reviews and the use of interactive feedback from staff.

The values we hold to support our ethos

Openness, honesty, equity, self-help, social responsibility and caring for others.

Overall aims

We at BHES will do for children in care what we do for all children only more so. We aim to ensure that children in care excel, as we aim for all children to excel. We aim to overcome their barriers to learning and enable them to leave us happy and secure in themselves, understanding that they do have control over their destiny and that education does matter. We will listen to what children in care tell us about what they want from their education and try to address any concerns or issues raised through various means including the Children in Care Council and surveys from The HOPE, Bristol's Virtual School for Children in Care.

BHES strives to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school are such that, whatever the heritage and origins of members of the school, pupils should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and celebrate diversity.

Objectives

BHES will support children in care by:

- ensuring an effective induction when joining the school or when coming into care whilst already on the school roll
- balancing high levels of support with real challenge
- ensuring that each child has a high quality Personal Education Plan
- linking each child to a key person they relate well to
- making it a priority to know the children well and to build strong relationships
- developing strong relationships with carers, local authorities including the Virtual School Head and specialist agencies
- encouraging and supporting children in care to take responsibility for their learning
- engaging children in care in learning outside the classroom and after-school activities
- intervening promptly if a problem emerges such as with behaviour or attendance
- giving integrated but low profile support in school for each child in care so that they are not made to feel different from other children
- planning for future transitions e.g. to further or higher education.

Mental Health objectives are carefully considered when supporting children in care:

- promote positive mental health in students
- being aware of past trauma that may affect student engagement
- increase awareness of mental health issues to support their own understanding
- staff to be alert of early warning signs of mental ill health and to report this via our CPOMS system and keep involved agencies informed
- provide support to students suffering mental ill health and their carers

BHES's objectives for all students are carefully considered when supporting children in care:

- reduce the impact that chronic illness has on students' life chances.
- provide education to students when their illness stops them from attending their on-roll school.
- work in partnership with health, education and social care colleagues to deliver co-ordinated intervention plans.
- that they return to their on-roll school as soon as possible.
- students are fully aware of the purpose of the work that we do with them.
- students understand the journey that they will make through our service and what their next steps are is key to our work.

Roles and responsibilities – see annex 2 for full detail

The Management Committee member with special responsibility for children in care in this school is: tbc

The designated teacher in this school is: Gwen Bennion

Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

All children in care must have a care plan which is drawn up and reviewed by the local authority which looks after them. The care plan must include a Personal Education Plan (PEP), which forms part of the child's official school record. The school and the Local Authority have a shared responsibility for making sure that the PEP is a useful document and for helping children in care to achieve and enjoy. Discussion about how together they can make that happen through the content, implementation and review of the PEP should be done through a meeting involving the young person, carers, the social worker, a teacher and others such as, where appropriate, staff from The HOPE Virtual School for Children in Care. The PEP should include challenging, curriculum-based targets and support the young person's educational progress. If the young person has a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan this should be reviewed annually and should, where possible, tie in with the PEP. Full guidance on PEP meetings and how to use the PEP is provided on the [children in care education web pages](#).

PEP meetings

Meetings are held:

- within 28 days of a child first coming into care
- within 3 months of the first PEP, and then every 6 months after that

The timings of the PEP meetings are set so that the latest PEP can be reviewed at each Child in Care review.

PEP reviews

The PEP is reviewed by the designated teacher each term to make sure that it's up to date with the child's current educational progress and needs. The young person, their social worker and their carer are also involved in the review.

Additional funding

Children in care are entitled to additional funding to help improve their outcomes and narrow the gap between their outcomes and those of their peers. Which young people are eligible and the amount of such funding available will be determined as a result of government policy.

The school is committed to ensuring effective use of this dedicated funding where available for all eligible children in care on roll to provide additional, personalised support to ensure accelerated progress in order to improve outcomes. The dedicated funding for children in Year R to Year 11 is currently called the LAC Pupil Premium Grant.

The appropriate use of allocated funding is to be assessed through the Personal Education Plan. The HOPE Virtual School for Children in Care expects 80% of LAC Pupil Premium money to be spent on improving outcomes in English and/or maths.

Admission/Induction Arrangements

On admission, records will be requested from the young person's previous school. As soon as practicable after the records are received, a meeting will be held with the carer/parent, social worker, other relevant professionals and the young person, as appropriate, to put together a new Personal Education Plan. This early meeting will ensure that communication systems are established early. If records are not received promptly we will undertake our own assessment to make sure that the teaching and support received are appropriate. We will endeavour to meet the statutory time scales for PEPs as outlined in guidance.

When any young person already on school roll enters care the school will ensure that the student meets with the designated teacher as soon as possible and is fully informed of the school procedures and additional support arrangements available. A meeting with other parties will be arranged and PEP prepared as soon as possible in the same way as for those children already in care admitted to school.

At the first PEP meeting, we will seek clarification from the social worker as to who requires school reports and who may give permission for school trips or other such activities. At this meeting any means of communication to aid the exchange of information between statutory meetings will be discussed and agreed (such as a home/school book to detail any sudden significant changes in a young person's circumstances.)

Many children in care do not want school staff to be aware of their care status because it makes them feel "different". Therefore, we will negotiate with the young person to identify who should be aware of their care status. However we recognise that in some cases, such as if the young person has a severe learning difficulty, this may not be possible.

School Trips and Special Activities

We aim to ensure that children in care enjoy as many extra-curricular opportunities as possible by reserving placements for them on trips or enrichment activities which they are eligible for and allowing sufficient time to gain the necessary consent. The responsibility for giving permission for school trips and enrichment opportunities is that of the social worker, although they often delegate this to foster carers. The person who may give permission will be clarified at the first PEP meeting. If in doubt we will always send consent forms to the social worker.

Given the delays that children in care experience in getting parental consent for school trips and activities, we will aim to ensure that children in care enjoy the same extra-curricular opportunities as other young people by reserving placements for them on trips or on activities.

Leaving Arrangements

When a child in care leaves the school we will find ways to say goodbye. We will also ensure the swift transfer of information to the next school or FE/HE institution if appropriate.

Annex 1 – Definitions and complaints procedure

Children in care

The terms Looked After Child (LAC) and child in care (CiC) are interchangeable. For the purposes of this policy we are using the term CiC. Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They include the following:

- (i) children who are accommodated by the local authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents;
- (ii) children who are the subject of a care order or interim care order;
- (iii) children who are the subject of emergency orders for the protection of the child;
- (iv) children who are compulsorily accommodated. This includes remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement.

A looked after child may be in residential care, a foster placement or could be living with their parents. If living with their parents, this could be on a part time basis or possibly before returning home permanently after a care placement.

Legal Framework

From 1 September 2009 the governing bodies of all maintained schools are required under the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 (the 2008 Act) to appoint a designated teacher (DT) to promote the educational achievement of children in care who are on the school roll. This policy follows the statutory guidance for school governing bodies outlined in [“The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children” 2009](#).

Complaints

If a young person, parent/carer or social worker wishes to complain about the provision or policy, they should in the first instance raise it with the designated teacher, who will try to resolve the situation alongside the carer and the social worker.

If the issue cannot be resolved within 10 days, the young person, carer or social worker can submit a formal complaint in writing to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will investigate the complaint and respond within 10 working days, unless the formal complaint is about the conduct of the Headteacher, in which case the complaint will go straight to the chair of governors.

Any issues that remain unresolved at this stage should be addressed through a meeting in order to assess the impact of any such complaint upon the young person's education. This meeting may include the named Governor and any other outside agency that both parties deem necessary to attend. This meeting should normally be held within 10 working days of the Headteacher's response.

Pupils who wish to make a formal complaint against the school or about their care will be advised of the support available for children in care through the National Youth Advocacy Service and encouraged to look at the page on Bristol's children in care [RVoice website](#).

Annex 2 - Roles and Responsibilities

The Role of the Management Committee

- The Management Committee will ensure that the designated teacher and named member undertake appropriate training.
- Ensure that the designated teacher is a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Governors will consider an annual report from the designated teacher covering attainment, attendance, progress, Personal Education Plans, CiC with Special Educational Needs and Disability or who are gifted and talented, impact on school development plans and how the school supports the work of The HOPE (Bristol's virtual school for children in care). A suggested template is available on the [CiC education web pages](#).
- The Management Committee, Headteacher and school leadership team will act on any issues raised in the report and will ensure that:
 - the school has a clear overview of the educational needs and progress of CiC on roll
 - the school's policies are effective in reflecting the needs of CiC
 - resources are allocated to support the designated teacher to carry out this role effectively for the benefit of CiC.

The role of the Headteacher

- To ensure that, in partnership with the Management Committee, the designated teacher has the opportunity to acquire and keep up to date the necessary skills, knowledge and training to understand and respond to the specific teaching and

learning needs of children in care.

- To make sure that the designated teacher role contributes to the deeper understanding of everyone in the school who is likely to be involved in supporting children in care to achieve.
- In partnership with the Management Committee, monitor the effectiveness of the role of the designated teacher.
- Oversee the development of the policy on children in care.
- Evaluate the standards and achievement of CiC and report these termly to the governing body and discuss them at Core SIO/HOPE meetings.
- Ensure that all staff are given the opportunity to attend training courses etc. that help them develop the skills and knowledge needed to support children in care.

The role of the designated teacher within the school

The designated teacher has lead responsibility for helping school staff understand the things which affect how CiC learn and achieve. The DT will:

- promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how CiC learn
- promote the educational achievement of every child in care on the school's roll
- contribute to the development and review of whole school policies to ensure that they do not unintentionally put children in care at a disadvantage
- make sure, in partnership with other staff, that there are effective and well understood school procedures in place to support children in care's learning
- promote a culture in which CiC are able to discuss their progress and be involved in setting their own targets, have their views taken seriously and are supported to take responsibility for their own learning
- be a source of advice for staff about differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children and in making full use of Quality First teaching
- make sure that CiC are prioritised in one to one tuition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home
- have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of the child's personal education plan (PEP) within the school
- set up systems to monitor and record the progress of all children in care and establish a system for contacting and forwarding educational records to new schools to facilitate a smooth and speedy transfer
- act as the named contact for colleagues in social care and health and ensure effective communication between all relevant parties
- have lead responsibility for helping school staff to understand the things which can affect how children in care learn and achieve
- ensure that the school file for CiC holds all the essential information; a template for which can be found on the [CiC education web pages](#)
- arrange for a mentor or peer mentor for each child in care on the roll of the school
- have due regard for the 'Expectations' document produced by The HOPE Virtual School for Children in Care.

The role of all those involved in supporting children in care

- Ensure that all children in care are made to feel welcome and included.
- Have high expectations of children in care's involvement in learning and educational progress.

- Be aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation from birth families.
- Understand the reasons which may be behind a child in care's behaviour, and why they may need more support than other children.
- Understand how important it is to see children in care as individuals and not to publicly treat them differently from their peers.
- Appreciate the central importance of showing sensitivity about who else knows about a child in care's status.
- Understand what a PEP is and its importance in helping to create a shared understanding between teachers, carers, social workers and, depending on age and understanding, the young person him or herself of what everyone needs to do to help them achieve their potential.

Annex 3 - Sources of guidance and support

National policy/statutory guidance

- [Improving the attainment of looked after children in secondary schools](#) - DCSF 2009
- [The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children](#) - DCSF 2009
- [Promoting the education of looked after children](#): statutory guidance for local authorities – DfE 2014
- [Department for Education website](#)
- [Pupil Premium information](#)
- **Bristol policies and guidance** – all available at <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/schools-learning-early-years/guidance-policies-and-procedures> unless otherwise shown
 - Admissions protocol and operational process
 - Attendance plan for CiC example
 - Exclusion Procedural Guidance
 - Induction and leaving processes for children in care (CiC)
 - Model confidential school file for CiC - Some schools requested a template of what a school's file for a CiC should contain. Several designated teachers contributed to this model document
 - Model policy for CiC for secondary schools - This is intended to be a template for secondary schools to adapt according to their own circumstances
 - Monitoring and Tracking Pupil Progress - This document shows the processes that are in place in addition to what schools do
 - [Personal Education Plan Guidance](#)
 - Glossary for PEP guidance
 - Free resources for CiC
 - Process for agreeing part time timetable
 - Process for new children in care/CiC moving
 - Pupil Premium policy
 - Principles for administering Bursary funds for CiC/care leavers
 - Process for agreeing part time timetable
 - Process for new children in care/CiC moving

- Process for Year 11-12 transfer for CiC
- Secondary policy for CiC - A secondary school DT has adapted the St Werburgh's primary policy for use in secondary schools
- FE policy on supporting young people in care or care leavers - St Brendan's Sixth Form College have given permission to share their policy
- When a child comes into care - Guidance for schools on social care processes when a child comes into local authority care
- [Children in care education website](#)

School's own policies e.g.

- Behaviour policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- PSHE &C – Jigsaw curriculum
- Learning and Teaching
- Confidentiality
- Safeguarding Children Policy