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GIRLS' COLLEGE
Lionheart Educational Trust

EDUCATION AND CARE OF LOOKED-AFTER AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED-AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

November 2026 – November 2028

Contents

1. Aims 3
2. Legislation and statutory requirements 3
3. Admissions 4
4. Personal Education Plan (PEP) 4
5. Pupil Premium Funding 4
6. Additional Educational Needs 5
7. Mental Health 5
8. Suspensions 5
9. Roles and responsibilities 6
10. Monitoring 10
11. Links with other policies 10

1. Aims

The aim of the policy is to promote the educational achievement and welfare of looked-after children and previously looked-after children.

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

2.1 This policy is based on the advice given in "Promoting the Education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children 2018. The designated teacher for looked-after children and previously looked-after children 2018 and Promoting the Health and Wellbeing of looked-after children March 2015".

2.2 The main points highlighted in the report were:

- A child 'looked-after by a local authority' is one who is looked-after within the meaning of section 22 of the children Act 1989.
- A previously looked-after child is one who is no longer looked-after in England and Wales because they are the subject of adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person or has been adopted from state care outside England and Wales; and
- A child is in state care outside if they are in the care of, or accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other organisation, the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.

2.3 Statutory framework

From 1 September 2009 the governing bodies of academies are required under the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 to appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children who are on the school roll.

2.4 Key documents

The designated teacher for looked-after children and previously looked-after children (DFE February 2018) Statutory guidance for school governing bodies on their roles and responsibilities.

Improving the Attainment of looked-after Young People in Secondary Schools Guidance for Schools (DCSF 01048-2009)

Promoting the Education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children (DFE February 2018)

Children and Families Act 2014.
(http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/pdfs/ukpga_20140006_en.pdf)

Promoting the Health and Wellbeing of looked-after children (DFE March 2015)
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/413368/Promoting_the_health_and_well-being_of_looked-after_children.pdf

3. Admissions

Sir Jonathan North Girls' College will prioritise looked-after children and previously looked-after children in their Admissions Policy.

The college will work to ensure that looked-after children (LAC) and previously looked-after children are admitted promptly after a request for a place has been made, to avoid unnecessary disruption to the child's schooling.

On admission, records will be requested from the student's previous school and a meeting will be arranged with carer/parent/guardian and Social Worker as appropriate. This will provide information to inform the timetable, and any arrangements that need to be put in place.

We will provide an effective induction for looked-after and previously looked-after children starting the college, new to school and new to care and will remind parents and guardians that they need to inform the college if their child is eligible to attract pupil premium plus funding (PP+).

4. Personal Education Plan (PEP)

All looked-after children will have a current PEP.

If a LAC joins the college without a PEP, the designated teacher will pursue the matter with the child's Social Worker who has a statutory duty to initiate the PEP.

The college will work alongside the assigned Social Worker to contribute to the education content of the PEP.

The designated teacher will lead on how the PEP is developed and used in the college to make sure the child's progress towards education targets is monitored. They will have overall responsibility for monitoring and tracking attainment, and ensuring that identified actions are put into place. They should work closely with other staff in the college to judge whether teaching and learning and intervention strategies are being used to support achievement and wellbeing effectively.

When a child leaves the college, the designated teacher will ensure that the PEP is passed on to the next designated teacher.

5. Pupil Premium Funding

5.1 Pupil Premium |(PP) funding will be used appropriately to provide additional identified support and intervention, taking into account the specific needs of children. The designated teacher will work with the social worker, carer and young person to identify support which will help the young person to achieve their potential.

5.2 All funding for LAC will be monitored and agreed by the virtual school and will be discussed, reviewed and agreed at the young person's PEP meeting.

6. Additional Educational Needs

6.1 The college will ensure that any special educational needs are promptly identified, bearing in mind that looked-after and previously looked-after children are significantly more likely to have special educational needs than their peers. Suitable learning support will be provided and the SENCO and designated teacher will be responsible for liaising with carers and other professionals.

6.2 Any special educational support provided by schools for looked-after children with SEN but who do not need an EHC plan, will be looked at as part of the child's PEP and care plan reviews, involving the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) where necessary.

6.3 For previously looked-after children, the SENCO, class teacher/s, designated teacher and the specialists should involve parents when considering interventions to support their child's progress. They should agree the outcomes to be achieved through SEND support, including a date by which progress will be reviewed. Virtual Schools may be invited to comment on the proposed SEND provision.

6.4 Where there is a need for an Educational Care Plan (EHCP) the college will ensure that:

- The special educational needs and disability code of practice 0 to 25 years, as it relates to looked-after children, is followed.
- The child's PEP works in harmony with his or her EHC plan to tell a coherent and comprehensive story of how the child's needs are being met. We will consider how the statement/EHC plan adds to information about how education, health and care needs will be met without the need to duplicate unnecessarily the information that is already part of the child's care plan or PEP.
- With the help of the Virtual School, they have the skills to identify signs of potential SEN issues, and know how to access further assessment and support where necessary, making full use of the SENCO and Local Authority support team where applicable.

7. Mental Health

7.1 Looked-after children and previously looked-after children are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues than their peers. This can impact on their education and behaviour.

7.2 Sir Jonathan North Girls College will ensure that staff are able to: identify signs of potential mental health issues and understand how to access assessment and support where necessary; understand the impact trauma, attachment disorder and other mental health issues can have on looked-after and previously looked- after children.

8. Suspensions

8.1 It is important to be especially sensitive in relation to suspensions where looked-after and previously looked-after children are concerned.

8.2 Where the college has concerns about a looked-after child's behaviour, the Virtual School Head should be informed and, where necessary, involved at the earliest opportunity. This is to enable the Virtual School Head, working with others, to:

- Consider what additional assessment and support (such as additional help for the classroom teacher, one-to-one therapeutic work or a suitable alternative placement) needs to be put in place to address the causes of the child's behaviour and prevent the need for suspension.
- Make any additional arrangements to support the child's on-going education in the event of a suspension.

8.3 Where the College has concerns about the behaviour of a previously looked-after child which could result in the child being suspended, the child's parents or the designated teacher, following discussions with the child's parents may seek the advice of the Virtual Schools Head on strategies to support the child to avoid suspension.

8.4 Every practicable means should be tried to maintain the child in the college.

8.5 The college we will find viable alternatives to fixed term suspensions/ permanent suspensions in conjunction with the Local Authority. Suspensions should be an absolute last resort in accordance with Promoting the Education of looked-after children (DFE February 2018).

9. Roles and responsibilities

9.1 The role of the governing body

- Must designate a member of staff to have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including those aged between 16 and 18 who are registered at the school.
- The governing body must ensure that the designated teacher undertakes appropriate training (section 20(2) of the 2008 Act) and ensure that they have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- For each Governing Body there will be a named Governor responsible for looked-after children and previously looked-after children.
- The designated teacher will report to the governing body and school leadership team and act on any issues raised as targets for improvement.
- When the school admits a looked-after child or previously looked-after child, the named governor will liaise with the designated teacher to monitor progress and identify any barriers to learning.
- This process should help identify issues for school improvement and feed into the SEF.
- The Governing Body will ensure that the school policies are reviewed from the point of view of looked-after children and previously looked-after children.

9.2 The role of the designated teacher for looked-after children

9.2.1 The designated teacher should:

- Be a central point of initial contact within the college. This helps to make sure that the college plays its role to the full in making sure arrangements are joined up and minimise any disruption to a child's learning
- Have a leadership role in promoting the educational achievement of every looked-after and previously looked-after child on the college's role. This involves working with the Virtual Schools to promote the education of looked- after and previously looked-after children and promoting a whole college culture where

the learning is personalised and emotional, academic and personal needs are prioritised

- Be a source of advice for staff about appropriate teaching strategies for individual children
- Work directly with looked-after and previously looked-after children and their carers, parents or guardians and social workers to:
  - promote good home school links
  - support progress; ensure that they understand the potential value of one-to-one tuition and are equipped to engage with it at home
  - help to understand how the school teaches literacy and numeracy
  - and encourage high aspirations, working with the child to plan for the future
- Should discuss with the social worker how the college should engage with birth parents and ensure that the college is clear about who has parental responsibility and what information can be shared with whom
- Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of looked-after children's personal education plan (PEP) within the college and liaise with outside agencies
- Work with the designated safeguarding leads to ensure that any safeguarding concerns are quickly and effectively responded to
- Have ultimate responsibility for leading the process of target setting for individual looked-after children in school and rigorously tracking their attainment progress
- Provide an annual report on looked-after children to the Local Governing Body. This will be sensitively written so as not to identify a looked-after child and must include information on attainment, progress, attendance, suspensions, impact of pupil premium plus and admissions.

9.2.2 The designated teacher should have lead responsibility for helping college staff understand the things which affect how looked-after and previously looked-after children learn and achieve and how the college supports the educational achievement of these children. This means making sure that all staff:

- Have strong awareness, training and skills around the specific needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children and how to support them.
- Have high expectations and set targets to accelerate educational progress.
- Are aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of separation (attachment awareness) from birth families and that some children might find it difficult to build relationships of trust because of their experience and how this might affect a child's behaviour.
- Understand how important it is to see looked-after and previously looked-after children as individuals rather than as a homogenous group, not publicly treat them differently from their peers and show sensitivity about who else knows about their looked-after or previously looked-after status.
- Appreciate the central importance of the looked-after child's PEP in helping to create a shared understanding between teachers, carers, social workers and most importantly the child's own understanding that they are being supported.

- Have the level of understanding they need of the role of the social workers, Virtual School and carers, and how the function of the PEP fits into the wider care planning duties of the authority which looks after the child; and
- For previously looked-after children, understand the importance of involving the child's parents or guardians in decisions affecting their child's education, and be a contact for parents and guardians who want advice or have concerns about their child's progress at school.

9.2.3 In addition to this, the designated teacher should contribute to the development and review of college policies and procedures to ensure that:

- They do not unintentionally put looked-after or previously looked-after children at a disadvantage
- Transitions to the next phase of education are supported, with thought given to the future, careers advice and guidance about further education, training and employment (where appropriate)
- There are no barriers to looked-after children and previously looked-after children accessing the general activities and experiences the school offers its children
- There is a culture of high expectations and aspirations
- The young person is able to discuss their progress and be involved in setting their own targets. They are also able to talk about any difficult issues with a sympathetic and empathetic adult, have their views taken seriously and are supported to take responsibility for their own learning
- Looked-after and previously looked-after children are prioritised in one-to-one tuition arrangements and that they have access to academic focused study support
- They are encouraging carers to understand the importance of supporting learning at home.

9.3 Staff are responsible for:

- Being aware of looked-after children or previously looked-after children and providing them with support and encouragement. Preserving confidentiality, where appropriate, and showing sensitivity and understanding. Being vigilant for any signs of bullying towards looked-after children or previously looked-after children
- Promoting the self-esteem of looked-after children or previously looked-after children
- Awareness of possible Mental Health needs and the impact of poor attachment and trauma on behaviour and learning.
- Work to ensure the Inclusion of looked-after children or previously looked-after children within the School community, maintaining their confidentiality while also providing support with raising their self-esteem, and supporting their relationships with peers in line with the Anti Bullying Policy.

9.4 Teaching staff should:

- Have high expectations in regard to the achievement of looked-after children or previously looked-after children

- Ensure that the individual needs of looked-after children or previously looked-after children are met through quality, differentiated teaching.
- Are aware that looked-after children or previously looked-after children have high rates of SEN and flag concerns regarding learning with the SENCO and Designated Teacher.
- Are aware of the specific needs of looked-after children or previously looked-after children in relation to Attachment and Trauma and make appropriate adjustment to teaching and classroom management to meet these needs.
- Are aware of the prevalence of looked-after children or previously looked-after children mental health needs, and flag concerns to the Designated Teacher and pastoral team.
- Swiftly identifying possible learning needs, safeguarding and mental health concerns to the Designated teacher, Safeguarding Lead, and SENCO where appropriate and jointly planning interventions to address these concerns.
- Work proactively with the Designated Teacher to ensure that looked-after children or previously looked-after children meet their targets and achieve, highlighting any barriers to learning, and inclusion at the earliest opportunity.

9.5 Pastoral team are responsible for:

- Being the first point of contact for looked-after children or previously looked-after children and their carers
- Providing light touch mentoring for looked-after children or previously looked-after children.
- Monitor attendance, punctuality and behaviour and discuss any concerns with the student, carer and Designated Teacher.
- Encouraging looked-after children or previously looked-after children to take part in extracurricular activities and trips, and removing any hidden barriers to their involvement.
- Ensuring instances of bullying affecting looked-after children or previously looked-after children is acted upon swiftly and that appropriate support is put in place.
- Ensuring that looked-after children or previously looked-after children have access to appropriate ongoing careers advice at the earliest opportunity and that they are encouraged to engage with post 16 education.

9.6 The role of the foster carer is to:

- Support the child's education and encourage them to achieve.
- Liaise with the child's social worker to agree tasks and areas of responsibility relating to the child's education.
- Contribute to the development and review of the child's PEP.
- Be the main point of contact for the school on a day to day basis and sign the home school agreement.
- Support the child to attend school regularly and engage in school activities and ensure adequate support at home for the child to carry out homework.
- Carry out any allocated tasks relating to the child's education and fulfilment of the corporate parenting role as set out in the child's placement plan.
- Attend parent's evenings and school performances that the child is involved in.
- Receive training and support that enables them to engage effectively with the education

- system and advocate for the child.
- Take an active interest in the child's education and provide a home environment that actively encourages learning.
- Ensure the child has access to books and materials to support their education.
- Ensure homework and revision is completed.
- Promote regular school attendance and good behaviour.
- Liaise with the school to deal with any arising issues.

10. Monitoring

The policy will be monitored by Nicola Coton (Assistant Principal) and updated every two years.

11. Links with other policies

- Admissions policy
- Behaviour policy
- SEND policy
- Anti-bullying policy