South Gloucestershire and Stroud College

Looked After Children Policy

If you would like this document in an alternate format

Please contact the Human Resources Department

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Job Title / Role:	Inclusion Manager & DDSL
Ref. No.: **Q/P 154**	**Date of this version**: 17 April 2019 **Review date**: 17 April 2021 (subject to any legislative change) **Upload to External College website?** Yes **Upload to e-Campus?** Yes
Approved by:	Senior Leadership Team
Date of Approval:	April 2019

Main aim and purpose of the policy:	This policy aims to inform staff, learners and other stakeholders how we will work to support Looked After Children to access education and achieve in their learning.			
Is this policy (or its constituent parts) relevant to a general equality duty? (please tick)	This policy development will assist in the elimination of unlawful discrimination and / or harassment of identified groups?	Implementation of this policy will promote equal opportunities for identified groups?	Implementation of this policy will promote positive attitudes and participation between groups?	Implementation of this policy will promote good relations between groups?
Age	☐	✓	☐	☐
Disability	☐	✓	☐	☐
Gender Reassignment	☐	✓	☐	☐
Race or Ethnicity	☐	✓	☐	☐
Religion or Belief	☐	✓	☐	☐
Marriage	☐	✓	☐	☐
Pregnancy/ Maternity	☐	✓	☐	☐
Sex	☐	✓	☐	☐
Sexual Orientation	☐	✓	☐	☐
Carers/ Care givers	☐	✓	☐	☐
Persons in care	☐	✓	☐	☐

Specify any groups for which there is evidence or reason to believe that some groups or individuals could be affected differently:

None

How much evidence is there:	None	A little	Some	A lot
	☐	☐	☐	☐
Is there any concern that the policy may operate in a discriminatory way?	None	A little	Some	A lot
	✓	☐	☐	☐

Assessed relevance to equality (tick one row only)	High	Med	Low	None	Brief reason for this assessment
Age	☐	☐	☐	✓	There are different expectations by age, but this will not impact negatively on learners.
Disability	☐	☐	☐	✓	
Gender Reassignment	☐	☐	☐	✓	
Race or Ethnicity	☐	☐	☐	✓	
Religion or Belief	☐	☐	☐	✓	
Marriage	☐	☐	☐	✓	
Pregnancy/ Maternity	☐	☐	☐	✓	
Sex	☐	☐	☐	✓	
Sexual Orientation	☐	☐	☐	✓	
Carers / Care givers	☐	✓	☐	✓	

What is the next step? (tick one only)	What priority level is this policy?			Has the Policy been sent for Full EQIA, or do you believe the policy should have a Full EQIA?	
	High ✓	Medium ☐	Low ☐	Yes ☐	No ✓

I am satisfied that an initial screening has been carried out on this policy/procedure and a full Impact Assessment is not required

Completed by: Jo Johnson   **Position**: Inclusion Manager & DDSL   **Date**: 11 April 2019

1. Introduction

1.1. A child who is looked after by a local authority (referred to as a looked-after-child) as defined in section 22 Children Act 1989, means a child who is subject to a care order (interim or full care order) or who is voluntarily accommodated by a local authority.

1.2. The majority of Looked After Children' will be living in foster homes, but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even placed back at home with their natural parent(s) sharing parental responsibility with the Local Authority.

1.3. South Gloucestershire and Stroud College (SGS) recognises that 'Looked After Children' may have very specific needs and may be coping with trauma, abuse or rejection, and are likely to experience personal distress and uncertainty.

1.4. The term Looked After Children, for this policy reflects those learners who are both 'In Care' or 'Care Leavers'.

2. Policy Statement

2.1. Since the mid-seventies, there has been concern that the educational achievements of children in care, as a cohort, have fallen well below that of their peers. It is also recognised that a successful education can play a huge part in helping young people escape from social deprivation and act as a passport to a better life.

2.2. It is essential therefore, that SGS actively promotes the education of 'Looked After Children', in order to remove the barriers of stigma and shame about their circumstances.

2.3. The Department of Education 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE) guidance September 6th 2016 2018, embodies joint working to promote positive outcomes and states.

The KCSIE Guidance states (p25, paragraph 98 & 100)

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe.

In particular, they should ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and the child's contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They should also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The designated safeguarding lead should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

2.4. At SGS, we recognise that sometimes young people with experiences of being in care may want or need a little extra support. We are committed to ensuring our looked after young people receive the best possible opportunities and support to succeed.

2.5. The college is also aware of the educational disadvantages faced by looked after young people and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them.

3. Policy Objectives

3.1. SGS is committed to:

3.1.1. promoting the education and welfare of Looked After Children;

3.1.2. ensuring that 'Looked After Children' have a voice in issues relating to their education;

3.1.3. challenging negative stereotyping and promoting inclusion;

3.1.4. targeting support appropriately;

3.1.5. ensuring appropriate level of support for parents/carers;

3.1.6. ensure that identified 'Looked After Children' and care leavers are fully aware of their eligibility for the 16-19 Vulnerable Young Person (VYP) Bursary Scheme.

4. Policy Implementation

4.1. The College aims to:

4.1.1. identify 'Looked After Children' and care leavers upon disclosure:

- Forms e.g. Application, Bursary, Enrolment;

- 1:1's with Tutors, Support Staff and ~~Learning Mentors~~ <mark>Education & Wellbeing Mentors</mark>;

- Local Authority (Protocol Agreement);

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1. Governors

5.1.1. Governors are responsible for ensuring that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep Looked after Children safe.

5.1.2. ~~There is a designated member of staff who~~ <mark>The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)</mark> will be the named Designated Member of Staff for Looked After Children.

5.2. Staff

5.2.1. It is important that all staff who are in contact with a child or young person are aware that he / she is being looked after by the Local Authority. However, it is important that information around the reasons for the young person being in care is shared on a need to know basis and in accordance with the wishes of the young person.

5.2.2. Teaching staff are required to give regular updates on Looked After Children to the designated member of staff. These are in addition to any report and review processes in place for all learners in the college.

5.2.3. Staff are to regularly monitor the attendance of Looked After Children. Any issues with regards to absence from college or particular lessons are addressed through the designated ~~person~~ <mark>member of staff</mark> working in partnership with Tutors and ~~Learning Mentors~~ <mark>Education & Wellbeing Mentors</mark>.

5.3. Designated Member of Staff

5.3.1. The ~~Lead Safeguarding and Child protection officer, along with the Deputy Heads of Learner Services (Stroud and Bristol)~~ <mark>DSL and DDSL</mark> have been designated to be responsible for Looked After Children and implementation and conduct of those policies and liaison with the relevant authorities.

5.3.2. Act as a contact point for all linked agencies, Including the Heads of the Virtual Schools and Local Authorities.

5.3.3. To provide details and update PEP (Personal Education Plan) paperwork on the on-line portals surrounding Looked After Children.

5.3.4. Promote understanding and development of policies and resources to support and include Looked After Children.

5.3.5. Promote awareness amongst staff of the difficulties and education disadvantages of children who are 'Looked After'.

5.3.6. ~~Learning Mentors~~ <mark>Education & Wellbeing Mentors</mark> are to act as an advocate for Looked After Children to ensure that they have the opportunity to contribute towards their regular PEP (Personal Education Plan) meetings in conjunction with the designated Social Worker and guardian.

5.3.7. Ensure that educational information required for the care planning process / court proceedings and Statutory Reviews is available as required and that if asked, the education perspective can be given at such meetings by the designated member of staff or an appropriate college representative.

5.3.8. The designated members of staff should ensure that they take full advantage of training available and keep up to date with developments within the area of public care. They should cascade this training to other members of staff.

5.4. The Young Person / Vulnerable Adult

5.4.1. It is important that a young person is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. It should be explained that the College, the Social Worker, designated member of staff and the young person's parent / carer are working together to promote his / her education.

5.4.2. It is important to establish the young person's view of their circumstances and identify what they want others to know.

6. **Related Policies and Procedures, Statements, Guidelines and Legislation**

6.1. Primary Legislation

6.1.1. Children Act 1989

6.1.2. Children and Young People Act 2008

6.1.3. Adoption and Children Act 2002

6.1.4. The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2002

6.2. <u>Guidance and Legislation</u>

6.2.1. Improving the Educational Attainment of Children In Care (LAC)

6.3. <u>National Policy</u>

6.3.1. Care Matters – Time to Deliver for Children in Care (DfES)

6.3.2. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018

6.4. <u>Supporting College Policies and Procedures</u>

6.4.1. Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedure

6.4.2. Single Equality Policy

6.4.3. 16 – 19 Bursary Fund Policy and Procedure