



GOTHIC MEDE ACADEMY LOOKED AFTER AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

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1. POLICY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Gothic Mede Academy and BEST are committed to providing quality education for all its pupils based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes. This policy includes requirements set out in “Promoting the Education of Looked After Children” 2014, and “Designated Teacher for Looked-After Children” 2009.

Gothic Mede Academy aims to:

- ensure that policies and procedures are followed for Looked After Children (LAC) as for all children
- ensure that all LAC have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, make progress and achieve exceptional outcomes
- provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual’s needs and ability
- ensure that LAC pupils/students take as full a part as possible in all academy activities
- ensure that carers and social workers of LAC pupils/students are kept fully informed of their child’s progress and attainment
- ensure that LAC pupils/students are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision.

2. POLICY

Under the Children Act 1989 a child is legally defined as ‘looked after’ by a local authority if he or she:

- is provided with accommodation for a continuous period of more than 24 hours
- is subject to a care order
- is subject to a placement order

All LAC will have full and equal access to all opportunities available in our academies.

There will be a designated member of staff for LAC and previously Lac children. At Gothic Mede Academy the designated teacher is Michael Warlow.

3. PROCEDURE

Admissions

All LAC children have been given the highest priority within school admission arrangements. The directors and governing body endorse council policy. The council, as the admission authority, believes that admissions criteria should not discriminate against LAC children. This stance is also endorsed by Central Bedfordshire Admissions. Due to care placement changes, LAC children may enter the Academy mid-term. It is vital that these students are given a positive welcome. If necessary, they may need to be offered additional support and pre-entry visits to help the student settle.

Inclusion

This policy recognises that all students are entitled to a balanced, broadly based curriculum. This policy reinforces the need for teaching that is fully inclusive. The directors and governing body will ensure that the academy makes appropriate provision for all LAC and previously LAC pupils.

The Personal Education Plan (PEP)

Every LAC must have a PEP, and it must be used to support the personalised learning of the child. It is coordinated in school by the designated teacher. It is vital that the academy assess each LAC child's attainment on entry to ensure continuity of learning. The academy will monitor and track the achievement and attainment of all students at regular intervals. LAC children will require their PEP to be reviewed, according to their needs. The young person's views should be sought by the Designated Teacher and noted on the PEP. As part of the PEP process there should be robust arrangements in place to ensure that any undiagnosed special educational needs are addressed through the SEND framework as soon as possible.

More information on PEPs can be found in "Promoting the Education of Looked After Children" 2014, pages 15-17.

Allocation of Resources

The governing body will ensure that the academy allocates resources to support appropriate provision for LAC and previously LAC children, meeting the objectives set out in this policy.

Record Keeping

The designated teacher in each academy will know who all the LAC are and will have access to their relevant contact details including parents, carers and social worker. The designated teacher will also know about any LAC placed in the academy, but transferring from other authorities. It is important that the academy flags LAC status appropriately in their information systems so that information is readily available as required.

Staff Development

Gothic Mede Academy and BEST encourage staff to attend courses that help them to acquire the skills needed to support LAC. Part of the designated teacher's role is to develop awareness of issues associated with LAC.

Partnership with parents/carers and care workers

Gothic Mede Academy and BEST firmly believe in developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable LAC to achieve their potential. Review meetings are an opportunity to further this partnership working.

The Designated Teacher

- To be a central point of initial contact within the academy
- To be an advocate for LAC within the academy
- To take the lead in promoting the educational achievement of every LAC and previously LAC child on the academies' roll
- To attend relevant training that supports LAC
- To act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to LAC, seeking advice from the local authority LAC team when appropriate
- To give regard to the impact of relevant decisions for LAC on both the LAC and the rest of the academy community
- To take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand the things which can affect how LAC and previously LAC children learn
- To ensure that LAC receive a positive welcome on entering the academy, especially mid-academic year and, if necessary, offer additional support and pre-entry visits to help the new pupil's transition
- To ensure that transitions to the next phase of a child's education are supported effectively, including careers advice and guidance

- To convene an urgent multi-agency meeting if a LAC is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion
- To ensure confidentiality on individual children, sharing confidential and personal information appropriately, bearing in mind the best interests of the pupil
- To act as the key adviser for staff and governors on issues relevant to LAC
- To remind parents and guardians of previously LAC children that they need to inform the academy if their child is eligible to attract Pupil Premium Plus (PPP+)
- To ensure that there are no barriers to LAC children or previously LAC accessing the general activities and experiences the academy offers to all its pupils
- To actively encourage and promote out of hours learning and extra-curricular activities for LAC

Academy Staff

- Follow academy procedures
- Keep the designated teacher informed about a LAC's progress
- Have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of LAC
- Positively promote the raising of a LAC's self-esteem and emotional wellbeing
- Ensure any LAC is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained
- Appreciate the central importance of a LAC's PEP in helping create a shared understanding between teaches, carers, social workers and the child's own understanding of how they are being supported
- For previously LAC, understand the importance of involving the child's parents or carers in decisions affecting their child's education, and be a contact for parents or guardians who want advice or have concerns about their child's progress at school

4. LINKS TO OTHER PROCEDURES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the academy's Pupil Premium Strategy.

5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This policy will be monitored by the designated teacher in the academy.

6. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be made known to all staff, parents/carers and governors, published on the academy's website and paper copies will be available upon request from the academy's office. This policy will be reviewed every three years or as required.