



WORCESTERSHIRE
VIRTUAL SCHOOL

Worcestershire Virtual School Policy for Children Looked After & Previously Looked After Children



Revised: Oct 2024

Worcestershire Virtual School Policy for Children Looked After & Previously Looked After Children

Worcestershire Virtual School (WVS) believes that all Children Looked After (CLA) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) should have equitable access to excellent educational provision and be able to achieve outcomes on par with or higher than 'all' Worcestershire children.

We recognise that nationally there is considerable educational underachievement of young people who are CLA, when compared with their peers.

Supporting CLA & PLAC

Inclusion

WVS will:

- work with professional partners to promote high aspirations and seek to secure the best outcomes for children and young people looked after and previously looked after.
- strive to ensure all CLA/PLAC receive a full-time education in an appropriate setting and that gaps in education are minimised.
- work with educational settings, social workers, other professionals and carers to improve attendance and minimise exclusions so that CLA/PLAC have access to all learning opportunities and have the best chance of success. This also includes appropriate training and employment opportunities for Post 16 CLA/PLAC (see Appendix 1).
- ensure sufficient information about a child's needs (e.g. mental health, SEND) is available to their education setting so that appropriate support can be provided.

Advocacy

WVS will:

- promote a culture that takes account of the child or young person's views according to age and understanding, identifying and meeting their educational needs.
- ensure there is a Designated Teacher for all CLA/PLAC at all settings.
- ensure there is a Designated Teacher or equivalent for all Post 16 CLA/PLAC at all settings (see Appendix 1).
- maintain an up-to-date roll of its looked-after children who are in school or college settings, and gather information about their education placement, attendance and educational progress.
- inform head teachers and designated teachers in schools if they have a child on roll who is looked-after by the VSH's local authority.

Admissions

WVS will:

- provide advice and support to social workers to ensure they understand the admissions process and the Early Years Funding processes.
- work with all professionals to ensure an educational setting is identified that is well placed to meet the child's needs. This should be the closest 'Good' or 'Outstanding' school to where the child or young person (CYP) resides (see Appendices 1, 2 & 3)

- ensure our CLA have access to a suitable range of high-quality education placement options.
- work with all professionals to minimise the length of time any CLA is without the correct education provision.
- seek to source the best provision for CYP, dependant on need. As such the school will not place our CYP in settings with a current 'Inadequate' Ofsted judgement, and only in exceptional circumstances will the VS place a CYP in a school with a 'Requires Improvement' Ofsted judgement.
- support and challenge any schools causing concern regarding provision for our children, using a clear protocol.

The Personal Education Plan (PEP)

WVS will:

- arrange a Personal Education Plan (PEP) or Personal Progression Plan (PPP) for all CLA (pre-school to age 18), within 10 school days of being notified of a child becoming Looked After, a minimum of once a term and each time there is an educational setting change.
- ensure social workers, designated teachers and schools, carers and IROs understand their role and responsibilities in initiating, developing, reviewing and updating the child's PEP/PPP and how they help meet the needs identified in that PEP/PPP.
- ensure PEPs/PPPs reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning that meets each child/young person's identified educational/training/employment needs, raises aspirations and improves life chances (see Appendix 1)
- ensure the educational attainment and progress of children looked after by the local authority is monitored and evaluated, through termly Pupil Progress Meetings.
- review the PEP/PPP with social workers, designated teachers and carers each term. Where progress is not being made and/or targets are consistently not achieved, WVS will challenge schools regarding the effectiveness of interventions and support.
- Provide feedback on the quality of the PEP/PPP document through a RA rating system. This will be in the form of developmental guidance
- distribute a copy of the completed PEP/PPP document to carers, via secure email.

Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) and Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)

WVS will:

- use ring fenced PP+ funding to enhance learning opportunities to improve educational outcomes for CLA.
- support settings in using the PP+ funding for PLAC which is allocated directly to and managed by the setting (see Appendix 4).
- support settings in using the Early Years Pupil Premium for all 3 and 4 year old CLA, which is allocated directly to and managed by the Preschool provider and used to enhance learning opportunities to improve educational outcomes.
- ensure all professionals involved with Post-16 CLA/PLAC who are applying for further education or training, are made aware of the 16-19 Bursary Fund and the application process (see Appendix 6).

Pupil Voice

WVS will:

- promote the importance of gathering, recording and listening to the views of all CLA, and will encourage a culture of ongoing conversation between CYP and professionals.

- ensure pupil voice is prioritised within the PEP/PPP meetings - all CLA will be invited and encouraged to attend their PEP/PPP meetings.
- ensure CYP's thoughts and feelings are heard and represented in the PEP/PPP document and appropriate targets/actions set.

Transitions

WVS will:

- support with all transitions; Care Placement Moves, In Year educational setting moves and all natural transitions, including Preschool to Reception, and Post 16 moves to Further Education, Apprenticeships or Employment.
- initiate a PEP/PPP for all CLA transitioning to a new education, training or employment setting within 20 school days of the move (after receiving notification of the move) (see Appendix 1).

Joined up Working

WVS will:

- take a proactive approach and develop strong partnerships with relevant professionals with regard to the education of our CLA, ensuring improved outcomes.
- promote positive collaboration between all the professionals engaged in supporting the child/young person.

Training

WVS will:

- offer regular, high-quality training to Designated Teachers, Social Care, Foster Carers, SENCOs and other partner agencies.
- ensure they have the resources, time, training and support they need to discharge the duty effectively.

Safeguarding

WVS will:

- be vigilant and proactive in identifying and reporting safeguarding concerns to the relevant professionals (see Appendix 5).

Appendices

1. [Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children - GOV.UK](#)
2. [School admissions code - GOV.UK](#)
3. [School admissions policies | Worcestershire County Council](#)
4. [Virtual School useful links to guidance and resources | Worcestershire County Council](#)
5. Worcestershire Virtual School Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) Policy (September 2022)
6. [Virtual School safeguarding | Worcestershire County Council](#)[The Virtual School | Worcestershire County Council](#)
7. [16 to 19 Bursary Fund: Overview - GOV.UK](#)

Additional Essential Reading & Guidance:

[The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children](#)

[Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](#)

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