



# Cornwall Education Learning Trust

Policy for education of children in care,  
previously looked after children, children with a  
social worker and children in kinship care

Exceptional Educational Experience

# DESIGNATED TEACHER POLICY

## Purpose

- Champion the needs of CiC, PLAC, children with a social worker, and those in kinship care.
- Ensure equal access to high-quality education, stability, and opportunities.
- Maintain high aspirations and support both academic progress and emotional wellbeing.

## Who?

- CiC – Children in the care of the Local Authority.
- PLAC – Previously looked-after children.
- Children with a Social Worker – including those on CP or CIN plans.
- Kinship Care – children living with relatives or friends.

## Key responsibilities

- Advocate/contact for CiC/PLAC
- Attend and submit termly PEPs (within 10 days)
- Liaise with carers, social workers, Virtual School
- Manage PP+ to support progress
- Ensure priority admissions/smooth transitions
- Notify Virtual Schools if learner is absent for 6+ days

## Supporting learners

- Identify a trusted adult in school for each child.
- Promote access to counselling and safe spaces.
- Adapt approaches for trauma, loss, and emotional needs.
- Encourage participation in extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities.

## Admissions

- CiC and PLAC must be given priority admissions.
- Admissions should be swift, smooth, and well supported.
- Transition information must be shared promptly with all relevant staff.



## Attendance and behaviour

- Maintain live attendance tracking; notify Virtual School of concerns quickly.
- Avoid suspensions where possible – use proactive behaviour support.
- Inform carers/social workers immediately about absences or exclusions.

## Multi-agency working

- Share positive progress and behaviour updates with stakeholders.
- Cooperate with carers, social workers, parents, and the Virtual School.
- Complete all requested data/statistical returns on time.



## Safeguarding and risk

- Follow safeguarding procedures if a learner is at risk, missing, or vulnerable to exploitation.
- Put safety plans in place for learners at risk of going missing.
- Always ask: "Would this be good enough for my child?"



## Remember

- The Designated Teacher role is vital to ensure vulnerable children feel safe, supported, and able to succeed.
- Every staff member has a part to play in this responsibility.



### Remember:

- Safeguarding is the golden thread through all school activities
- The full policy contains detailed guidance and must be read alongside this summary.

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## **Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility**

At Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT) we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and we expect all members, trustees, CELT community champions, staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

## Context

At Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT) we believe that all children in care (CiC), post looked after children (PLAC) and children with a social worker should have equitable access to excellent educational provision and achieve in line, or better, than all children from Cornwall and children nationally.

CELT aims to be champions and advocates for these children and will take a proactive approach to support their success and achievement, recognising that we have a vital role to play in promoting children and young people's social and emotional development and enhancing life outcomes.

## Our aims

1. Provide a safe and secure environment, which values education and believes in the abilities and potential of all children.
2. Close the gap - bring the educational attainments of our vulnerable children in line or better to those of their peers.
3. Ensure appropriate use of pupil premium plus (PP+) to support education.
4. Make sure that learners have access to education appropriate to their age, ability and emotional understanding; this includes access to a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum.
5. Following lessons learned during the pandemic – ensure our children have access to online learning, access to an IT device and that regular contact with our children is maintained should it be required.
6. Identify schools' role to promote and support the education of our vulnerable children.
7. Always ask the question: "Would this be good enough for my child?"
8. All settings are required to have a designated teacher (DT) for CiC, PLAC and children with a social worker, who will act as their advocate and coordinate support for them, liaising with carers, birth parents (as appropriate), social workers and health on a wide variety of educational and care issues; this person will be required to make financial decisions in the best interest of the child.

9. All staff and CELT community champions are committed to ensuring improved educational life chances for vulnerable children by ensuring that the relevant personnel have reasonable support and time to compete tasks and responsibilities; also, to establish and maintain appropriate reporting and monitoring procedures, both within the school and with other agencies.

## Legislation and statutory guidance

School staff and CELT community champions are aware of the 'Promoting the Education of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children', Feb 2018 DfE & Extended Duties for Children with a Social Worker.

There is a duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement and attendance of CiC, PLAC and children with a social worker, under Section 52 of the Children's Act 2004 (still remains in place despite act updates).

There is a dedicated CELT community champion to monitor the work of the school in supporting its vulnerable learners.

CELT will take a proactive approach in co-operating with, and supporting, the relevant local authority with regard to the education of these children attending their school.

Designated teachers and staff are aware of and enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively with the full support of the headteacher.

The Children Act (2004) places a duty to safeguard children in care, to promote their educational achievement and to ensure each child can "achieve and reach their full potential." The collective responsibility of local authorities and schools to achieve this are set out under six principles:

1. Prioritising education
2. Maintaining high expectations and aspirations
3. Inclusion – changing and challenging attitudes
4. Achieving continuity and stability
5. Early intervention and priority action
6. Listening to the child's voice at all stages of care and education planning

CELT believes that, in partnership with Cornwall Council, we have a special duty as corporate parents to safeguard and promote the education of CiC and PLAC.

## Key personnel

Each school has a designated teacher, with additional nominated staff members as appropriate.

Please see Safeguarding Suite School Level Context Appendix on the school's website for individual school leads.

## Whole school approach

The school celebrates the achievements of CiC, PLAC, children with a social worker and children in kinship care arrangements. Teachers should have high expectations of these children, encouraging achievement and ambition. Effective assessment, recording and reporting practices are established.

All teachers within the school are made aware of the needs of these children and actively promote their best interests.

The young person will need to have a special, trusted adult in school that is able to take time to listen to them and have access to support and counselling in school if required. Trusted adults in school will need to be sensitive to the young person's wishes over what is known and by whom regarding their care status.

The designated teacher ensures that positive messages about behaviour and achievement are shared within the school and between school, parents, carers and outside agencies, and that high educational expectations are maintained.

Staff work in partnership with carers and agencies and parents (where appropriate).

For CiC, PLAC and children with a social worker, there should be clarity in relation to who is and is not allowed to collect the child from school.

The school ensures that systems are in place to keep staff up-to-date and informed about CiC, PLAC, children with a social worker and children in kinship care arrangements

A nurturing and trauma informed approach and understanding of ACES will help to support vulnerable children.

Support the engagement of CiC, PLAC and children with a social worker in out-of-school hours learning.

Support carers to value educational achievement and improve attendance.

Teachers can help the individual begin to feel that they are fitting in and offer them a safe haven and a sympathetic ear in a crisis.

Staff are aware that being or becoming a child in care has a major impact on children's lives and that when considering children's learning and or behaviour, due consideration will be given.

Teachers can be aware of a variety of emotional issues and trauma that may undermine the young person's ability to engage in the learning process, including feelings of loss, rejection, isolation, confusion and low self-esteem.

Teachers need to be aware of possible unresolved feelings the young person may have about their own families and siblings, in addition to insecurity over their current homes and carers.

CiC have access to Pupil Premium Plus (PP+). From September, £350 will be allocated to every child from day one of being in care by the Virtual School Head. School will receive this at the end of each term. A bid can be made via the EPEP to top this up by a further £350 if required. See Education Endowment Fund / Sutton trust for guidance on use, good practice and impact of PP+.

PLAC have access to Pupil Premium Plus (£2345/ year) by declaring their status in each October Census.

School adheres to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) with reference to Article 28 & 29 – 'The Right to education and the goals of education.

## Role and responsibilities

### The Designated Teacher (DT) will:

- ensure the child receives a copy of their termly PEP
- advise the Virtual School (Awena) if the DT is going to change/leave the school or if you change your email address (GDPR)
- liaise with the finance department with regards to fixed rate and additional PPP payments you are expecting.
- for CiC - To attend PEPs in the summer term for those who are going to transition to your school/establishment.
- for CiC- To submit your PEP within 10 working days of the PEP meeting being held
- for CiC - To complete a PEP every term (at the very least).
- for CiC - If there is a change of date for a PEP meeting you will ensure the date is amended on Welfare Call to reflect this.



- inform the Virtual School of any changes you require or if there are any issues in order for them to be resolved at an early stage.
- it is a statutory requirement for a DT to attend one training session (Induction/ Network/Conference) with the Virtual School per year. This will be entered on the S157/175 annual safeguarding return as part of the new annual audit and peer review system
- to inform the Virtual School if any CiC, PLAC, Child with a social worker and a child in a kinship care order is out of school/ education for 6+ days

#### All staff will:

- ensure that any looked-after or previously looked-after children are supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained
- be familiar with, and respond appropriately to, requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation as needed for review meetings
- ensure that looked-after or previously looked-after children are provided with a supportive environment, so they are able to achieve stability within the school setting
- as with all children, have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of looked-after or previously looked-after children

#### The lead trustee will:

- on behalf of the Board, for safeguarding is responsible for our Trust oversight of children; in care, previously in care, with a social worker and in kinship care
- ensure the appointment of a fully qualified (QTS) Designated Teacher
- champion the needs of CiC, PLAC and children with a social worker, supporting the work of the designated teacher by ensuring they have access to all support and training needed to fulfil their role
- ensure all CELT community champions are fully aware of legal requirements and guidance on the education of children in care, including the DfE statutory guidance on promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://publishing.service.gov.uk))



- examine whether the school is making the fullest possible use of all available resources, including PP+ funding, to maximise progress and attainment
- be informed of the number of CiC, PLAC and children with a social worker on school roll, their attainment and achievements

## Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

Any special educational needs are quickly identified and appropriate provision is made – early identification and action is key.

Schools ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when CiC, PLAC and children with a social worker are underachieving and/or not thriving at school and have early interventions to improve and support the child. Contact needs to be made with the Virtual School as soon as concerns are raised.

If the child or young person has a statement of special educational need or EHC Plan, the school must ensure the annual review coincides with one of the six monthly Statutory Care Reviews / termly PEP meetings; dates can be obtained from the social worker. Please refer to SEN Code of Practice for further information.

## Admissions and transitions

- CiC and PLAC have priority on school admission
- Prioritise CiC and PLAC within the school's own admissions procedures and admit learners as quickly as possible, recognising the importance of re-establishing school stability for CiC and PLAC
- Adhere to Cornwall Council School Admission protocol
- Awareness of 'Placement of pupils out of their chronological year group', Cornwall Council guide
- Ensure that on admission or transfer all relevant information is obtained at the outset
- We will forward appropriate documents, in a timely fashion, to any receiving school at point of transition where the receiving school is made known
- Make every effort to provide continuity of schooling and educational experience

## Attendance

- Ensure SIMS is linked through the DFE WONDE portal so the virtual school have access to live attendance data.
- Where attendance is a problem, a first day of absence procedure needs to be established.
- Inform Education Welfare Officer / Social Worker / Awena- Virtual School if any concerns about attendance.
- Acknowledge attendance in any education meetings, celebrating success and setting realistic targets if it is a concern.
- If a child is on a protection plan, ensure Social Worker and Carer are contacted if child is absent from school.
- CiC and PLAC should not be taken out of school for holidays, only for 'exceptional circumstances'.
- There should be no unauthorised absences for CiC and PLAC.
- Safety plans to be put in place where a CiC/ PLAC / Child with a Social Worker is on a reduced timetable or Children Missing Education or Children Missing Out of Education (CME/CMOE) and on an EOTAS / EOTIS package

## Suspension

- Identify any CiC, PLAC & Child with a Social Worker who is at risk of suspension and contact Awena- Virtual School Education Welfare Officer, Social Worker and relevant professionals to put proactive strategies in place to avoid the learner missing days from school.
- Ensure in the case of a fixed term suspension that the carer (or persons holding parental responsibility) and the Social Worker have been spoken to and within one day a letter has been sent specifying the period and the reasons for the suspension, date of return, outline of the rights of carers to make representations to the governing body where appropriate and details of arrangements made to enable the suspended learner to continue his/her education.
- Make sure in the event of any exclusion, contact is made with the Virtual School with details of the suspension outlining the reasons why the child has been suspended so that an appropriate response can be made.

## Multi-agency liaison

The designated teacher will need to liaise closely with carers, birth parents (if appropriate) and the learner's social worker on a variety of issues including homework, kit and equipment required. It is important that positive messages about relationships, presentation and achievement are shared.

There should be a well-planned and co-ordinated approach to meeting the young person's educational and social needs, for example, whether potentially disruptive changes in school can be prevented or explained.

There needs to be clear understanding about the role and responsibility of school staff in relation to the young person and the roles and responsibilities of the other professionals involved.

School staff will need to share positive perceptions and high expectations of the young person with other professionals but especially with the young person.

The school should be aware of and sensitive to the appropriate role of the natural parents.

Designated teachers should ensure that requests from the local authority for statistical information held by the school are completed and returned on time to comply with statutory obligations.

Encourage each young person to have access to out-of-hours learning activities realising the positive impact this could have on their self-esteem and learning.

Support the young person to have the opportunity to participate fully in planning and decision making

## At risk

Schools to be made aware/share information if they feel a CiC, PLAC and child with a social worker is at risk in any way.

Schools to be aware and have a safety plan in place with regards to absconding, going missing and or at risk of exploitation. Links with other policies This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour
- CELT safeguarding suite of policies
- CELT exclusions
- CELT SEND

## Appendix: History of Changes

Version	Date	Page	Change	Origin of change
1.0	29.08.23		Original draft	
1.1	29.08.24		Annual review	
1.2	18.08.2025		Reference to Safeguarding Suite School Level Context Appendix for key personnel.	