

# WILL ADAMS ACADEMY



## Child in Care Policy

Date of last review	October 2023
Review cycle	Biennial
Policy due for review and approval by Local Governing Body	Autumn Term 2025



## Who this policy is for:

---

This policy is for children or young people who are currently, or have previously been, in care or looked after. It is also for the wider network of professionals who are involved in supporting such children or young people.

## Definitions:

---

The Children Act (1989) introduced changes terminology. The term 'in care' now refers solely to children who are subject to Care Orders. Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are 'accommodated' by the local authority. Both these groups are said to be 'looked after children' (LAC) or 'children in care' (CiC) or 'children looked after' (CLA) by the local authority. Accommodated children also include those in receipt of respite care – if it exceeds 20 days in one episode or over 120 days in a year.

It is important not to confuse a young person's legal status with their living arrangements. For example, a child on a Care Order can be living with:

- Foster carers
- In a children's home
- In a residential school
- With relatives, or
- Even with parents – under supervision of Children's Service

Similarly, an 'accommodated' child can be living:

- In foster care
- In a children's home
- In a residential school

These arrangements include:

- Children who are accommodated by the local authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- Children who are the subject of a care order (section 31 (1)) or interim care order (section 38)
- Children who are the subject of emergency orders for the protection of the child (section 44)

## Parental Responsibility

---

It is also important to note that Parental Responsibility (PR) for the young person normally lies with the Local Authority and/or the parents and responsibility for day-to-day decisions may be delegated to the foster carers or staff at the residential home. This must always be confirmed with social worker/virtual schools by the Academy.



## **Policy Purpose**

---

This policy reflects the requirements set out in the statutory guidance on the duty in local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004 and the Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher – statutory guidance for School Governors (2009).

It also reflects the shared aims and ethos with our partners across the different Virtual Schools with which we work.

## **Will Adams Academy's aims for CLA**

---

At Will Adams Academy, we recognise that nationally there is considerable educational underachievement of children in residential or foster care, when compared to their peers. This, alongside the fact that students needing support of alternative provision often have poor attendance, significant gaps in their learning and use behavior to mask other learning needs. Therefore, at Will Adams Academy, all staff and governors are committed to ensuring improved educational outcomes for CLA. The Academy works hard to create the right supportive environment for each CLA as a unique individual. The building of secure relationships with both the Designated Teacher, in school Therapist, and all staff is key to supporting their success.

At Will Adams Academy we work to ensure we meet the following aims to implement the key qualities of effective practice:

- Focus on ensuring CLA access and utilise the opportunities offered to all students.
- Ensuring there is a balance between high levels of support and real challenge.
- Developing key relationships with staff to support the success of CLA.
- Developing strong partnerships with carers, local authorities and specialist agencies.
- Ensuring that when there is a suggestion of support or opportunity for a CLA that action happens and is followed through.
- Ensuring there is consistency in our approach with relevant and discrete flexibility when needed to support a CLA fully.
- Actively working to extend the horizons of each young person and ensuring full access to the cultural capital activities available.
- Planning for and supporting future transitions; ensuring positive ending processes happen.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

---

### **The Designated Teacher (DT) will:**

- Promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations for CLA students.
- Have lead responsibility for helping school staff understand what can affect how CLA learn and achieve, ensuring that happens at an individual level rather than treating them as a homogenous group.



- Make sure the young person has a voice in setting learning targets (Personal Education Plan (PEP)) and be an advocate for CLA within the school.
- Know who all the CLA are in school, including those in the care of other authorities, and ensure the availability of all relevant details from the school's record-keeping systems, as required.
- Be aware of any student on the school roll who has ever been CLA.
- Have regard to the impact of relevant decisions for CLA on both the CLA and the rest of the school community by contributing to the development of whole school policies.
- Be a source of advice for staff about strategies to support CLA's educational outcomes, including providing or sourcing appropriate training.
- Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of the child's PEP within the school, including monitoring progress.
- Be involved in any discussions related to decisions about potential exclusions of CLA on roll, including making contact for advice and support with the relevant Virtual School and Social Worker.
- Ensure that any Special Educational Needs (SEN) are addressed in conjunction with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) and in accordance with the Code of Practice for SEN. Recognising that CLA's are more likely to have an Educational Healthcare Plan (EHCP), the DT will ensure that applications are supported when needed and if an EHCP is in place all strategies are followed with the SENCo.
- With the Designated Safeguarding Lead, act as a point of contact for carers to ensure good communication between care placement and the school.
- Liaise closely with the Virtual School and the student's Social Worker to ensure that the PEP and other plans are effective, working with a joined-up approach to minimise disruption to a CLA's education.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual students, sharing information on a need-to-know basis, bearing in mind the wishes of the individual.
- Contribute information to CLA reviews, when required, attending these as appropriate.
- Attend relevant training about CLA.
- Report to the Governors regularly on CLA in the school.