



Designated Teacher Policy (Children in Care and Previously Children in Care) 2023/24 (v1)

The Midland Academies Trust

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**George Eliot
Academy**
Part of The Midland Academies Trust



**Hartshill
Academy**
Part of The Midland Academies Trust



**Heath Lane
Academy**
Part of The Midland Academies Trust



**Nuneaton
Academy**
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Document History

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Designated Teacher Policy (Children in Care - After and Previously Looked-After) 2022 (v1)

1. Statement of Intent

- 1.1. Educational achievement and subsequent life chances for Pupil in Care (CiC) and previously-CiC (PCiC) are of real concern. Pupils who are looked after may require additional support and attention in order to improve their situation.
- 1.2. The Midland Academies Trust is committed to a safe, welcoming, and inclusive learning environment, in which all our pupils are happy, can flourish and will thrive, to live life in all its fullness. Every child is revered and respected as a member of our community.
- 1.3. The Midland Academies Trust endeavours to provide positive experiences and offer stability, safety, and individual care and attention for all our pupils. With this in mind, we aim to:
 - i. Ensure that a suitable member of staff is appointed as the designated teacher for CiC and PCiC.
 - ii. Ensure that the designated teacher promotes the educational achievement of CiC and PCiC and supports other staff members to do this too.
 - iii. Ensure that staff, parents, carers and guardians are aware of the identity of the designated teacher, how to contact them and what they are responsible for.
 - iv. Encourage pupils to reach their potential and to make good progress in relation to their professional, social and emotional development.
 - v. Ensure that pupils enjoy high quality teaching and a curriculum which meets their needs and the requirements of legislation.
 - vi. Plan support for CiC realistically and use the academy's resources efficiently to ensure the academy meets their needs.
 - vii. Promote a positive culture in all aspects of academy life.
 - viii. Help pupils develop their cultural, moral and social understanding.

2. Legislation and Statutory Guidance

- 2.1. This Policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance on the designated teacher for CiC and PCiC.
- 2.2. It also considers [section 2E](#) of the Academies Act 2010.
- 2.3. This Policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. **CiC** are registered pupils that are:
 - i. In the care of a local authority, or
 - ii. Provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services functions, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours.
- 3.2. **Children PCiC** are registered pupils that fall into either of these categories:
 - i. They were looked after by a local authority but ceased to be as a result of any of the following:

- A pupil arrangements order, which includes arrangements relating to who the pupil lives with and when they are to live with them.
 - A special guardianship order.
 - An adoption order.
- ii. They appear to the Board of Directors to have:
- Been in state care in a place outside of England and Wales because they would not have otherwise been cared for adequately, and
 - Ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted.
- 3.3. **Personal education plan (PEP)** is part of a CIC's care plan that is developed with the academy. It forms a record of what needs to happen and who will make it happen to ensure the pupil reaches their full potential.
- 3.4. **Virtual school head (VSH)** is a local authority officer responsible for promoting the educational achievement of their authority's CIC, working across academies to monitor and support these pupils as if they were in a single academy. The VSH is also responsible for providing information and advice to academies, parents and guardians in respect of children PCIC.

4. Identity of our Designated Teacher

- 4.1. Our designated teacher is [insert name].
- 4.2. You can contact them by [insert contact details]
- 4.3. Our designated teacher takes lead responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of CIC and PCIC at our academy. They are your initial point of contact for any of the matters set out in the section below.

Commented [BM(1)]: Please add your details here

5. Role of the Designated Teacher

- 5.1. The following is based on the responsibilities listed in the [DfE's statutory guidance](#). Although the designated teacher must always have lead responsibility, your academy can decide how individual functions, including pastoral and administrative tasks, can be appropriately delegated.
- 5.2. If any responsibilities have been delegated to other roles, you may want to separate these out in a new section so that anyone reading the policy understands who handles what at your academy.
- 5.3. **Leadership responsibilities:** the designated teacher will:
- i. Act as a central point of initial contact within the academy for any matters involving CIC and children PCIC.
 - ii. Promote the educational achievement of every pupil looked-after and PCIC on roll by:
 - Working with VSHs.
 - Promoting a whole academy culture where the needs of these pupils' matter and are prioritised.
 - iii. Take lead responsibility for ensuring academy staff understand:
 - The things which can affect how CIC and PCIC learn and achieve.
 - How the whole academy supports the educational achievement of these pupils.
 - iv. Contribute to the development and review of whole academy policies to ensure they consider the needs of CIC and PCIC.
 - v. Promote a culture in which CIC and PCIC are encouraged and supported to engage with their education and other academy activities.

- vi. Act as a source of advice for teachers about working with CIC and PCIC.
- vii. Work directly with CIC and PCIC and their carers, parents and guardians to promote good home-academy links, support progress and encourage high aspirations.
- viii. Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of CIC's PEPs.
- ix. Work closely with the academy's designated safeguarding lead to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding CIC and PCIC are quickly and effectively responded to.
- x. Involve parents and guardians of pupils PCIC in decisions affecting their child's education.

5.4. **Supporting CIC:** the designated teacher will:

- i. Make sure CIC's PEPs meet their needs by working closely with other teachers to assess each child's specific educational needs.
- ii. Have overall responsibility for leading the process of target-setting in PEPs.
- iii. Monitor and track how CIC's attainment progresses under their PEPs.
- iv. If a pupil is not on track to meet their targets, be instrumental in agreeing the best way forward with them in order to make progress and ensure that this is reflected in their PEP.
- v. Ensure the identified actions of PEPs are put in place.
- vi. During the development and review of PEPs, help the academy and relevant local authority decide what arrangements work best for pupils.
- vii. Ensure that:
 - A pupil looked-after's PEP is reviewed before the statutory review of their care plan – this includes making sure the PEP is up to date and contains any new information since the last PEP review, including whether agreed provision is being delivered.
 - PEPs are clear about what has or has not been taken forward, noting what resources may be required to further support the pupil and from where these may be sourced.
 - The updated PEP is passed to the pupil's social worker and VSH ahead of the statutory review of their care plan.
- viii. Transfer a pupil looked-after's PEP to their next academy or college, making sure it is up to date and that the local authority responsible for looking after them has the most recent version.

5.5. **Relationships beyond the school:** the designated teacher will:

- i. Proactively engage with social workers and other professionals to enable the academy to respond effectively to the needs of CIC and PCIC.
- ii. Discuss with social workers how the academy should engage with birth parents, and ensure the academy is clear about who has parental responsibility and what information can be shared with whom.
- iii. Be open and accessible to parents and guardians of pupils PCIC and encourage them to be actively involved in their children's education.
- iv. Proactively build relationships with local authority professionals, such as VSHs and SEN departments.
- v. Consider how the academy works with others outside of the academy to maximise the stability of education for CIC, such as:
 - Finding ways of making sure the latest information about educational progress is available to contribute to the statutory review of care plans.
 - Ensuring mechanisms are in place to inform VSHs when CIC are absent without authorisation and work with the responsible authority to take appropriate safeguarding action.

- Talking to the pupil's social worker and/or other relevant parties in the local authority regarding any decisions about changes in care placements which will disrupt the pupil's education, providing advice about the likely impact and what the local authority should do to minimise disruption.
- Making sure that, if a pupil looked-after moves academy, their new designated teacher receives any information needed to help the transition process.
- vi. Seek advice from VSHs about meeting the needs of individual children PCIC, but only with the agreement of their parents or guardians.
- vii. Make sure that for each pupil looked-after:
 - There's an agreed process for how the academy works in partnership with the pupil's carer and other professionals, such as their social worker, in order to review and develop educational progress.
 - Academy policies are communicated to their carer and social worker and, where appropriate, birth parents.
 - Teachers know the most appropriate person to contact where necessary, such as who has the authority to sign permission slips.
- viii. Where a pupil looked-after is at risk of exclusion:
 - Contact the VSH as soon as possible so they can help the academy decide how to support the pupil to improve their behaviour and avoid exclusion becoming necessary.
 - Working with the VSH and pupil's carers, consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to address the causes of the child's behaviour.
- ix. Where a pupil's PCIC is at risk of exclusion, talk to the pupil's parents or guardians before seeking advice from the VSH on avoiding exclusion.

6. Personal Education Plan (PEP)

- 6.1. All CIC must have a care plan; PEPs are an integral part of this care plan.
- 6.2. The PEP is an evolving record of what needs to happen for a pupil to enable them to make the expected progress and fulfil their potential.
- 6.3. The PEP will reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning which meets the identified educational needs of the pupil.
- 6.4. The academy with other professionals and the pupil's carers will use the PEP to support the pupil's educational needs, raise the pupil's aspirations and improve their life chances.
- 6.5. All relevant bodies, such as the LA, the designated teacher and carers, will involve the pupil in the PEP process at all stages.
- 6.6. The PEP will address the pupil's full range of education and development needs, including:
 - i. On-going catch-up support, which will be made available for pupil's who have fallen behind with work.
 - ii. Suitable education provided by the LA, where the pupil is not in academy because of suspension or exclusion.
 - iii. Transitional support where needed, such as if a pupil is moving to a new academy.
 - iv. Academy attendance and behaviour support, where appropriate.
 - v. Support to help the pupil meet their aspirations, which includes:
 - Support to achieve expected levels of progress for the relevant national key stage and to complete an appropriate range of approved qualifications.

- Careers advice, guidance and financial information about Further Education, training and employment, that focusses on the child's strengths, capabilities and the outcomes they want to achieve.
 - Out-of-academy hours learning activities, study support and leisure interests.
- 6.7. The VSH and the designated teacher will ensure that information is included within a or previously-CIC's PEP surrounding how they are benefitting from any use of PP+ funding to improve their attainment.
- 6.8. Any interventions supported by PP+ will be evidence-based and in the best interests of the pupil.

7. Working with Agencies and the VSH

- 7.1. The academy will ensure that copies of all relevant reports are forwarded to the CIC social workers, in addition to carers or residential social workers.
- 7.2. The academy will coordinate their review meetings, for example, annual PEP review.
- 7.3. The academy will work with other agencies to exchange information, such as changes in circumstances, exclusions, or attendance issues, taking prompt action, where necessary, to safeguard CIC and previously-CIC.
- 7.4. The designated teacher for CIC and previously-CIC will communicate with the VSH and pupil's social worker to facilitate the completion of the PEP for CIC.
- 7.5. Through the designated teacher, the academy will work with the VSH, social worker and other relevant agencies to monitor any arrangements in place so that actions and activities recorded in the pupil's PEP are implemented without delay.
- 7.6. The designated teacher will communicate with the VSH and agree on how PP+ can be used effectively to accommodate the pupil's educational attainment and progress.
- 7.7. PP+ for previously- will be allocated directly to, and managed by, the academy.
- 7.8. The academy will work with the VSH to manage allocation of PP+ for the benefit of our cohort of CIC, or previously-CIC, and according to their needs.
- 7.9. If deemed necessary, the academy will allocate an amount of funding to an individual to support their needs.
- 7.10. The designated teacher will ensure consistent and strong communication with the VSH regarding CIC who are absent without authorisation.
- 7.11. The academy will share their expertise on what works in supporting the education of CIC and previously-CIC.

8. Training

- 8.1. The designated teacher and other academy staff involved in the education of CIC and previously-CIC have received the appropriate training, this includes information about the following:
- i. Academy admissions arrangements.
 - ii. SEND.
 - iii. Attendance.
 - iv. Exclusions.
 - v. Homework.
 - vi. GCSE Pathways.

- vii. Managing and challenging behaviour.
- viii. Promoting positive educational and recreational activities.
- ix. Supporting pupils to be aspirational for their future education, training and employment.
- x. Safeguarding.

9. Safeguarding

- 9.2. The academy recognises that many CIC or PCIC have experienced trauma, abuse or complex family circumstances that have led to them being placed in care and will ensure that all staff are aware that experiences of adversity such as these can leave pupils vulnerable to further harm or exploitation.
- 9.3. All staff will be trained to recognise signs and indicators of safeguarding concerns and will ensure that extra vigilance is practiced in observing and identifying these indicators amongst CIC and PCIC as soon as possible.
- 9.4. Where a CIC or PCIC has a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding, e.g., responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks.
- 9.5. The Principal or SLT Designate will implement appropriate pastoral support services in place throughout the academy to ensure that the welfare of CIC and PCIC can be adequately protected to the extent that reflects their increased vulnerability.
- 9.6. Staff will be encouraged to report to the DSL any concerns they have over CIC or PCIC in line with the processes outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- 9.7. Staff will be regularly encouraged to look for signs of bullying and report to the designated teacher if they believe a CIC or previously-CIC is being bullied, as this can have a particularly negative impact on pupils who have early experiences of rejection or abandonment.

10. Pupil Mental Health

- 10.1. CIC and PCIC are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues which can impact their behaviour and education. Designated teachers will have awareness, training, and skills regarding a child's needs and how to support them in relation to behaviour management and mental health.
- 10.2. The designated teacher will work with the VSH to ensure the academy is able to identify signs of potential mental health issues, understand the impact issues can have on CIC and PCiC, and knows how to access further assessment and support, where necessary.
- 10.3. The academy understands that the increased frequency of mental health problems amongst CIC and PCIC may present a barrier to adequately identifying when mental health problems are indicative of a safeguarding concern. For this reason, the designated teacher will ensure that they, and all staff who maintain regular contact with or PCIC are vigilant surrounding any changes in the mental health, behaviour, social inclination or mood of these pupils.

11. Suspensions

- 11.1. Past experiences of CIC and PCIC will be considered when designing and implementing the academy's Behavioural Policy.
- 11.2. The academy will have regard to the DfE's statutory guidance 'Exclusions/Suspensions from maintained academies, academy and pupil referral units in England' and, as far as possible, avoid excluding any CIC.
- 11.3. Where the academy has concerns about a pupil's behaviour, the VSH and social worker will be

informed at the earliest opportunity.

- 11.4. As far as possible, the academy will engage proactively with the social worker or carer of a CIC to provide appropriate support for underlying issues that may be causing poor behaviour and improving this behaviour.
- 11.5. Suspensions will only be used as a last resort, after the academy and VSH have considered what additional support can be provided to prevent exclusion, and any additional arrangements to support the pupil's education in the event of exclusion.
- 11.6. The academy will inform parents that they can seek the advice of the VSH on strategies to support their child to avoid suspensions.
- 11.7. Permanent exclusion will only occur where there has been serious and/or persistent breaches of the academy's Behavioural Policy or where allowing the pupil to remain in academy would seriously harm the education or welfare of others.

12. Pupils with SEND

- 12.1. Support for CIC with SEND, who do not need an EHC plan, will be covered as part of the pupil's PEP and care plan reviews.
- 12.2. The SENCo, class teacher, designated teacher and specialists will involve parents when considering interventions to support their child's progress.
- 12.3. If appropriate, the VSH will be invited to comment on proposed SEND provision for previously-CIC.
- 12.4. The designated teacher and the SENCo will ensure that CIC and previously-CIC with SEND are supported in line with the SEND Policy, with extra consideration given to the fact that some of the usual procedures for supporting pupils with SEND may lack applicability for CIC, e.g., where CIC are in residential care and, thus, will have their EHC plans taken care of by the LA rather than the general stipulation of the place where they are ordinarily resident.

13. Information Sharing

- 13.1. Appropriate and specific arrangements for sharing reliable data are in place to ensure that the education needs of CIC and PCIC are understood and met.
- 13.2. The arrangements set out include:
 - i. Who has access to information on CIC and PCIC and how data will remain secure.
 - ii. How pupils and parents are informed of, and allowed to challenge, information that is kept about them.
 - iii. How carers contribute to and receive information.
 - iv. Mechanisms for sharing information between the academy and relevant LA departments.
 - v. How relevant information about individual pupils is passed between authorities, departments and the academy when pupils move.

14. Monitoring Arrangements

- 14.1. This Policy will be reviewed annually by [name/job title of individual]. At every review, it will be approved by the Board of Directors.

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15. Links with Other Policies

15.1. This Policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- i. Behaviour.
- ii. Child protection and safeguarding.
- iii. Exclusions.
- iv. SEN.
- v. Supporting pupils with medical needs.