



Looked After Children Policy

At Isaac Newton Academy our aim is to equip every student with the knowledge, learning power and character necessary for success at university and beyond. We believe unswervingly that, regardless of background or prior attainment, every student entering the Academy has the potential to leave with a set of qualifications that will enable them to pursue their education at a top university. Fundamental to the realisation of this challenging aspiration is an absolute commitment to providing a learning environment where all students, including looked after children make exceptional progress and fulfil their potential.

Many looked after children experience disrupted learning and may miss extended periods of school. The gaps in their learning, and in many cases the emotional impact of their experiences, can become significant barriers to their emotional well-being, academic progress and future success, as the statistics below show:

- 53% of looked after children leave school without passing any GCSEs
- 13% of looked after children achieve five A* - C grade GCSEs (compared with 47% of all children)
- 29% of looked after children are not in education, employment or training by the age of 19, compared with 13% of all young people
- 20% of women who leave care between 16 and 19 become mothers within a year
- 23% of the prison population has spent time in care
- 30% of children in custody have been in care
- 45% of children in care are assessed as having a mental health disorder.

(DFE, 2009)

Our aim at Isaac Newton Academy is for looked after children to achieve their full potential and achieve high educational outcomes, comparable to their peers. This requires us to ensure that looked after children experience educational stability and that their personal, emotional and academic needs are prioritised.

Personal Education Plan

Every looked-after student has a Care Plan that includes a Personal Education Plan that the student's social worker and the designated teacher take a lead in developing. The PEP identifies specific areas

of concern, sets challenging targets with expectations of rapid progress and identifies the support the student requires to succeed. The following areas are covered in the PEP:

- academic progress and attainment
- behaviour
- independent learning
- involvement in enrichment activities
- special educational needs (if relevant)
- development needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge or subject areas and experiences)
- long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations).

The PEP is updated at least every six months, as part of the statutory reviewing process carried out by the Vulnerable Childrens' Service. Each statutory review of the care plan the PEP documents progress towards educational targets set at the previous PEP review.

Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher for Looked after Children

The statutory guidance for school governing bodies places a duty on them to designate a member of staff to take responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of all looked after children registered at the school. The designated teacher at Isaac Newton Academy is the Vice Principal.

The designated teacher is responsible for:

- playing a key role in helping looked after children make a smooth transition to Isaac Newton Academy
- ensuring that there are effective procedures in place to support looked after children's learning
- briefing staff on the looked after children
- promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations for looked after children
- involving looked after children in reviewing their progress and setting their own learning targets
- promoting excellent home-Academy links through close contact with looked after children's carers, including arranging home visits for looked after children new to the Academy
- helping to co-ordinate education and Looked After Children review meetings
- leading on the development and implementation of the Personal Education Plans (PEPs) for looked after children and monitoring progress towards the targets set
- attending meetings to set up Care Plans for looked after children
- promoting looked after children's engagement in the wider life of the Academy through, for example, involvement in Independent Learning support, enrichment activities, leadership roles within the Academy
- acting as an advocate for looked after children
- forming strong links with other with other agencies and services, such as social services and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- reporting to governors on an annual basis the progress made by looked after children at the Academy.

Responsibilities of staff

All staff who work with looked after children at Isaac Newton Academy are responsible for:

- having the highest expectations of looked after children in terms of attainment, behaviour and attendance
- being sensitive to the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation from birth families
- understanding the underlying causes which may be behind a looked after child's behaviour but maintaining the highest expectations of his/her behaviour
- knowing the targets on looked after children's PEPs and carefully tracking their progress towards achieving them
- putting in place remedial action if the progress of looked after children is not on track to achieve their targets.

Responsibilities of Governors

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- appointing a designated teacher for looked after children
- considering the annual report from the designated teacher for looked after children (in the SEF)
- ensuring that the designated teacher undertakes appropriate training.

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