

Policy Name	Looked After Children Policy
Department	Student Services
Created by (Job Title)	Director of Student Services
Date Reviewed	August 2022
Date of Next Review	August 2025
Equality Impact Assessment	<p>This policy has been reviewed in line with the Equality Act 2010 which recognises the following categories as Protected Characteristics: Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex (gender) and Sexual orientation. We will continue to monitor this policy to ensure that it provides equal access and does not discriminate against anyone, especially any person/s listed under any protected characteristic. <i>(insert date of EIA)</i></p>

1. Definition

1.1 This policy refers to young people who are Looked After as defined by the Children Act 1989. That is those students who are under the age of 18 and are:

- The subject of an interim or full time care or emergency protection order;
- Unaccompanied minors who are asylum seekers;
- Accommodated by a local authority with the agreement of their parent(s) or legal guardian;
- Compulsorily accommodated as a result of criminal proceeding.

2. Introduction

2.1 Nationally, 'Looked After Children' significantly underachieve compared with their peers. Colleges have a major part to play in ensuring that 'Looked After Children' aged 16 to 18 are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being, in line with Every Child Matters.

Helping 'Looked After Children' succeed and providing a better future for them is a priority for The Bedford College Group. This policy complements the College's Child Protection Policy and identifies further responsibilities that the College believes it should undertake in relation to 'Looked After Children'

Both policies take account of:

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 which brings all agencies into line with the duties placed on schools and colleges by section 175 of the Education Act 2002. The duties to safeguard and promote welfare are part of the comprehensive strategy of change for children which began with the publication of Every Child Matters in September 2003.

3. Policy Statement

The College's approach to supporting the achievements of 'Looked After Children' will focus on:

- Targeted support
- The promotion of regular attendance
- The setting high expectations
- The promotion of stability and continuity

- Mentoring by Personal Achievement Tutor
- Comprehensive and impartial advice and guidance
- Listening to students

The Bedford College Group is committed to educating staff, who have student contact, on the difficulties faced by 'Looked After Children' and the support networks available to them.

4. Designated Staff with Responsibility for Children Who Are Looked After

- 4.1 A member of the College's Governing Body has responsibility for Child Protection and this includes responsibility for Children Who Are Looked After.

The senior member of staff with responsibility for 'Looked After Children' is the Director of Student Services.

The Director of Student Services will lead on managing and monitoring the implementation of the policy and procedures.

The designated members of staff will liaise with external agencies and those members of staff working with or supporting 'Looked After Children'. Members of staff linked with the 'Looked After Children' will have additional responsibility in weekly monitoring, co-ordinating interventions and developing an offer of support.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Responsibilities of Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Be responsible for the writing and updating of the College's 'Looked After Children' policy
- Inform the Executive Group of the progress of 'Looked After Children' as and when required
- Liaise with Local Authorities (LAs) to ensure that the College is aware of all students who have 'Looked After Children' status
- Ensure that staff with 'Looked After Children' responsibility receive appropriate awareness training.

5.2 Responsibilities of the Personal Achievement Tutor

- Ensure that a one to one is completed for each student in conjunction with the student, the student's foster care and social worker, as and when required
- Contribute towards the Personal Educational Plan process
- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievements of such students
- Review students' progress regularly and liaise with the team surrounding the student to target support appropriately
- Weekly tracking and monitoring of the student
- Monitor students' attendance carefully and target support appropriately

In the light of the high percentage of Children Who Are Looked After who say they have experienced being bullied, pay particular attention to the state of students' relationships with peers.

5.3 Responsibilities of the Academic Review Tutors

- Contribute towards the Personal Educational Plan process
- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievements of such students
- Review students' progress regularly and liaise with the team surrounding the student to target support appropriately
- Weekly tracking and monitoring of the student
- Monitor students' attendance carefully and target support appropriately

In the light of the high percentage of Children Who Are Looked After who say they have experienced being bullied, pay particular attention to the state of students' relationships with peers.

5.3 Responsibilities of the Student Services Team

The Student Services Team will:

- Ensure that the transition to College is as smooth as possible for these students through an Induction programme which takes account of their particular needs, as and when required

- Ensure that those students who are 'Looked After Children' receive an application for the Guarantee Bursary that is available to them.

6. The Transition Team

The Bedford College group is committed to ensuring personalised support for 'Looked After Children' to ensure transition from school is well supported.

Heads of Departments and Personal Achievement Tutors are available to ensure that 'Looked After Children' are supported when attending information sessions and Enrolment/Induction.

7. Confidentiality

All students' records are confidential and access to them is restricted. For example, whilst reports on students' progress are shared with teaching staff, parents and employers, reports giving students' personal details are much more restricted. Such reports are restricted to the students' Head of Department, Personal Achievement Tutor and the Safeguarding Team. All records are kept in a locked cupboard within the confidential Executive Assistants office.

8. Data Protection

All data relating to 'Looked After Children' will be held in accordance with the College's Data Protection Policy. This policy conforms to the Data Protection Act 1998 (Implemented March 2000) and its eight principles. In relation to the second principle, data on 'Looked After Children' will be held for the specific purpose of enabling the College to put in place any support, guidance and advice which these students may need above and beyond that offered to other students.

9. Associated documentation

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy

10. Approval and monitoring

- The Executive group has key responsibility for approving and establishing the policy.
- Copies of this policy are contained on the College Intranet site and are accessible via the Safeguarding section of the College's External website.