

THE WHEELS PROJECT LTD

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Brislington
Bristol BS4 5QH
Registered Charity No: 1081236

CHILDREN IN CARE POLICY FOR USE IN THE WHEELS PROJECT

Overall aims

We at The Wheels Project will do for children in care what we do for all children only more so. We aim to ensure that children in care excel, as we aim for all children to excel. We aim to overcome their barriers to learning and enable them to leave us happy and secure in themselves, understanding that they do have control over their destiny and that education does matter. We will listen to what children in care tell us about what they want from their education and try to address any concerns or issues raised through various means including the Children in Care Council and surveys from The HOPE, Bristol's Virtual School for Children in Care.

The Wheels Project strives to ensure that the culture and ethos of the Project are such that, whatever the heritage and origins of members of the school, pupils should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand, and celebrate diversity.

Objectives

The Wheels Project will support children in care by:

- ensuring an effective induction when joining the school or when coming into care whilst already on the school roll
- balancing high levels of support with real challenge
- ensuring that each child has a high-quality Personal Education Plan
- linking each child to a key person they relate well to
- making it a priority to know the children well and to build strong relationships
- developing strong relationships with carers, local authorities including the Virtual School Head and specialist agencies
- encouraging and supporting children in care to take responsibility for their learning
- engaging children in care in learning outside the classroom and after-school activities
- intervening promptly if a problem emerges such as with behaviour or attendance
- giving integrated but low-profile support at The Wheels Project for each child in care so that they are not made to feel different from other children
- planning for future transitions e.g., to further or higher education.

Roles and responsibilities – see annex 2 for full detail

The Trustee with special responsibility for children in care in this organisation is: Rachael Wheatley
The designated member of staff in this organisation is: David Glossop

Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

All children in care must have a care plan which is drawn up and reviewed by the local authority which looks after them. The care plan must include a Personal Education Plan (PEP), which forms part of the child's official school record. The school and the Local Authority have a shared responsibility for making sure that the PEP is a useful document and for helping children in care to achieve and enjoy. Discussion about how together they can make that happen through the content, implementation and review of the PEP should be done through a meeting involving the young person, carers, the social worker, a teacher, and others such as, where appropriate, staff from The Wheels Project. The PEP should include challenging, curriculum-based targets and support the young person's educational progress. If the young person has a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan this should be reviewed annually and should, where possible, tie in with the PEP. Full guidance on PEP meetings and how to use the PEP is provided on the [children in care education web pages](#).

One to one tuition

Research has shown that children in care benefit from one-to-one tuition in English and/or maths even if they appear to be progressing in line with age related expectations. The Wheels Project is committed to prioritising all children in care for one-to-one tuition when requested by the referring school.

Additional funding

Children in care are entitled to additional funding in schools to help improve their outcomes and narrow the gap between their outcomes and those of their peers. Which young people are eligible and the amount of such funding available will be determined as a result of government policy.

The referring school is committed to ensuring effective use of this dedicated funding where available for all eligible children in care on roll to provide additional, personalised support to ensure accelerated progress in order to improve outcomes. The dedicated funding for children in Year 9 to Year 11 is currently called the LAC Pupil Premium Grant.

The appropriate use of allocated funding is to be assessed through the Personal Education Plan.

Admission/Induction Arrangements (Background)

Children in care are a priority for admission into schools and, as such, will follow the statutory guidance on school admissions. On admission to the school or to care, carers will be given an introductory booklet about the school's expectations and processes and the young person will meet with the designated teacher for children in care. The designated teacher will identify any relevant issues, academic or pastoral, and ensure the young person is made to feel supported in their school and at The Wheels Project. Consideration will be given to giving the young person a peer mentor. On admission, records will be requested from the young person's previous school. As soon as practicable after the records are received, a meeting will be held with the carer/parent, social worker, other relevant professionals, and the young person, as appropriate, to put together a new Personal Education Plan, this early meeting will ensure that communication systems are established early. If records are not received promptly The Wheels Project will undertake its own assessment to make sure that the teaching and support received are appropriate.

When any young person already on school roll enters care the school will ensure that the student meets with the designated teacher as soon as possible and is fully informed of the school procedures and additional support arrangements available. A meeting with other parties will be arranged and PEP prepared as soon as possible in the same way as for those children already in care admitted to school.

At the first PEP meeting, we will seek clarification from the social worker as to who requires school reports and who may give permission for school trips or other such activities. At this meeting any means of communication to aid the exchange of information between statutory meetings will be discussed and

agreed (such as a home/schoolbook to detail any sudden significant changes in a young person's circumstances.)

Many children in care do not want The Wheels Project' staff to be aware of their care status because it makes them feel "different". Therefore, we will negotiate with the young person to identify who should be aware of their care status. However, we recognise that in some cases, such as if the young person has a severe learning difficulty, this may not be possible.

Project Trips and Special Activities

We aim to ensure that children in care enjoy as many extracurricular opportunities as possible by reserving placements for them on trips or enrichment activities which they are eligible for and allowing sufficient time to gain the necessary consent. The responsibility for giving permission for Wheels Project trips and enrichment opportunities is that of the social worker, although they often delegate this to foster carers. The person who may give permission will be clarified at the first PEP meeting. If in doubt The Wheels Project will always send consent forms to the social worker.

Given the delays that children in care experience in getting parental consent for school trips and activities, we will aim to ensure that children in care enjoy the same extracurricular opportunities as other young people by reserving placements for them on trips or on activities.

Leaving Arrangements

When a child in care leaves the Wheels Project, we will find ways to say goodbye. We will also ensure the swift transfer of information to the next school or FE/HE institution if appropriate.

This policy is dated: 17.11.21

To be reviewed: annually

Annex 1 – Definitions and complaints procedure

Children in care

The terms Looked After Child (LAC) and child in care (CiC) are interchangeable. For the purposes of this policy, we are using the term CiC. Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They include the following:

- (i) children who are accommodated by the local authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents;
- (ii) children who are the subject of a care order or interim care order;
- (iii) children who are the subject of emergency orders for the protection of the child;
- (iv) children who are compulsorily accommodated. This includes remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement.

A looked after child may be in residential care, a foster placement or could be living with their parents. If living with their parents, this could be on a part time basis or possibly before returning home permanently after a care placement.

Legal Framework

From 1 September 2009 the governing bodies of all maintained schools are required under the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 (the 2008 Act) to appoint a designated teacher (DT) to promote the educational achievement of children in care who are on the school roll. This policy follows the statutory guidance for school governing bodies outlined in [“The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children” 2009](#).

Complaints

If a young person, parent/carer, or social worker wishes to complain about the provision or policy, they should in the first instance raise it with the designated supervisor, who will try to resolve the situation alongside the carer and the social worker.

If the issue cannot be resolved within 10 days, the young person, carer, or social worker can submit a formal complaint in writing to the General Manager. The General Manager will investigate the complaint and respond within 10 working days, unless the formal complaint is about the conduct of the General Manager, in which case the complaint will go straight to the chair of governors.

Any issues that remain unresolved at this stage should be addressed through a meeting in order to assess the impact of any such complaint upon the young person’s education. This meeting may include the named Governor and any other outside agency that both parties deem necessary to attend. This meeting should normally be held within 10 working days of the General Manager’s response.

Pupils who wish to make a formal complaint against the Wheels Project or about their care will be advised of the support available for children in care through the National Youth Advocacy Service and encouraged to look at the page on Bristol’s children in care [RVoice website](#).

Annex 2 - Roles and Responsibilities

The Role of the Governing Body

- The governing body will ensure that the designated Supervisor and named Trustee undertake appropriate training.
- Ensure that the designated supervisor is a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Governors will consider an annual report from the designated supervisor covering attainment, attendance, progress, Personal Education Plans, CiC with Special Educational Needs and Disability or who are gifted and talented, impact on The Wheels Project's development plans A suggested template is available on the [CiC education web pages](#).
- The governing body, General Manager and referring school leadership team will act on any issues raised in the report and will ensure that:
 - The Wheels Project has a clear overview of the educational needs and progress of CiC on roll
 - The Wheels Project's policies are effective in reflecting the needs of CiC
 - resources are allocated to support the designated supervisor to carry out this role effectively for the benefit of CiC.

The role of the General Manager

- To ensure that, in partnership with the governing body, the designated supervisor has the opportunity to acquire and keep up to date the necessary skills, knowledge and training to understand and respond to the specific teaching and learning needs of children in care.
- To make sure that the designated supervisor role contributes to the deeper understanding of everyone in the school who is likely to be involved in supporting children in care to achieve.
- In partnership with the governing body, monitor the effectiveness of the role of the designated supervisor.
- Oversee the development of the policy on children in care.
- Evaluate the standards and achievement of CiC and report these termly to the governing body and discuss them at Trustee meetings.
- Ensure that all staff are given the opportunity to attend training courses etc. that help them develop the skills and knowledge needed to support children in care.

The role of the designated supervisor within the Wheels Project

The designated supervisor has lead responsibility for helping Project staff understand the things which affect how CiC learn and achieve. The DS will:

- promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how CiC learn
- promote the educational achievement of every child in care on the Project's roll
- contribute to the development and review of whole Project policies to ensure that they do not unintentionally put children in care at a disadvantage
- make sure, in partnership with other staff, that there are effective and well understood Project procedures in place to support children in care's learning
- promote a culture in which CiC are able to discuss their progress and be involved in setting their own targets, have their views taken seriously and are supported to take responsibility for their own learning
- be a source of advice for staff about differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children and in making full use of Quality First teaching
- make sure that CiC are prioritised in one-to-one tuition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home
- have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of the child's personal education plan (PEP) within the Project
- set up systems to monitor and record the progress of all children in care and establish a system for contacting and forwarding educational records to referring schools to facilitate a smooth and speedy transfer
- act as the named contact for colleagues in social care and health and ensure effective communication between all relevant parties

- have lead responsibility for helping Project staff to understand the things which can affect how children in care learn and achieve
- ensure that the Project file for CiC holds all the essential information; a template for which can be found on the [CiC education web pages](#)
- arrange for a mentor or peer mentor for each child in care on the roll of the school
- have due regard for the 'Expectations' document produced by The Wheels Project for Children in Care.

The role of all those involved in supporting children in care

- Ensure that all children in care are made to feel welcome and included.
- Have high expectations of children in care's involvement in learning and educational progress.
- Be aware of the emotional, psychological, and social effects of loss and separation from birth families.
- Understand the reasons which may be behind a child in care's behaviour, and why they may need more support than other children.
- Understand how important it is to see children in care as individuals and not to publicly treat them differently from their peers.
- Appreciate the central importance of showing sensitivity about who else knows about a child in care's status.
- Understand what a PEP is and its importance in helping to create a shared understanding between teachers, carers, social workers and, depending on age and understanding, the young person him or herself of what everyone needs to do to help them achieve their potential.

Annex 3 - Sources of guidance and support

National policy/statutory guidance

- [Improving the attainment of looked after children in secondary schools](#) - DCSF 2009
- [The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children](#) - DCSF 2009
- [Promoting the education of looked after children](#): statutory guidance for local authorities – DfE 2014
- [Department for Education website](#)
- [Pupil Premium information](#)
- **Bristol policies and guidance** – all available at <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/schools-learning-early-years/guidance-policies-and-procedures> unless otherwise shown
- Admissions protocol and operational process
- Attendance plan for CiC example
- Exclusion Procedural Guidance
- Induction and leaving processes for children in care (CiC)
- Model confidential school file for CiC - Some schools requested a template of what a school's file for a CiC should contain. Several designated teachers contributed to this model document
- Model policy for CiC for secondary schools - This is intended to be a template for secondary schools to adapt according to their own circumstances
- Monitoring and Tracking Pupil Progress - This document shows the processes that are in place in addition to what schools do
- [Personal Education Plan Guidance](#)
 - Glossary for PEP guidance
 - Free resources for CiC
- Process for agreeing part time timetable
- Process for new children in care/CiC moving
- Pupil Premium policy
- Principles for administering Bursary funds for CiC/care leavers
- Process for agreeing part time timetable
- Process for new children in care/CiC moving
- Process for Year 11-12 transfer for CiC
- Secondary policy for CiC - A secondary school DT has adapted the St Werburgh's primary policy for use in secondary schools
- FE policy on supporting young people in care or care leavers - St Brendan's Sixth Form College have given permission to share their policy
- When a child comes into care - Guidance for schools on social care processes when a child comes into local authority care
- [Children in care education website](#)

School's own policies e.g.

- Behaviour policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- PSHE &C
- Emotional Literacy policy
- Learning and Teaching
- Confidentiality
- Single Equality Scheme (inc. DES,GES,RES)
- Child Protection
- Safeguarding Children Policy