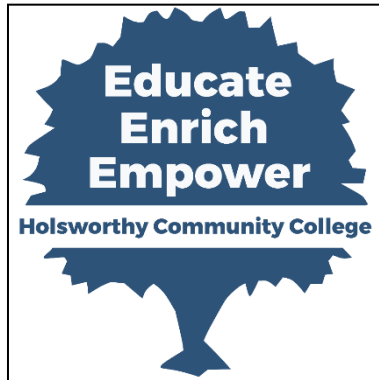


Holsworthy Community College

Children In Care Policy

2026-2027



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Rationale

At Holsworthy Community College we believe that all Children Looked After, and those previously in care, should have equitable access to excellent educational provision and achieve at a similar level to all Devon and Cornish children. As a community we aim to be champions for Children Looked After and take a proactive approach to support their success, recognising that we have a vital role to play in promoting their educational achievement and social and emotional development. To do this we commit to:

- Supporting them to raise their aspirations.
- Giving them a sense of the control they have over their own lives.
- Fostering positive attitudes and behaviour through our cooperative values.
- Providing continuity and 'normality' for those who may have been subject to emotional distress, abuse and disruption.

Definition: Who are our Children Looked After?

Most Children Looked After will be living in foster homes but a smaller

number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even be placed back at home with their parent(s) sharing parental responsibility with the Local Authority.

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is in the care of the Local Authority if he or she is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the Authority. This includes the following:

- (a) Children who are accommodated by the local authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents.
- (b) Children who are the subject of a care order or interim care order.
- (c) Children who are the subject of emergency orders for the protection of the child.

In addition to Children Looked After, the school recognises its responsibilities towards Previously Looked After Children. These include children who were looked after immediately before being adopted, made subject to a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) or a Child Arrangements Order (CAO). The Designated Teacher alongside the DSL will promote their educational achievement and provide advice and guidance to staff, parents and guardians as required.

[Previously Looked After Children](#)

Legal Framework

- The governing body will appoint a suitably qualified Designated Teacher to promote the educational achievement of looked after and previously looked after children, in accordance with current statutory guidance.
- The school will work closely with the Virtual School Head to support the educational achievement of looked after children and recognise the strategic role of the Virtual School in promoting outcomes for children with a social worker.
- This policy is informed by current DfE statutory guidance including The Designated Teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children and Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children.

Schools are required to:

- Ensure access to a balanced and broadly based education for all Children Looked After.
- Prioritise recording and improving the academic achievement of Children Looked After.
- Prioritise a reduction in the number of exclusions and truanies for all Children Looked After.
- Ensure there is a (qualified) designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of all Children Looked After who are on the school roll.

- Develop effective systems of communications and protocols.
- Promote the attendance of Children Looked After.

Objectives

At Holsworthy Community College we aim to ensure that those key qualities found by the DCSF and Ofsted to be features of best practice in supporting Children Looked After are embedded in our practice.

In supporting Children Looked After we will:

- Create a whole school ethos in which all staff understand their responsibility in supporting the role of Corporate Parent.
- Provide a safe and secure environment, which values education and believes in the abilities and potential of all children.
- Bring the educational attainments of our Children Looked After in line with those of their peers.
- Make sure that they have access to education appropriate to their age and ability. This includes access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Balance high levels of support with challenge and high expectations to ensure rapid progress.
- Have a Designated Teacher (DT) for Children Looked After who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them, liaising with carers, parents (as appropriate) and social workers on a wide variety of educational and care issues.
- Work alongside the Social Worker, PEP Co-ordinator, Virtual School Headteacher and other professionals to ensure that each Looked After Child has a current, good quality Personal Education Plan (PEP) in place which includes challenging, curriculum-based targets and is an effective tool which supports the young person and helps them make excellent progress.
- Ensure that Pupil Premium Plus funding is used to provide additional, personalised support as identified in the Personal Education Plan.
- Closely monitor each child's attendance and academic progress, working and sharing information in a timely manner with the Virtual School to help ensure each child achieves the best possible educational outcomes.
- Ensure there is a well-planned and co-ordinated approach to meeting the child's educational and social needs, for example, whether potentially disruptive changes in school can be prevented.
- Plan for future transitions effectively including planning for transport. All staff and Governors are committed to ensuring improved educational life chances for Children Looked After by ensuring that the relevant personnel have reasonable support and time to complete tasks and responsibilities. Also, to establish and maintain appropriate reporting and monitoring procedures both within the school and with other agencies.

In addition, we will:

- Challenge negative stereotypes amongst students and staff.
- Closely monitor the academic, social and personal progress of all Children Looked After.
- Ensure discretion when addressing a child's Care status and the background and family history of children who are in Care, especially surrounding teaching and learning relating to the family.
- Ensure a clear protocol is followed in the sharing of information, both within school and with outside agencies.

In pursuit of this Policy we will:

- Nominate a School Governor to ensure that the needs of Children Looked After in the school are taken into account at a school management level and to support the Designated Teacher.
- Support the Designated teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend training to support Children Looked After.

Admissions and Transitions

We will:

- Prioritise the admission of Children Looked After, and those who have been adopted who have a Special Guardianship Order, within our own admissions procedures in order to admit students without delay, recognising the importance of re-establishing school stability for Children Looked After.
- Ensure that all Children Looked After meet the Designated Teacher who will identify any relevant issues, academic or pastoral.
- Ensure a warm welcome to our school by providing appropriate induction for all Children Looked After so that there is a smooth and successful transition which includes carers and parents where appropriate.
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- DCSF 2009.
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- Children's Plan.
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- To make sure that on admission or transfer all relevant information records are obtained at the outset.
- Forward appropriate documents, in a timely fashion, to any receiving school at the point of transition (where the receiving school is made known).
- Make every effort to provide continuity of schooling and educational experience.

Attendance (see our Attendance Policy)

We will:

- If school is not using a management system linked to DCC or CCC provide weekly updates on attendance of Children Looked After or respond to telephone calls, as required.
- Inform the Carer /Virtual School Headteacher/ Education Welfare service / Social Worker / Parents (if appropriate) if there are any concerns about attendance.
- Acknowledge attendance in any education meetings, celebrating success and setting realistic targets if it is a concern.

Exclusion

We will:

- Actively follow the DCC Protocol for reducing Exclusions of Children in Care.

Multi-agency liaison

We will:

- Support the child to engage fully in planning and decision making.
- The Designated Teacher will liaise closely with carers, parents (if appropriate) and the pupil's social worker on a variety of issues, including homework, kit and equipment required. It is important that positive messages about behaviour and achievement are shared.
- There will be a clear understanding about the role and responsibility of staff in relation to the child and the roles and responsibilities of the other professionals involved.
- Our staff will share positive perceptions and high expectations of the child with other professionals but especially with the child.
- Be aware of, and sensitive to, the appropriate role of the parents.
- Our Designated Teacher will ensure that requests from the LA for statistical or other information held by the school are completed and returned on time, to comply with statutory obligations.
- Encourage each of our Children Looked After to access out of hours learning activities realising the positive impact this could have on their self-esteem and learning.

Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

We will:

- Hold a PEP meeting in time for every Statutory Care Review that involves the Social Worker, PEP Co-ordinator, Foster Carers, child and parent (if appropriate). Additional attendees may include e.g. Careers South West, Educational Psychologist, Education Welfare officer, Virtual School Headteacher, etc. We will seek the views of the child as to appropriate attendees in line with the statutory guidance.
- Have a high-quality PEP for each child which includes appropriate

targets and has been quality assured by the Virtual School. Other school plans e.g. Statement/EHCP, Transition Plan, Pastoral Support Programme will feed into and form a part of the PEP.

- Contribute to the process whereby all Children Looked After have a high quality Personal Educational Plan (PEP) in place within 20 days of starting at the school. This will include SMART educational targets and will be linked to the child's Care Plan and any other plan resulting from the assessment of the child (IEP, PSP, Statement of Educational Need/EHCP). To inform the Designated Teacher, round robins are requested from all teaching staff, so that monitoring of academic progress and any socialisation issues can be discussed and recorded. Make certain that following the writing of a PEP, any educational recommendations in that PEP will be adhered to by our staff in order that all our Children Looked After have the opportunity to fulfil and achieve the targets set.
- Ensure that Pupil Premium Plus funding is carefully targeted to improve the educational outcomes of the Child in Care and used as identified in the Personal Education Plan.
- Make or support applications for a Personal Education Allowance (PEA) e.g. those who are at risk of underachieving academically or for extracurricular activities through discussions at PEP meetings. At Holsworthy Community College the allocation of the PEA money has been used for one-to-one tuition outside of school time, extracurricular activities, school trips, wider activities and to aid vocational training.
- Seek to nominate our Children Looked After to DCC for the annual Children Looked After Celebration of Achievement Event.

School Trips and Special Activities

- We aim to ensure that Children Looked After enjoy as many extra-curricular opportunities as possible by reserving places for them on trips or enrichment activities for which they are eligible. The responsibility for giving permission for school trips and enrichment opportunities is that of the Social Worker, sometimes delegated to Foster Carers. The person who may give permission will be clarified at the first PEP meeting.

Complaints

If a young person, parent or Social Worker wishes to complain about the provision or policy, they should, in the first instance, raise it with the Designated Teacher, who will try to resolve the situation alongside the carer and Social Worker.