

Cyngor Sir Powys County Council Gwasanaeth Ysgolion – Schools Service

Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After Policy

Ysgol Bro Tawe



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Children Looked After (CLA) and Children Previously Looked After (CPLA) policy.

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Introduction and legal framework

Children Looked After (CLA) and Children Previously Looked After (CPLA) are, statistically, more at risk of academic underachievement and are at greater risk of exclusion. Many CLA will have experienced disruption to their educational experience, either through periods of being out of education or because of the wider disruption in their life, including the significant emotional impact caused by both the life experiences that led to them becoming a Child Looked After, and the emotional impact of being a CLA and being separated from their family. In addition, many CLA also have Special Educational Needs/Additional Learning Needs (SEN/ALN).

Supporting CLA and CPLA to succeed and improve their prospects is a key priority for the Schools Service and Powys County Council.

Powys County Council recognises, however, that all learners are individuals: despite the vulnerabilities listed above, it is not appropriate to assume that all CLA will be negatively affected or will require additional support to succeed in education. Therefore, we will ensure that all CLA or CPLA are assessed according to their individual needs and supported appropriately thereafter.

This policy takes account of the following:

- Section 52 of the Children Act 2004.
- Section 20 of the Child and Young Persons Act 2008.
- Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014.
- Making a difference: A guide for the designated person for looked after children in schools (Document n^o: 255/2017, November 2017).
- The Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales (2021)

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, a Child Looked After is a child who is looked after by a local authority within the meaning of section 76 of the Social Service and Well-Being (Wales) Act or section 22 of the Children Act 1989. For the purposes of this policy, Children Looked After encompasses both CLA by Powys and Children of Other Local Authorities (COLA) who may or may not attend schools maintained by Powys but who reside in Powys.

The term Child Previously Looked After refers to a child who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is the subject of an adoption, Special Guardianship Order (SGO), or child arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live or has been adopted from “state care” outside England and Wales.

The approach of the Schools Service to supporting the educational achievement of CLA and CPLA is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education
- Promoting attendance
- Supporting transitions
- Targeting support
- Having high expectations
- Promoting inclusion by challenging individuals’ attitudes and changing those attitudes
- Achieving stability and continuity
- Early intervention and priority action

- Student voice
- Promoting health and well-being
- Avoiding exclusions
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers, school staff and other professional

Virtual School

Powys Schools Service has a Virtual School team who can be contacted as follows:

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Supporting Powys Schools

Schools that are maintained by Powys County Council may have on roll CLA by Powys as well as learners who are COLA. The Schools Service will ensure that these learners are known to be CLA by the school, and that their CLA status is accurately reflected on education information management systems, including accurately recording which local authority looks after them.

In addition, there will be learners on roll at Powys schools who are CPLA, either adopted or subject to an SGO. There is no mechanism by which these learners can be readily identified through information management systems: where learners are known to be CPLA, the Virtual School will maintain a list of these learners.

The Virtual School will also maintain a list of Designated Persons for CLA in each school, and those Persons' contact details. This will facilitate communication between the Schools Service and the Designated Person.

The Virtual School will provide information, advice and guidance to Designated Persons and their schools in respect of either CLA and CPLA as a group, or individual CLA or CPLA. This will include the provision of or signposting to training opportunities, and advice and signposting to relevant and appropriate routes for additional support for CLA and CPLA (for example, referrals to TYFU Powys ALN system). There are established principles for the provision of additional support for learners (i.e. a graduated response) which must be followed for all learners: having Looked After status does not circumvent these processes.

Whilst it is the responsibility of the school to liaise with any named social worker and the carers of CLA, the Virtual School can take a role in regard to fostering and supporting effective multi-agency working.

The Virtual School will monitor the academic outcomes of CLA who are educated in Powys Schools, through attendance at Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings. Due to the low numbers of learners

in any year group, year-on-year trends for CLA as a group are statistically unreliable: measures will instead take account of individual progress.

Corporate Parenting

In addition to having a direct role with Powys maintained schools in respect of CLA and CPLA, the Virtual School also has a role in supporting the education of all CLA by Powys.

The Virtual School will liaise with and support all partners (Children's Services, carers, non-Powys schools, host local authority) in respect of educational provision, including, but not limited to:

- Admissions.
- Additional support.
- Funding.
- School consultations and placement

The Virtual School will also obtain and collate information and data on Powys CLA to monitor progress and outcomes, and to ensure the Corporate Parenting Group is able to fulfil its role. This data will include:

- Current academic levels.
- Attendance data.
- Exclusions data.
- Destinations data (where known).

Academic data cannot be combined into cohort measures, due to the differences in education systems in England and Wales.

Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

Each CLA must have a PEP as part of their overall care and support plan. It is the responsibility of the child's named social worker to ensure that the PEP is completed, maintained and reviewed. Schools have a duty to contribute to the PEP. Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 is clear that the PEP must be reviewed in line with the care and support plan as a whole, i.e at least every six months. However, Part 6 also states that the PEP should be treated as a living document. Best practice is that PEPs should be updated on a termly basis. Powys has an electronic PEP system as part of TYFU.

The Virtual School will support and facilitate the completion of PEPs by working with social care to book PEP meetings, providing log ins to Social Workers, Schools, Foster Carers for the ePEP Quality Assuring the completed school forms, and ensuring that Targets are SMART. This will allow the Virtual School to quality assure the data being provided, and allow the Schools Service to support the education of all Powys CLA regardless of where they are educated.

Where COLA attend Powys schools, the home authority for that child retains responsibility for the PEP and will liaise directly with the Powys school.

Where a CLA also has ALN/SEND, they will have an Individual Development Plan (IDP) as per 2021 ALN Code of Practice. As a CLA pupil they can only have a Local Authority held IDP.

CLA in England may have an EHCP or be on SEND Support. CLA might also have another plan, such as an Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP) or a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP). Where a learner has any other educational plan, the Schools Service advocates that their PEP should align with that plan and they should be uploaded to the ePEP system, TYFU.

PEPs are not required for CPLA.

Funding

CLA in Wales are eligible to receive support via the Pupil Development Grant – Looked After Children (PDG LAC). The Schools Service will administer the PDG LAC as per the terms and conditions set by Welsh Government. The grant is available to any CLA looked after by any Welsh local authority and the Virtual School is funded for Powys CLA in Powys schools.

Where a CLA by an English authority attends a Powys maintained school, they are eligible for Pupil Premium (English funding model). Powys schools should liaise with the Virtual School for that child's home authority: the Schools Service can advise on this.

CLA educated in special schools are not eligible for the PDG LAC.

Aims

The aims of the school with relation to CLA / CLPA:

- ***To work closely with the virtual school for CLA/CPLA to ensure the best possible educational outcomes for LAC.***
- ***To ensure that all policies and procedures are followed for CLA/CPLA as for all children and young people.***
- ***To ensure that CLA/CPLA have access to a broad and balanced curriculum.***
- ***This should be reflected within the Personal Education Plan (PEP), to provide a differentiated curriculum and additional interventions as required appropriate to the individual's needs.***
- ***To ensure that CLA/CPLA take as full a part as possible in all school activities.***
- ***To ensure that parents, carers and social workers of CLA are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment.***
- ***To ensure that CLA/CPLA are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision.***

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body will

- Ensure the school has a coherent policy for CLA/CPLA
- Agree the school's policies and procedures in conjunction with legislation and statutory guidance
- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Children Looked After.

Ensure that the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Children Looked After.

The head teacher will

- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher who has the same prominence as that of an ALNCO, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Ensuring the designated teacher for CLA/CPLA has received the appropriate training.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of Children Looked After to ensure equal access to the curriculum.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusion of Children Looked After and act where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Ensuring that all members of staff are aware that supporting CLA/CPLA is a key priority.
- Promoting and actively challenging negative stereotypes of CLA/CPLA and promoting attachment and trauma informed approaches to understanding behaviour as a communication.
- Ensure reporting of CLA on Head teacher reports to include the number of CLA, their attendance as a vulnerable group in relation to other learners.

The designated teacher for CLA/CPLA will

- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan to plan for that transition in consultation with the child's social worker and arrangements are put in place to ensure their needs identified and met.

- Build relationships with health, education and social care partners and other partners so that they and the Specialist Teacher for CLA understand the support available to CLA.
- Ensure that the personal education plan is completed with the child, social care, foster carer and any other relevant people in a timely manner.
- Act as the main contact for social services and the Specialist Teacher for CLA.
- Gain the knowledge and skills to advise and support staff on teaching and behaviour strategies for CLA/CPLA
- Ensure that CLA/CPLA are prioritised for one-to-one tuition and support.
- Support new CLA/CPLA admissions to the school
- Liaise with the ALNCO to ensure all pupil needs are met.
- Maintain an up-to-date record of the CLA/CPLA in school, including those in the care of other authorities and ensuring all necessary information is passed to other staff as required
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately
- Establish and maintain regular contact with home, statutory and voluntary agencies.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life and encourage Looked After Children to join in extracurricular activities and out of school learning.
- Be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education.
- Ensure that attendance is monitored.
- Attend training as required to keep fully informed of latest developments and policies regarding Looked After Children.

Personal education plans (PEPs)

- All CLA must have a care plan; PEPs are an integral part of this care plan.
- The ePEP is an evolving record of what needs to happen for a pupil to enable them to make at least the expected progress and fulfil their potential.
- The ePEP will reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning which meets the identified educational needs of the child.

- The school will work with other professionals and the child's carers to use the ePEP to support the child's educational needs, raise the child's aspirations and improve their life chances.
- All relevant bodies, such as the LA, the designated teacher and carers, will involve the child in the ePEP process at all stages, when appropriate.

Working with agencies and the CLA education

- The school will ensure that copies of all relevant reports are forwarded to the social workers, in addition to parents/carers or residential social workers.
- The school will coordinate their review meetings; for example, hold their annual review at the same time as a PEP review.
- The school will work with other agencies to exchange information such as changes in circumstances, exclusions or attendance issues.
- The designated teacher for CLA will communicate with the Specialist Teacher for CLA and child's social worker to facilitate the completion of the PEP.
- The designated teacher will ensure prompt, consistent and strong communication with the Specialist Teacher for CLA regarding CLA who are absent without authorisation.