



FOREST OF DEAN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS FEDERATION

PARKEND PRIMARY & YORKLEY PRIMARY

Child in Care (CiC)

and

Previous Child in Care (PCiC)

Policy 2026-2027

Ratified: June 2026

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Statement of intent

Educational achievement and subsequent life chances for CiC and PCiC are of real concern. Pupils who are looked after often require additional support and attention in order to improve their situation.

The Forest of Dean Community schools Federation endeavours to provide positive experiences and offer stability, safety, and individual care and attention for all our pupils. With this in mind, we aim to:

- Encourage pupils to reach their potential and to make good progress in relation to their professional, social and emotional development.
- Ensure that pupils enjoy high quality teaching and a curriculum which meets their needs and the requirements of legislation.
- Plan support for CiC and PCiC realistically and use the school's resources efficiently to ensure the school meets their needs.
- Promote a positive culture in all aspects of school life.
- Help pupils develop their cultural, moral and social understanding.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children Act 1989
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE (2018) 'Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2018) 'The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2023) 'Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'
- DfE (2023) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'

2. Definitions

"Looked-after children (CiC)" are defined as:

- Children or young people who are the subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989.
- Children who are placed in foster care, children's residential homes, with relatives or friends, in semi-independent or supported independent accommodation.
- Children subject to a Care or Interim Care Order whilst placed with a parent, where the LA has parental responsibility.
- Children who are not subject to an order, but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents.

"Previously CiC (PCiC)" are defined as:

- Children who have left LA care in England and Wales through an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement order; or were adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales. Not all children under these legal orders will have previously been in care, and individual circumstances will apply.

In December 2023, the government published 'Championing Kinship Care', which includes an expansion to the Virtual School Head's role. This will include championing the educational progress of all children in kinship care, and will allow kinship carers to access advice from the Virtual School on request, regardless of whether the child was previously in care.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Ensuring the school has a coherent policy for CiC and PCiC.
- Reviewing the school's policies and procedures in conjunction with legislation and statutory guidance.
- Ensuring the Designated Teacher for CiC and PCiC has received the appropriate training.
- Ensuring that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to each looked after child's:
 - Legal status (i.e. whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.
 - Care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the LA.
- Ensuring that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep CiC and PCiC safe.
- Ensuring that there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying and reporting possible safeguarding or mental health concerns amongst CiC and PCiC.
- Ensuring CiC and PCiC have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and that reasonable adjustments are made, if necessary.
- Ensuring they receive feedback from the Executive Head Teacher regarding the effectiveness of the policy regularly.

The virtual school head (VSH) is responsible for:

- Monitoring the attendance and educational progress of the children their authority looks after; this includes children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders, or who were adopted from state care outside of England and Wales.
- Ensuring that arrangements are in place to improve the education and outcomes of the authority's CiC and PCiC, including those placed out-of-authority.
- Building relationships with health, education and social care partners, as well as other partners, so they and the Designated Teacher understand the support available to CiC and PCiC.
- Working with the school to ensure all CiC and PCiC in attendance are fully supported in reaching their full potential.
- Acting as the educational advocate for CiC and PCiC.
- Acting as a source of advice and information to help parents/carers of CiC and PCiC as effectively as possible.
- Managing the school's allocation of pupil premium plus (PP+) for CiC and PCiC and overseeing its appropriate use in school.
- Ensuring there are effective systems in place to:
 - Maintain an up-to-date roll of the CiC and PCiC who are in school settings, and gather information about their educational placement, attendance and progress.
 - Inform the Executive Head Teacher and Designated Teacher if they have a pupil on roll who is looked after by the LA.

- Ensure social workers, schools, Designated Teacher, careers and independent reviewing officers understand their role and responsibilities regarding a pupil's personal education plan (PEP).
- Ensure that up-to-date and effective PEPs that focus on educational outcomes are maintained for all CiC.
- Avoid delays in providing suitable educational provision.
- Ensure the education achievement of CiC and PCiC is seen as a priority by everyone who has responsibilities for promoting their welfare.
- Report regularly on the attainment, progress and school attendance of CiC and PCiC through the authority's corporate parenting structures.

The Executive Head Teacher is responsible for:

- Appointing the Designated Teacher for CiC and PCiC.
- Allowing the School Inclusion Team (Designated Teacher and Family Support Worker) the time and facilities to succeed in carrying out their duties.
- Overseeing this policy and monitoring its implementation, feeding back to the governing board annually on the following:
 - The number of CiC and PCiC in the school
 - An analysis of assessment scores as a cohort, compared to other pupil groups
 - The attendance of CiC and PCiC, compared to other pupil groups
 - The level of fixed term and permanent exclusions, compared to other pupil groups
- Ensuring all members of staff are aware that supporting CiC and PCiC is a key priority.
- Ensuring PP+ for PCiC is managed effectively.
- Promoting the advantages of actively challenging negative stereotypes of CiC and PCiC.

The Designated Teacher and Family Support Worker for CiC and PCiC are responsible for:

- Building relationships with health, education and social care partners and other partners so that they and the VSH understand the support available to CiC and PCiC.
- Promoting the educational achievement of CiC and PCiC at the school; this includes those that left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.
- Acting as the main contact for social services and the DfE.
- Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations.
- Ensuring CiC and PCiC are involved in setting their own targets.
- Advising staff on teaching strategies for CiC and PCiC.
- Ensuring that CiC and PCiC are prioritised for one-to-one tuition and support.
- Leading on how the child's PEP is developed and used in school to ensure the child's progress towards targets is monitored.
- Liaising with the SENCO to ensure all pupil needs are met.
- Being vigilant in observing any potential safeguarding concerns that could arise surrounding CiC and PCiC due to their increased vulnerability to harm, and reporting these to the DSL as soon as they arise.
- Working with the child's VSH and social worker to develop and implement their PEP.

- Working with the VSH to discuss how funding can be used to support the child's progress and meet the needs identified in their PEP.
- Working with the Executive Head Teacher to submit an annual report to the governing board, which details the progress of all CiC and PCiC.

The DSL is responsible for:

- Keeping up-to-date records of CiC's and PCiC's respective social worker and VSH.
- Promoting amongst staff the importance of recognising and reporting safeguarding concerns surrounding CiC and PCiC as soon as possible due to their increased vulnerability to harm.
- Where a child ceases to be looked after and becomes a care leaver, keeping up-to-date contact details of their LA personal advisor and liaising with the advisor as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Ensuring they are involved in reviewing PEP and care plans for CiC and PCiC.
- Liaising with the class teacher, Designated Teacher, specialists and parents when considering interventions to support the progress of CiC and PCiC.

Staff are responsible for:

- Being aware of CiC and PCiC and providing them with support and encouragement.
- Preserving confidentiality, where appropriate, and showing sensitivity and understanding.
- Being vigilant for any signs of bullying towards CiC and PCiC.
- Being vigilant for any signs of safeguarding concerns surrounding CiC and PCiC due to their increased vulnerability to harm, and reporting any concerns to the DSL as soon as possible.
- Promoting the self-esteem of CiC and PCiC.

4. Personal education plan (PEP)

All CiC must have a care plan; PEPs are an integral part of this care plan.

The PEP is an evolving record of what needs to happen for a pupil to enable them to make the expected progress and fulfil their potential. The PEP will reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning which meets the identified educational needs of the child. The PEP will be reviewed termly.

The school, with other professionals and the child's carers, will use the PEP 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 PEP process at all stages.

The PEP will address the pupil's full range of education and development needs, including:

- Access to nursery provision that is appropriate to the child's age.

- On-going catch-up support, which will be made available for children who have fallen behind with work.
- Suitable education provided by the LA, where the child is not in school because of suspension or exclusion.
- Transitional support where needed, such as if a child is moving to a new school.
- School attendance and behaviour support, where appropriate.
- Support to help the child meet their aspirations, which includes:
 - Support to achieve expected levels of progress for the relevant national key stage and to complete an appropriate range of approved qualifications.
 - Careers advice, guidance and financial information about FE, training and employment, that focusses on the child's strengths, capabilities and the outcomes they want to achieve.
 - Out-of-school hours learning activities, study support and leisure interests.

The VSH and the Designated Teacher will ensure that information is included within a CiC's PEP, surrounding how they are benefitting from any use of PP+ funding to improve their attainment. Any interventions supported by PP+ will be evidence-based and in the best interests of the pupil.

5. Working with agencies and the virtual school head (VSH)

The school will ensure that copies of all relevant reports are forwarded to the social workers of CiC, in addition to carers or residential social workers.

The school will coordinate their review meetings; for example, hold their annual review of CiC with their statutory care review.

The school will work with other agencies to exchange information, such as changes in circumstances, exclusions or attendance issues, taking prompt action, where necessary, to safeguard CiC and PCiC.

Behaviour management strategies will be agreed between the VSH and the school, to ensure challenging behaviour is managed in the most effective way for that individual child.

The Designated Teacher/Family Support Worker for CiC will communicate with the VSH and child's social worker to facilitate the completion of the PEP.

Through the Designated Teacher/ Family Support Worker, the school will work with the VSH, social worker and other relevant agencies to monitor any arrangements in place so that actions and activities recorded in the child's PEP are implemented without delay. The Designated Teacher/Family Support Worker will communicate with the VSH and agree on how PP+ can be used effectively to accommodate the child's educational attainment and progress.

PP+ for PCiC will be allocated directly to, and managed by, the school. The school will work with the VSH to manage allocation of PP+ for the benefit of our cohort of tPCiC, and according to their needs. If deemed necessary, the school will allocate an amount of funding to an individual to support their needs.

The Designated Teacher/Family Support Worker will ensure consistent and strong communication with the VSH regarding CiC who are absent without authorisation.

The school will share their expertise on what works in supporting the education of CiC and PCiC.

6. Training

The Designated Teacher and other school staff involved in the education of CiC and PCiC will receive the appropriate training, including information about the following:

- School Admissions arrangements
- SEND
- Attendance
- Suspensions and Exclusions
- Managing and Challenging behaviour
- Promoting positive educational and recreational activities
- Supporting pupils to be aspirational for their future education
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

The governing board will ensure that staff are equipped with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep CiC and PCiC safe through training.

7. Safeguarding

The school recognises that many CiC and PCiC have experienced trauma, abuse or complex family circumstances that have led to them being placed in care, and will ensure that all staff are aware that experiences of adversity such as these can leave pupils vulnerable to further harm or exploitation.

All staff will be trained to recognise signs and indicators of safeguarding concerns and will ensure that extra vigilance is practiced in observing and identifying these indicators amongst CiC and PCiC as soon as possible.

Where a CiC and PCiC has a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding, e.g. responding to absence from education where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

The Executive Head Teacher will implement appropriate pastoral support services in place throughout the school to ensure that the welfare of CiC and PCiC can be adequately protected to the extent that reflects their increased vulnerability.

Staff will be encouraged to report to the DSL any concerns they have over CiC and PCiC in line with the processes outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Staff will be regularly encouraged to look for signs of bullying and report to the designated teacher if they believe a CiC or PCiC is being bullied, as this can have a particularly negative impact on pupils who have early experiences of rejection or abandonment.

8. Pupil mental health

CiC and PCiC are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) issues which can impact their behaviour and education. The designated teacher/Family Support Worker will have awareness, training and skills regarding a child's needs and how to support them in relation to behaviour management and mental health.

The Designated Teacher/Family Support Worker will work with the VSH to ensure the school is able to identify signs of potential mental health issues, understand the impact issues can have on CiC and PCiC, and knows how to access further assessment and support, where necessary.

The school understands that the increased frequency of mental health problems amongst CiC and PCiC may present a barrier to adequately identifying when mental health problems are indicative of a safeguarding concern. For this reason, the Designated Teacher/Family Support Worker will ensure that they, and all staff who maintain regular contact with CiC and PCiC are vigilant surrounding any changes in the mental health, behaviour, social inclination or mood of these pupils.

The school's Mental Health Lead will work alongside the Designated Teacher to promote the wellbeing and mental health of CiC and PCiC, and will always either be a member of, or be supported by the Senior Leadership Team and could be the Family Support Worker, SENCO, or DSL.

The school's Safeguarding Policy will be adhered to when dealing with all potential or explicit mental health issues that CiC and PCiC may face.

9. Suspension and Exclusion

Past experiences of CiC and PCiC will be considered when designing and implementing the school's Behaviour Policy and Suspension and Exclusion Policy.

The school will have regard to the DfE's statutory guidance '[Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement](#)' and recognises that suspending or excluding CiC can make them more vulnerable to harm due to not having the protection and opportunities school provides. The Executive Head Teacher will balance this recognition alongside the need to ensure calm and safe environments for all staff and pupils, devising strategies that take both into consideration.

Where the school has concerns about a CiC's behaviour, the VSH will be informed at the earliest opportunity. As far as possible, the school will engage proactively with the social worker or carer of a CiC to provide appropriate support for underlying issues that may be causing poor behaviour and improving this behaviour.

As part of the termly review of a pupil's PEP, any concerns about their behaviour will be recorded, alongside information on how they are being supported to improve this and reduce the likelihood of exclusion.

Suspension or permanent exclusion will only be used as a last resort. Permanent exclusion will only occur where there has been serious and/or persistent breaches of the school's Behaviour Policy, or where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others.

Where a CiC is at risk of being suspended or permanently excluded, the school will engage with the Designated Teacher/Family Support Worker and the pupil's parents, or other individuals involved in the pupil's care. The Designated Teacher/Family Support Worker will contact the VSH as soon as possible to work together, and with other relevant individuals, to consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to help the school address the factors affecting the pupil's behaviour and reduce the need for suspension or permanent exclusion.

The school will inform parents that they can seek the advice of the VSH on strategies to support their child to avoid exclusion.

Where a CiC is excluded, the school will document the provision of immediate suitable education in the pupil's PEP.

10. Pupils with SEND

Support for CiC and PCiC with SEND, who do not need an EHC plan, will be covered as part of the child's PEP and My Plan reviews.

The SENCO, Class Teacher, Designated Teacher/Family Support Worker and specialists will involve parents when considering interventions to support their child's progress. If appropriate, the VSH will be invited to comment on proposed SEND provision for PCiC.

The Designated Teacher/Family Support Worker and the SENCO will ensure that CiC and PCiC with SEND are supported in line with the SEND Policy, with extra consideration given to the fact that some of the usual procedures for supporting pupils with SEND may lack applicability for CiC, e.g. where CiC are in residential care and, thus, will have their EHC plans taken care of by the LA rather than the general stipulation of the place where they are ordinarily resident.

11. Information sharing

Appropriate and specific arrangements for sharing reliable data are in place to ensure that the education needs of CiC and PCiC are understood and met. The arrangements set out include:

- Who has access to information on CiC and PCiC and how data will remain secure.
- How pupils and parents are informed of, and allowed to challenge, information that is kept about them.
- How carers/parents contribute to and receive information.
- Mechanisms for sharing information between the school and relevant LA departments.
- How relevant information about individual pupils is passed between authorities, departments and the school when pupils move.

12. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Designated Teacher/Family Support Worker and the Executive Head Teacher or sooner if statutory guidance changes.

All changes to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders

13. Links with other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies;

- Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Equal Opportunities
- Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions.
- Admissions
- Anti-Bullying
- Attendance
- Suspensions and Exclusion
- Educational Visits
- RSHE Policy
- Young Carers

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