



Illuminate Care Group

Education

REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS

[The Support Standard](#)

1. Responsibilities of the Placing Authority

1.1 Corporate Responsibility for Promoting Educational Achievement

Obtaining a good education can be the key to vastly improving a young person's chances in life. Young people in care can be particularly disadvantaged educationally. They will often have had their education disrupted as a result of changes of placements and circumstances and may not have had the opportunity to develop to their full potential. Some young people may have little sense of their abilities and may need encouragement to develop greater self-esteem.

The Placing Authority has a corporate responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of all Looked After Children under section 22 (3A) and 23ZZA of the Children Act 1989 (as amended by section 4 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). This includes seeking a school or other education setting that is best suited to the young person's needs. The local authority's responsibilities as corporate parent apply wherever the young person is placed.

Promoting the Education of Young people with a Social Worker: Virtual School Head Role Extension describes how local authorities are expected to comply with their duties to promote the education of looked-after young people.



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When commissioning a placement in supported accommodation the placing authority must establish how the Homes will support the young person's educational needs.

If a Looked After young person from a different local authority area is placed in the Homes, the Virtual School Head of that local authority remains responsible for promoting the young person's educational achievement.

If the young person is an unaccompanied migrant, looked after by a local authority, they are entitled to the same local authority support as any other Looked After young person: to have a safe and stable placement; to receive the support that they need to thrive; and the support they need to fulfil their educational and other outcomes.

Some unaccompanied young people who have recently arrived in the country may never have had access to education before. Appropriate education for unaccompanied young people may include a period of time in a setting where their full educational needs can be assessed and integrated into their Personal Education Plan (PEP). They may need time to be prepared for and then become used to formal education, and their initial educational outcomes may include cultural orientation and life skills. The Home will have a key role in this.

Delegation of Authority in regard to education should be recorded in the young person's Placement Plan.

1.2 The Role of the Virtual School Head (VSH)

The VSH's key role is to ensure there are effective systems to:

- Make sure all relevant professionals are aware of the status of the young person and their entitlement to support;
- Maintain a roll of the authority's school-age Looked After Young Person, together with information about the placements, attendance and educational progress;



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- Inform headteachers and Designated Teachers in schools if they have a young person on roll who is Looked After Children by the VSH's local authority;
- Ensure that social workers, Designated Teachers and schools, carers and IROs understand their role and responsibilities in initiating, developing, reviewing and updating the young person's PEP and how they help meet the needs identified in that PEP;
- Ensure up-to-date, effective and high quality PEPs that focus on educational outcomes and that all Looked After Young People, wherever they are placed, have such a PEP;
- Avoid drift or delay in providing suitable educational provision, including special educational provision, and unplanned termination of educational arrangements, through proactive multi-agency co-operation. Where this requires negotiation with other authorities this should be completed in a timely manner and with the best interest of the young person as paramount;
- Ensure the educational achievement of Young People Looked After by the authority is seen as a priority by everyone who has responsibilities for promoting their welfare;
- Report regularly on the attainment of Looked After Young People through the authority's corporate parenting structures.

1.3 Personal Education Plans

The placing authority must ensure that all young people have an Education place and a Personal Education Plan (PEP) which promotes their educational achievement. The PEP must be drawn up before the young person becomes Looked After (or within 10 working days in the case of an emergency placement), and be available for the first statutory review meeting and all subsequent LAC Reviews.

If it is a subsequent placement, the young person should already have a PEP, if this is not the case, the manager should obtain one from the social worker.

PEP's should:



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- Identify developmental and educational needs in relation to skills, knowledge, subject areas and experiences;
- Set short and long-term educational attainment targets agreed in partnership with the young person.
- Include a record of planned actions, including milestones on homework, extra tuition and study support, that the school and others will take to promote the educational achievement of the young person, based on an assessment of their educational needs;
- Include information on how the young person's progress is to be rigorously monitored;
- Record details of specific interventions and targeted support that will be used to make sure personal education targets are met.
- Say what will happen, or is already happening, to put in place any additional support which may be required - e.g. possible action to support special educational needs involving the SENCO, educational psychologist, or local authority education services (information contained within a Education Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) does not have to be duplicated in the PEP, a reference is sufficient as long as the plans work together to meet overall needs);
- Set out information on what will happen or is already happening to identify and support any mental health needs relevant to the young person's education;
- Set out how a young person's aspiration and self-confidence is being nurtured, especially in consideration of longer-term goals towards further and higher education, work experience and career plans. They should focus on young person's strengths and capabilities and the outcomes they want to achieve;
- Include the young person's views on how they see they have progressed and what support they consider to be most effective;
- Be a record of the young person's academic achievements and participation in the wider activities of their education setting and other out of education learning activities (e.g. sporting, personal development);



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- Provide information which helps all who are supporting the young person's educational achievement to understand what works for them, helping to substitute for the role that parents might otherwise provide; and
- Have clear accountability in terms of who within the school is responsible for making the actions identified in the plan happen.

In addition, the PEP should have:

- An up to date and accurate chronology of education and training history which provides a record of the young person's educational experience and progress in terms of **National Curriculum Assessments**, including information about educational institutions attended and the reasons for leaving, attendance and conduct record, academic and other achievements, any special educational needs, an indication of the extent to which the young person's education has been disrupted before entering our supported accommodation;
- A clear statement clarifying existing arrangements for education and training, including details of any special educational provision and any other provision to meet the young person's educational or training needs and promote educational achievement;
- A description of any planned changes to existing arrangements and provision to minimise disruption;
- A description of the young person's leisure interests;
- A description of how the Pupil Premium is assisting the young person's progress and applications for bursaries should be discussed as part of PEP Meetings;
- Details of who will take the plan forward, with timescales for action and review are an essential aspect of all PEP planning.

1.4 Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) Funding

Looked After and Previously Looked After young people are eligible for Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) funding. This is additional funding provided to help improve the attainment



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of young people who are Looked After and close the attainment gap between these young people and their peers. It is not a personal budget for individual young people. The extra funding provided by the PP+ reflects the significant additional barriers faced by Looked After and Previously Looked After young people. The designated teacher has an important role in ensuring the specific needs of Looked After and Previously Looked After young people are understood by the school's staff and reflected in how the school uses PP+ to support these young people.

The PP+ is a key component in ensuring resources are available to support the young person's Personal Education Plan and the plan should clarify what the support is and how it will be delivered.

The PP+ for Looked After young people is managed by the Virtual School Head (VSH).

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1.5 Avoiding Disruption in Education

The Nominated Officer must approve of any change of placement affecting a young person in Key Stage 4, except in an emergency/where the placement is terminated because of an immediate risk of serious harm to the young person or to protect others from serious injury.

2. Responsibilities of the Home.

This section provides guidance on the role and responsibilities of the manager and staff.



2.1 Supporting Education

Young people living in the Home should be attending school or other educational provision, be learning, and making good progress. Staff should be ambitious for young people and support them to attend and to do well in their education.

Young people should be in full-time education whilst they are of compulsory school age, unless their Personal Education Plan states otherwise. The Home must aim to support full time attendance at school unless the young person's relevant plan indicates this is not in their best interests.

The registered service manager must ensure that each young person has access to appropriate equipment, facilities, and resources to support the young person's learning and that adults:

- Understand the barriers to learning that each young person may face and take appropriate action to help them to overcome any such barriers;
- Help each young person understand the importance and value of education, learning, training, and employment.
- Promote opportunities for each young person to learn informally.
- Help each young person to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in their relevant plans eg supporting them to set alarms to get themselves up at the correct time, supporting them to plan and make a packed lunch, ensuring they have correct equipment and clothing etc.
- Help each young person to achieve their education and training targets, as recorded in their relevant plans;
- Support each young person's learning and development, including supporting the young person to develop independent study skills.
- Maintain regular contact with each young person's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the young person's education and training and to maximise their achievement;



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- Raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a young person with their education or training provider and their placing authority.
- Help each young person who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education, training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment;

2.2 Participating in Education or Training

The necessary support must be given to young person to enable them to access their education or training. Support may include, for example, putting in place practical support by staff to learn how to use public transport confidently and safely, or the use of technology to connect with online learning.

Where young people are not participating in education because they have been excluded or are not on a school roll for some other reason, the registered person and staff must work closely with the placing authority so that the young person is supported and enabled to resume full-time education as soon as possible. In the interim, the young person should be supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable structured activities. If no education place is identified by the placing authority, the registered person must challenge them to meet the young person's needs.

Key/Link Workers should ensure that young people have adequate opportunities and support to complete homework and take part in extracurricular activities.

Young people should be encouraged to join a library and have opportunities to access a range of educational support material, including books and specialist educational software.



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Key/Link Workers, should attend all school events that would usually be attended by parents such as open days, school plays etc. Where it is set out in the young person's Placement Plan we will support parents to attend alongside us. If Parents cannot attend staff at the Home will update them after the event.

All young people are required to continue in education or training until their 18th birthday. Young people can choose how to participate. This can be through full time education, an apprenticeship or traineeship, or by combining full-time employment with part-time education or training. Whilst the duty is on the young person themselves, it is important that staff encourage the young person to continue their education or training and support them to develop the skills necessary to succeed in the option they choose. They can also direct them to the financial support that is available through the 16-19 bursary fund and to their local authority young people's services who can advise about the options available. For further information on the 16-19 Bursary Fund, see: **Overview of 16 to 19 Bursary Fund**.

Local authorities have a number of responsibilities in relation to education and training for 16-19 year olds, including ensuring that sufficient provision is available to meet their needs and supporting them to participate. They are also responsible for identifying young people covered by the duty to participate who are not in education or training. The Home should work with the local authority to make sure the young people are getting the support they need to participate. For further information, see **Participation of Young People: Education, Employment and Training**.

2.3 'Measurable Progress'

Progress in education can be measured and evidenced in various ways, including but not limited to: success in academic, vocational and other awards and qualifications; other formal attainment tests that are part of national assessment arrangements; and teachers' ongoing assessments. Measurements of progress should include qualitative information such as how well the young person is being prepared for their next stage of education, training or employment, and quantitative data where available. Other



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metrics can also be taken into account such as rewards and recognition of achievements, improvements in attendance and, where appropriate, reduction in behavioural incidents including exclusion. The young person's personal circumstances, individual needs and educational history are relevant in considering what might constitute progress; but should not limit aspirations for them.

2.4 Understanding Barriers to Learning

For some young people who have experienced severe trauma, have mental health difficulties or have been excluded or out of education for significant periods, it may be necessary to address and work through their past experiences and present needs before they can positively participate in learning activities and formal education. Staff will play a key role in supporting these young people in line with their Personal Education Plan or EHC plan and recommendations from education and health professionals.

Where young people have special educational needs (SEN), staff need to understand the specialist support young people may need to be able to engage positively and achieve in education. Staff must be aware of whether a young person has an EHC plan and the information in it.

2.5 Working in Partnership with Others

The Homes will strive to have proactive relationships with appropriate schools and educational support services and should have processes that enable staff to share their experience and understanding of the young person's educational needs and progress with other services.

The designated teacher would normally have overall responsibility for leading the process of target setting for young people looked-after in school, should monitor and track how their attainment progresses, and ensure that identified actions are put in place.



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PEPs should be reviewed by the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) at Looked After Reviews.

It is however important that staff work co-operatively and that they liaise on a regular basis with teaching staff or with external schools and educational support services, to ensure that educational programmes are appropriately differentiated. Key/Link Workers will have regular contact with teachers and co-operate with reviews of key plans e.g. SEN Support Plans, ensuring that education and placement/care plans are consistent with or complement each other.

Staff should have an understanding of how schools' function, including the processes for admission to schools, the role of designated teachers for looked-after young people and the role of the Virtual School Head.

Staff need to have the knowledge and skills to understand each young person's education and training targets and their next steps for learning. If a young person's progress is not in line with their agreed targets or next steps, staff should seek expert advice from education professionals, such as the Virtual School Head, SENCO, learning mentor or teacher. Staff must challenge the young person's education or training provider if they do not receive sufficient support to progress as outlined in their relevant plans.

Staff should act as effective advocates for or on behalf of a young person who may be experiencing difficulties with education or training matters including, but not limited to, attainment, admissions, attendance, or behaviour, as a good parent would do.

Staff need to know, for every young person, what level of decision-making has been delegated to them in relation to their education. These delegations should be recorded in their Placement Plan and it is the joint responsibility of the registered person and the placing authority to agree this at the time of placement. The Education Act 1996 defines 'parent' as including a person who has care of the young person in question. Therefore, for a young person looked after, the registered service manager may be



deemed a parent for the purposes of education law. This means that they should be treated like a parent with respect to information provided by a school about the young person's progress; should be invited to meetings about the young person; and should be able to give consent to decisions regarding school activities and trips unless there are good reasons not to delegate these decisions to them. For further information, see **Consents and Delegated Authority Policy**.

2.6 The Home Learning Environment

The ethos within the Homes should support each young person to learn, emphasising the value of independent study and reading for enjoyment. The Homes must make available suitable facilities, equipment and resources for learning. Staff must support Young people by encouraging them to learn independent study skills and supporting them to practice those skills.

Young people should have access to a computer and the internet to support their education and learning unless there are specific safeguarding reasons why this would be inappropriate. In such cases, the Home should consider whether and how it can support the young person to access a computer and the internet safely.

3. Exclusion/Refusal to Attend School

On rare occasions young people may either be unable to attend school as a result of exclusion or may choose not to attend school, school refusal. Exclusions are either fixed term; i.e. for a specified number of days after which the young person will return to their school; or permanent; where it is not intended that the young person will return to that particular school.

Due to the close working relationships established between staff and school-based staff it is likely that staff from the Homes will be aware of any difficulties the young person is experiencing or causing within the educational setting prior to exclusion being used by the school. At this stage staff from the Home will liaise closely with



school staff in order to provide additional support to the young person during this period of difficulty. All action taken at this time will be recorded in the young person's individual records and the Personal Education Plan (PEP) will be amended to reflect the changed circumstances.

However, there may well be situations whereby the school has no option but to exclude the young person without warning, for example in response to an isolated incident of a very serious nature. Examples of this would include a serious assault on another pupil or member of staff or the taking of illegal substances into school.

It is important that any young person who is excluded, and other young people in the home do not view exclusion from school as an extended holiday. A criticism often levelled at young people who are Looked After is that too frequently young people have no routine, they are frequently not at school, get up when they please, and at best, spend their days unoccupied and bored. Establishing a balanced approach for young people will achieve positive outcomes.

On those occasions where a young person is permanently excluded from school, staff from the Home will work closely with the placing authority to identify an appropriate alternative educational placement.

4. Safeguarding in Schools

Young people who are Looked After are a vulnerable group. Staff, in the school, should all be aware of the systems in place that will support safeguarding. The aim of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all young people in education should be:

- Protecting them from maltreatment, including emotional, physical abuse and harm; bullying and cyberbullying; upskirting [1]; sexting [2] (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); sexual harassment, etc.
- Preventing any impairment of their mental or physical health or development;



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- Ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care;
- Being proactive in enabling them to experience positive outcomes.

[1] **Upskirting is against the law**. See also: **GOV.UK, Upskirting: know your rights**

[2] **NSPCC, Sexting: advice for professionals**

An Ofsted thematic review (**Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges (Ofsted)**) identified substantial levels of sexual harassment for both girls (90%) and boys (nearly 50%) – usually in unsupervised settings. Sexual harassment and sexual violence exist on a continuum and may overlap. Where the latter occurs, there could be a criminal offence committed.

The Ofsted Review also recognised a wide variety of behaviours that children and young people told (them) happened online including:

- Receiving unsolicited explicit photographs or videos, for example ‘dick pics’;
- Sending, or being pressured to send, nude and semi-nude photographs or videos (‘nudes’);
- Being sent or shown solicited or unsolicited online explicit material, such as pornographic videos.

Keeping Children Safe in Education notes that with regard to sexual harassment, all adults working with young people are advised to maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’ and must respond to all reports and concerns about sexual violence and/or sexual harassment, including online behaviour and incidents that have happened outside the school/college. This could include picking-up information from other pupils.

All staff supporting in the Homes should ensure they give young people time and space to check with them that school is going satisfactorily – not necessarily relying on their



school to make them aware. The Ofsted report reflected that schools were often unaware of the levels of sexual harassment.

Nevertheless, the **Ofsted thematic Review** also reflected that children said they did not bring events to the attention to staff for fear of losing control over events and the subsequent consequences. Staff should carefully consider this balance of judgement, but always be prepared to monitor and evaluate events with the young person to prevent the likelihood of significant harm to them.

The staff should discuss serious issues further with the young person's social worker when concerned; it may be that there is a safeguarding issue (see **Referring Safeguarding Concerns Policy**).

There should be staff (usually the Designated Teacher or the SEN coordinator) who will be able to share with you information about:

- The school's child protection policy and procedures;
- The Data Protection Act and safeguarding;
- The behaviour policy;
- The staff behaviour policy (code of conduct);
- The safeguarding response to young people who go missing from education.

Staff should be made aware how to share and respond to any allegations and concerns about an adult's behaviour, no matter how small, and who this should be reported to and that this should be done without delay.

Staff codes of conduct and safeguarding policies should explain what constitutes an allegation and what a low-level concern is and the importance of sharing concerns.

For supporting resources on low level concerns, see also: **NSPCC, Responding to Low Level Concerns in Education**.



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They will also explain that staff must report any concerns regarding Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), modern slavery, trafficking, or exploitation.

5. Arrangements for Education

Arrangements for a young person's education will be outlined in their Care Plan, Pathway Plan and / or their Placement Plan. The young persons' key worker must ensure young people have the necessary clothing, equipment, funds and transport to meet the requirements of their educational placement.

Arrangements for education will be reviewed at every statutory Child in Care Review meeting and at their PEP meetings.

Further Information

Legislation, Statutory Guidance and Government Non-Statutory Guidance

[Promoting the Education of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children \(DfE\)](#)

[Promoting the Education of Children with a Social Worker: Virtual School Head Role Extension](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education \(DfE\)](#)

[Designated Teacher for Looked-after and Previously Looked-after Children \(DfE\)](#)