



## LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND POST 18 STUDENTS POLICY

Updated June 2022  
Approved by the Principal

**This policy refers to and should be read in conjunction with the following policies:**

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy
- General Data Protection Regulation Policy

### 1. Definition

- 1.1 Please note this policy also applies to young people who were formerly looked after and who are currently looked after.
- 1.2 This policy refers to young people who are Looked After as defined by the Children Act 1989. That is those learners who are under the age of 18 and are:
- The subject of an interim or full time care or emergency protection order
  - Unaccompanied minors who are asylum seekers
  - Accommodated by a local authority with the agreement of their parent(s) or legal guardian
  - Compulsorily accommodated as a result of criminal proceedings
  - Living with foster parents
  - Living in a secure unit
- A large number of young people in care will have a history of physical, sexual or emotional abuse. Some may have suffered the death of a parent, or have parents who can't look after them properly because of illness. Others may have disabilities and many different needs. A very small number are in care because of the crimes they have committed.
  - Young people come into care by two main routes:
    - because the parents have asked for this help or
    - because the child is in danger of being harmed
    - the child could be an unaccompanied asylum seeker, with no responsible adult to care for them

### 2. Legislation

- 2.1 Under section 20 of the Children Act 1989: where parents have asked for help, because for some reason their child can no longer stay at home suitable accommodation for the child will be provided. Parental responsibility remains with the parent/guardian.

- 2.2 Under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 if the child is in danger of being harmed, a court will make a care order. The court will take all the circumstances into careful consideration before doing this. When a care order is made, children's services acquire parental responsibility and become a legal parent alongside the parent/guardian.
- 2.3 Between the ages of sixteen to eighteen a young person who has been Looked After may be expected to begin the transition towards independent living to become a Young Care Leaver. They may move into supported lodgings or into a bedsit or flat depending on the provision available. From the age of sixteen they will be supported by their Local Authority Leaving Care Team.
- 2.4 Children may enter care for all sorts of reasons, many enter because they have been abused or neglected.

### **3. Introduction**

- 3.1 Although there has been a slight improvement in outcomes for Looked After Children over the past years, they remain significantly lower than those for all children, and the gap is not narrowing.
- 3.2 Post 16 Providers can play a significant part in ensuring that Looked After Children aged 16 to 18 are enabled to participate and be successful in education.
- 3.3 Supporting Looked After Children to succeed and progress to further education, higher education, employment and a better future is a priority for Big Creative Academy. This policy is in conjunction the Academy's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- 3.4 General principles adopted are:
  - a) Learner focus to inform support offer and delivery at all times
  - b) The Academy will produce information about the Looked After Children support offer in handout and electronic formats and make them available through website and to all concerned parties
  - c) Keep accurate records of contacts and support
  - d) Collaborate with the Local Authority and to ensure accurate identification of Looked After Children and ensure all details remain updated.
  - e) Offer and deliver all appropriate support to enable successful transition to further education, successful learning and achievement and further progression to higher education or work

### **4. Identification of Looked After Children**

- 4.1 London has many children that are placed by London Boroughs and information about Looked After Children is not readily available. Requests will be made to Local Authorities to provide details of Looked After Children who have enrolled on courses at the Academy, on a termly basis.

## 5. Designated Members of Staff with Responsibility for Looked After Children

### 5.1 Responsibilities of the senior management team will include:

- Ensure that the Academy has a lead with responsibility for Looked After Children
- Be responsible for the writing and updating of the Academy's Looked After Children policy
- Inform the senior leadership team of the progress of Looked After Children on a regular basis

### 5.2 The designated lead will:

- Liaise with local authorities to ensure that the Academy is aware of all learners who have Looked After Children status during their period of study at Big Creative Academy and for as long as necessary afterwards
- Ensure that staff with Looked After Children responsibility receive appropriate training
- On identification, ensure that the transition to College is as smooth as possible for these learners through an Induction programme which takes account of their particular needs
- Review learners' progress regularly and refer to targeted support if appropriate
- Liaise with Tutors to ensure attendance is monitored and, if necessary, that the Welfare Officer has implemented effective support.

#### Pre-entry:

- a) Looked After Children identified during enrolment will be contacted by the Designated Teacher for Looked after Children (LAC) with offer of support and clear outline of support available, including 16-19 Vulnerable Bursary, specialist support, support at interviews, tours of the building and liaison with the key worker/dedicated guardian.
- b) The Designated Teacher will obtain information about the child's legal status and parental contact arrangements.

#### In-course:

- a) Designated Teacher for LAC will regularly follow up contact with Looked After Child to check on progression and reiterate support offer; and follow up contact with the Course Manager to check on progression and identify any support needs
- b) The Designated teacher will update the DSL records with details of child's social worker and name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.
- c) The Designated Teacher for LAC will record progress in the Looked After Child's Personal Education Plan (PEP) and will chair a progress meeting each term, inviting representatives from the Local Authority, the Looked After Child's family/guardians and the Course Manager or Classroom Teachers.
- d) The Designated teacher for LAC will work with the school's virtual school head to decide how best to use funding to support the progress of the LAC student meet needs identified in the PEP.

End of course:

- a) The Careers Officer will meet with the Looked After Child to produce a progression plan and to support with applications. Feedback will be obtained from the Looked After Child about support offer and delivery.

## **6. Care Leavers**

- 6.1 The Local authority will appoint personal advisers for young people who become care leavers.
- 6.2 The Designated teacher will obtain details of the personal adviser appointed to support the care leaver
- 6.3 The Designated teacher will liaise with the personal adviser regarding any concerns affecting the care leaver.
- 6.4 The DSL will have oversight of this

## **7. Equality and Diversity**

- 7.1 Big Creative Academy is committed to promoting and celebrating the diversity of all our community. Please see the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy.

## **8. Data Protection**

- 8.1 All data relating to Looked After Children will be held in accordance with the Academy's General Data Protection Regulation Policy. Information on Looked After Children will be held for the specific purpose of enabling the Academy to put in place any specific support, guidance and advice which these learners may need.
- 8.2 Students can give permission for this information to be given to all staff who deal with them. Otherwise the information will only be shared on a "need to know basis" and only with appropriate staff, such as the PA to the Principal and Course Leads.
- 8.3 Information about Looked After Children will be stored on the MIS database.