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## **BCT Looked After Children (LAC) Policy**

### **1. PURPOSE AND INTRODUCTION**

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

This policy also applies to young people who were formerly looked after for at least a year.

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

Although there has been an improvement in outcomes for Looked After Children over the past years, they remain significantly lower than those for all children. The percentage of LAC achieving the threshold in English and Maths GCSE at grade 5 or above was 7.2% in 2019 (*Source: NSPCC*).

Many 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 appropriately because of illness, disability welfare needs.

This policy complements BCT's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The Director of Operations has responsibility to ensure that BCT has a named lead for Looked After Children.

### **2. LEGISLATION**

2.1 Under section 20 of the Children Act 1989: where parents have asked for help when 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 completed, children's services acquire parental responsibility



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and become a legal parent ('The Corporate Parent') alongside the parent/guardian. This policy refers to and should be read in conjunction with the following policies Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy .

2.3 Between the ages of sixteen to eighteen a young person who has been Looked After will be expected to begin the transition towards independent living to become a Care Leaver. They may move into supported accommodation or into social housing depending on the provision available. From the age of eighteen they will be supported by their Local Authority Leaving Care Team.

#### 4. THE POLICY

4.1 Big Creative Training's approach to supporting the achievements of Looked After Children and Care Leavers will focus on:

- Pre-entry: Looked After Children identified during enrolment will be contacted by the DSL (DT for LAC) with an offer of support and a clear outline of support available, including 16-19 Bursary and specialist support.
- In-course: DSL will regularly follow up contact with Looked After Child to check on progression and reiterate support offer; and follow up contact with the teaching team to check on progression and identify any support needs
- The DSL will record progress and will attend Personal Education Plan meetings (PEP) with representatives from the Local Authority and the young person's carers/guardians.
- End of course: The Careers Officer will meet with the Looked After Child to produce a progression plan and to support applications.

4.2 Big Creative Training's Designated Safeguarding Lead is also the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children. The **designated teacher** for Looked After Children will:

- Liaise with local authorities to ensure that BCT is aware of all learners who have LAC status during their period of study
- Ensure that staff with LAC responsibility receive appropriate training
- On identification, ensure that the transition to college is as smooth as possible for the learners
- Review learners' progress regularly and refer to targeted support if appropriate
- Liaise with Tutors to ensure attendance is monitored and, if necessary, that effective support is implemented
- Keep detailed and accurate records of progress and attainment, as well as the impact of interventions put in place for the learner.
- Be responsible for the writing and updating of the Looked After Children policy
- Inform the senior leadership team of the progress of Looked After Children on a regular basis



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## 5. THE LAC OFFER AT BIG CREATIVE TRAINING

5.1 Big Creative Training is committed to supporting Looked After Children to succeed and progress to further education, higher education, employment and a better future.

5.2 All Looked After Children and Care Leavers will be offered the following support package upon completing enrolment on a course at Big Creative Training:

- Monthly Life Skills group intervention
  - Bespoke sessions on Budgeting, Cooking, Mental Health, Hygiene and more
  - Small group environment to foster a safe space where you can ask questions and confide in us
- Birthday & Christmas hampers
- Vulnerable 16-19 Bursary
- Additional Trips & Enrichment Activities (fun & non-academic)
- 1:1 support with Safeguarding/LAC officer
- Internal Counselling & Mentoring if needed
- Attendance support
- Advocacy support if needed with external agencies

We understand that the pathway to adulthood can be scary and confusing. We are here to support you with any questions and queries that you may have about your future, no matter how small.

## 6. POLICY REVIEW

The BCT senior management team is responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy. Previous versions of the policy are to be kept to demonstrate progress and developments made

<b>Date Updated</b>	<b>To Review</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
July 2025	Jul 2027	AMq