



**essa**

**Foundation  
Academies Trust**

**LAC POLICY**

Date Reviewed: November 2019

Next Review: April 2021

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## **Essa - Looked After Child Policy**

### **Vision**

Our vision is to provide our children with the best opportunity to achieve their potential and develop into independent learners, irrespective of their background, culture, ethnic origin, religion or any other status.

Essa Trust is an open, friendly learning community where everybody is valued and has a voice. In partnership with all stakeholders we aim to equip our children to live safe, healthy, fulfilling lives, enabling them to achieve success 'right from the start' both today and in the future.

**Our LAC Designated Teacher is Russell Kinch for Essa Primary and Jodie Milburn (milburnj@efatrust.org) for Secondary and our LAC Designated Governor is Nigel Whittle.**

Our Admissions Policy reflects the needs of LAC.

Essa Trust Academy understands that Looked After Children (LAC) both nationally and locally are known to significantly underachieve, have poorer educational outcomes and remain at greater risk of educational and social exclusion compared with their non-looked after peers.

We work in close partnership with external services and Bolton's virtual head (Mikaela Wallace-Bannon) as well, more information about their services can be found on their website (<https://www.bolton.gov.uk/children-care/educational-support-looked-children/1>). We understand that in partnership with children's social care services, we play a major role in ensuring that Looked After Children are encouraged to achieve, to be healthy, to stay safe, to enjoy their lives and to have high expectations of their lives to come. Our approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children is based on the following principles:

Essa Trust Academy will ensure every Looked After Child has an up to date Personal Education Plan (PEP) which will:

1. be compiled within a multi-agency PEP meeting;
2. monitor and promote good attendance;
3. involve the pupil in its planning;
4. maintain high expectations for Looked After Children;
5. identify areas of concern in the child's education and work proactively to address them;
6. in partnership with pupils, social workers and carers ensure the LAC Pupil Premium + (PPG) is spent efficiently and effectively on individual Looked After Children and that both its use and its effect is recorded within PEP minutes;

7. promote inclusion by challenging and changing stereotyped attitudes towards Looked After Children and the care system;
8. provide stability and continuity within pupils' education;
9. intervene early in concerns and ensure all partner agencies are informed and involved;
10. be aware that Looked After Children may be experiencing emotional upset in their life;
11. encourage them to seek practical and emotional support within the school, listen to them and if necessary signpost them to find additional help and support;
12. avoid permanently excluding Looked After Children by ensuring that all agencies have delivered their services and been fully consulted prior to consideration of such an exclusion.

Essa Academy Trust and our governing body are committed to helping every Looked After Child to achieve the highest levels they can, including supporting and promoting aspirations to achieve in their further and higher education.

Improved achievement will be measured by monitoring classroom progress, attainment, achievements and attendance which we monitor and report on via the PEP and the Virtual School Portal. We respond promptly and accurately to requests for attainment data and other relevant information requested by the Bolton LAC Virtual School.

For our Looked After Children we will also:

1. ensure a Designated Teacher of suitable seniority is identified and enabled to carry out the responsibilities as set out below;
2. identify a governor as Designated Governor for Looked After Children;
3. identify and champion the needs of Looked After Children, raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them, and ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible.

#### **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE KEY PROFESSIONALS**

The Governing Body of Essa Trust Academy will:

1. identify a nominated governor to represent the interests of Looked After Children and ensure that the governor is fully trained on the requirements of their role and associated legal issues;
2. be aware of and understand the statutory guidance applicable to the education of Looked After Children
3. ensure all school policies and procedures support Looked After Children's needs, including the school's admissions policy;
4. request performance data on Looked After Children at every governors meeting;
5. work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school by Looked After Children;
6. ensure that the school has an identified Designated LAC Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher has enough resource and authority to carry out his or her responsibilities;
7. commission from the Designated Teacher an annual report setting out the achievements/attendance etc of the schools looked after pupil population.

#### **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRINCIPAL**

The Principal of Essa Trust Academy will:

1. identify a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children, whose role is set out as below. It is essential that another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or be away from school for any length of time;
2. ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusion of Looked After Children and take immediate action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations;
3. be able to report on the progress, attendance and achievements of Looked After Children;
4. ensure that all staff in the school receives relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related legislation and guidance.

### **THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER**

Government Guidance states that the statutory role of the designated teacher should be delivered by “someone with sufficient authority to make things happen... [who] should be an advocate for Looked After Children, assessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them.”

At Essa Trust Academy our Designated LAC Teacher will undertake the following tasks:

1. Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their Carer, using the Personal Education Plan to plan for their transition in consultation with the child’s Carer, their social worker and associated professionals.
2. Ensure that a Personal Education Planning meeting is held and actions from it inform the statutory care review.
3. Track and monitor the academic progress of Looked After Children within the school and target support appropriately. Ensure relevant academic monitoring information is uploaded termly into the Bolton Virtual Schools Portal.
4. Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing sensitive personal information with teaching staff on a need to know basis.
5. Encourage Looked After Children to join in extra-curricular activities and access out of school learning opportunities.
6. Ensure (when appropriate) the attendance of pupils at their PEP and Looked After review meetings.
7. Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of Looked After Children and informing the delivery of any sensitive school work (such as Family Tree lessons).
8. Liaise with all professionals and agencies who are working with the pupil(s).
9. Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and – if the pupil changes school – to a new school.
10. Be pro-active in supporting transitions and associated planning when moving to a new phase in education.
11. Promote inclusion in all areas of school life.
12. Be aware that many Looked After Pupils say they are bullied, so will actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school’s anti-bullying policy.
13. Ensure that requests for information that come from the Virtual Schools are responded to quickly.

14. Ensure awareness of available grants and bursaries available to Looked After Children.
15. Ensure that all school staff have relevant training for Looked After Children's needs and of this policy, to enable them to positively promote their education.
16. Act as a champion for Looked After Children and advocate for them in school.
17. In consultation with the pupil's social worker, ensure an informed Personal Education Planning meeting is held within 20 days of the child entering the school and that the plan is designed, implemented and regularly reviewed twice per year for every Looked After Child (in line with Bolton's guidance on Personal Education Plans).