

Education of Care Experienced Children policy

Document Owner	DEMAT Inclusion Lead
Last updated	September 2022
Version number	1
Review due	September 2024

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1. Definitions

Under the Children Act 1989, children in care are looked after by a Local Authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the Local Authority. This can happen under a number of arrangements.

- Children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- Children who are the subject of a Care Order (section 31) or Interim Care Order (section 38)
- Children who are subject to emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
- Children who are compulsorily accommodated - this includes children remanded to the Local Authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21)
- Children who have previously been in care include those children that are no longer in care through:
 - Adoption
 - A Special Guardianship Order (SGO)
 - A Child Arrangement Order (CAO)

2. Application of this Policy

The policy is applicable to all employees (permanent and temporary) of DEMAT. Where applicable, it is also applicable to all Volunteers supporting DEMAT.

The above definitions are included for reference purposes for both Academy and Central Team staff to enable clarify and transparency when applying this policy.

3. Relationship with DEMAT Values

The application of this policy must be always applied in a way that reflects the values of DEMAT and our Christian Ethos:

Love – We engender love and tolerance between and for our staff, pupils, and others to foster an inspiring atmosphere of mutual support.

Community – We are committed to ensuring our academies are a living part of the community and contribute positively to its needs.

Respect – We do everything to provide a caring, safe, and secure place for our staff and pupils to be happy and respected in our academies so they may achieve their potential.

Trust – We acknowledge accountability and responsibility for our actions and ensure that we encourage each other to make brave decisions and then learn from any mistakes.

Ambition – We are determined that our academies offer a place for the joy of learning, enabling those of all abilities to thrive and go on to lead rewarding lives.

4. Purpose and Scope

4.1. Aims of the Policy

All DEMAT Academies will champion the individual needs of all care-experienced children enabling them to learn, aspire, thrive, and achieve their maximum potential.

This will be achieved by:

- Placing the highest priority on their education
- Promoting regular attendance
- Having high expectations and aspirations
- Promoting access and inclusion in all areas of Academy life
- Promoting stability and continuity
- Supporting early intervention
- Valuing the voice of the child
- Promoting social, emotional, and mental health and well-being
- Working in partnership with parents, carers, social workers, and other professionals

4.2 . Guiding Principles

- The voice of the child is of paramount importance.
- All care-experienced children will receive high quality education, which is inspiring and challenging, resulting in the best possible outcomes, thus closing the educational gap between these children and those who are not care experienced.
- Every care-experienced child will have a positive educational experience which promotes social and emotional learning and wellbeing alongside academic success to ensure readiness for adulthood.
- All DEMAT pupils are entitled to a knowledge-rich curriculum where knowledge is valued, specified, well sequenced, and taught to be remembered.
- All DEMAT Academies will meet the needs of care-experienced children through effective liaison and integrated work with all key partners including the relevant Virtual Academy.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1. The DEMAT Trust Board

Are committed to promoting improved educational life chances for all care-experienced children. They will ensure that the Designated Teacher for children in care has qualified teacher status, appropriate seniority and sufficient time and experience to fulfil this statutory role.

5.2 . Local Governing Body

A named governor for each Academy will be nominated to link with the Designated Teacher and all governors will be fully aware of the statutory guidance for care-experienced children.

5.3. DEMAT Inclusion Lead

The DEMAT Inclusion Lead will liaise with Headteachers to ensure that all Designated Teachers receive the appropriate training. In addition, Trust wide aggregated information on the effectiveness of this policy will be collected and presented to the CEO and Trust Board.

5.4 . The Headteacher

The Head Teacher and nominated governor will monitor the role of the Designated Teacher to ensure that all care-experienced children make accelerated and rapid progress and that the whole Academy staff have relevant skills, knowledge and understanding.

Regular communication between the Head Teacher and Governing Body and the Designated Teacher should include:

- The number of care-experienced children on roll
- Compliance and quality of individual children's Personal Education Plan (for Children in Care)
- The use and impact of the Pupil Premium Plus grant in raising educational outcomes
- Attendance and exclusion data (in comparison to children who are not care-experienced)
- Progress and attainment data (in comparison to children who are not care-experienced)
- Destinations for care-experienced children
- Promoting the Education of Looked-after Children and Previously Looked-after Children

5.5. The Designated Teacher (DT) and Designation Person (DP)

The Designated Teacher and Designated Person of will:

- Have a full understanding of relevant statutory guidance and attend relevant training as required.
- Have a lead responsibility in promoting and raising the educational achievement of every care-experienced child on roll.
- Ensure every child in care has a high quality up to date Personal Education Plan (PEP) and regularly monitor the progress towards desirable outcomes.
- Monitor the effective spend of the pupil premium plus grant to maximise educational outcomes for children in care.
- Ensure the social, emotional, mental health and well-being needs of care-experienced children are recognised and prioritised.
- Take the lead responsibility for helping all Academy staff to understand the factors that can affect how care-experienced children learn and achieve, any barriers they might face and the impact of trauma and poor attachments.
- Act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and individuals in relation to care-experienced children.
- Share confidential and personal information on a need-to-know basis only.
- Actively encourage and promote home learning and extra-curricular activities.
- Recognise the impact of transition and plan accordingly.

5.6. Academy staff

DEMAT staff will ensure their part in embedding a 'care-experienced children friendly culture'. This may include attending training, referring to the Designated Teacher for advice and sharing accurate information and data with the Designated Teacher.

6. Policy and Processes

6.1. Staff Development and Training

The Designated Teacher and Designated Person must be trained for the role when they come to post and will continue to support them to access ongoing professional development pertinent to the role.

All staff are encouraged to participate in training that will enable them to meet the needs of care-experienced children more effectively and the Designated Teacher will raise awareness of typical issues and barriers for these children at a whole academy level.

6.2. Admissions

In line with national guidance all DEMAT Academies prioritise the admission of care-experienced children.

The importance of a thorough and planned transition is recognised, and this may include:

- Transition meetings between Academies.
- The swift transfer of information between Academies.
- Additionally, Academy visits and identification of staff mentor and/or peer buddy.
- Additional support and planning for care-experienced children at times of transition.
- Structured activities to 'say goodbye', in recognition of the impact of broken attachments and loss.

6.3 . Attendance and Punctuality

Academy attendance procedures will reflect the specific needs of care-experienced children. This may include reasonable adjustments such as celebrating 100% attendance despite incidents of non-attendance due to care placement moves.

Where there is a concern about attendance or punctuality the Designated Teacher will speak to the child, carer / parent, social worker, and other relevant professionals including the Virtual Academy where a child is in care.

6.4 . Suspensions and Exclusion

DEMAT Academies will make every effort to avoid excluding a care-experienced child, in recognition of the impact of their early experiences, but do retain the right to exclude where necessary.

If the child is in care, before acting, the rationale for suspension or exclusion will be discussed with the relevant Virtual Academy. The Virtual Academy may be contacted for advice if the child was previously in care, with consent from the carers / parents. If there is no option other than suspension, then every attempt to reduce the number of days of the suspension and ensure that educational provision is in place from day one (for children in care).

6.5. Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)

Where a care experienced child is allocated pupil premium plus, it is to be used for the benefit of their educational needs through:

- The allocation of PP+ promotes high aspirations and seeks to secure the best educational outcomes.

- The extra funding provided by the PP+ reflects the significant additional barriers faced by Children and Young People in care.
- For children in care, the allocation of PP+ will be linked to clear desirable outcomes as identified in the Personal Education Plan (PEP).

7. Legislation

The Children Act 1989, as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010.

8. Associated Policies and Documents

This Policy/Procedure should be read in conjunction with the following DEMAT Policies/Procedures:
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

- DEMAT Exclusions Policy
- DEMAT Behaviour Policy
- DEMAT Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

9. Version control

No.	Status of document/changes	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Approved by	Date of approval	Date of review
1.	Published	DEMAT Inclusion Lead	CEO	CEO	14/09/2022	Annual

This policy will be reviewed on a biennial basis.