# Child in Care Policy

## Contents

## 1. Introduction and Purpose

Hatton Academies Trust is committed to securing excellent outcomes for Children in Care (CIC), Previously Looked After Children (PLAC), and Internationally Adopted Previously Looked After Children (IAPLAC). This policy provides a clear framework for admissions, Personal Education Plans (PEPs), Pupil Premium Plus (PP+), exclusions, safeguarding and attendance, and monitoring, consistent with the current edition of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023).

## 2. Scope and Linked Policies

This policy applies to all HAT academies and staff. It should be read alongside: Child Protection Policy; Safeguarding Handbook; Behaviour Policy; SEND Policy; Attendance Policy; Online Safety Policy; and Admissions Policy.

## 3. Definitions

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is in care by a local authority if he or she is in their care or is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority.  They include the following:

• CIC: Child in the care of, or accommodated by, a local authority under the Children Act 1989.

• PLAC: Child who was looked after but left care through adoption, special guardianship, or child arrangements order.

• IAPLAC: Child previously in state care outside England who has been adopted (Admissions Code priority).

## 4. Policy Aims and Principles

• High expectations with targeted support and early intervention.
• Trauma-informed, inclusive practice; co-production with carers and social workers.
• Strong partnership with the Virtual School Head (VSH) and external agencies.

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

| Role | Key Duties |
| --- | --- |
| Board of Directors or Local Governing Body (if applicable) | Approve policy; receive annual report on attainment, attendance, exclusions, PP+ impact; monitor compliance. |
| Principal | Ensure implementation; support Designated Teacher (DT); ensure staff awareness and training. |

| Designated Teacher (DT) | Attend CIC reviews, Lead PEP process; track progress; liaise with VSH/DSL/carers; champion high aspirations; report termly. |
|---|---|
| DSL | Coordinate safeguarding for CIC/PLAC/IAPLAC; monitor persistent absence/behaviour; ensure risk assessments. |
| Virtual School Head (VSH) | Provide advice; quality assure PEPs; oversee PP+ for CIC; support schools with PLAC/IAPLAC. |

## 6. Procedures

### 6a. Admissions
When oversubscribed, academies will give highest priority to CIC, PCIC and IAPCIC in line with the School Admissions Code (2021). Admissions should be prompt to minimise disruption; request records immediately and arrange a transition meeting including the DT, DSL, carer and (where applicable) social worker/Virtual School.

### 6b. Personal Education Plans (PEPs)
Each CIC must have a high-quality PEP reviewed termly. The DT leads PEP development with the child, carer, social worker and VSH. PEPs set academic, attendance and wider achievement targets; identify support; and record PP+ funding decisions. For PCIC/IAPCIC, schools should use internal plans to record support funded via PP+.

### 6c. Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)
For 2024/25, PP+ is £2,630 per eligible pupil. For CIC, PP+ is managed by the VSH via the PEP; for PCIC/IAPCIC, PP+ is allocated to schools via the census. PP+ must be used to improve attainment, attendance, inclusion and mental health/wellbeing, and schools should evidence impact through termly reviews and the annual governor report.

### 6d. Exclusions
Follow DfE Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance (2023). Notify the VSH and (where applicable) social worker without delay. Consider reasonable adjustments and alternatives before exclusion; ensure educational continuity and a reintegration plan.

### 6e. Safeguarding and Attendance
Persistent absence and repeated suspensions can indicate safeguarding risk. The DT and DSL will review attendance and behaviour data for CIC/PCIC/IAPCIC, complete risk and needs assessments when concerns arise, and coordinate multi-agency support in line with KCSIE and Working Together.

For each academic year pupil premium plus funding is in place for each child. This is administered by Northamptonshire County Council Virtual School Headteacher and will be issued once appropriate plans are submitted and approved.

The Pupil Premium Plus will be provided to meet the needs identified in a high-quality plan in the PEP with clear quantitative [and exceptionally qualitative] targets for improvement, underpinned by well-targeted support.

The Pupil Premium Plus should be used to improve outcomes for children in:

- Academic achievement and progress

- Wider achievement e.g., in an area in which the child is gifted and talented

- Attendance

- Inclusion, by reducing internal and external exclusion

- Social skills and emotional aspects related to learning

- Transition into the next key stage and/or a new learning provider

- Mental health (including overcoming the effects of attachment and developmental trauma) where this affects learning

- Out of hours activities that support any of the above.

## 7. Monitoring and Reporting

Within each Trust academy, the Designated Teacher and Principal will keep the working of the policy under review and will report to the CEO and the Trust Safeguarding Committee.

Each academy will provide an annual report to the Board of Directors covering: numbers on roll; attainment and progress; attendance; exclusions; PP+ use and impact; key safeguarding themes; and actions taken. Termly summaries should inform SEF/Improvement Plans at each academy.

The CEO will report to the Board of Directors on the Trust's provision for CIC/PCIC and evaluate procedures.  The annual report to the CEO (Appendix A for areas within report linked to CIC/PCIC) will form the basis of this evaluation.

Quality Assurance proformas for the Trust and individual academy's evaluation of provision for CIC is given in Appendix B and C.

Appendix B is to be completed termly for each CIC pupil by Designated Teacher, and uploaded to CPOMS/My Concern.

Appendix C is to be completed for 20% CIC pupils termly by Designated Teacher, and quality-assured by the Principal.

Feedback on each PEP from Virtual Schools uploaded to CPOMS/ My Concern.

Actions noted following quality assurance activities, will be used to inform:

- Academy SEF
- Improvement planning
- Trust-level safeguarding/CEO reporting

**8. Statutory References**

- KCSIE (current edition): https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023): https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2

- School Admissions Code (2021): https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2

- DfE Exclusions Guidance (2023): https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion

- PP+ rate confirmation (2024/25): https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-04-24/23390

- North Northamptonshire Council: Personal Education Plans: Early Years and statutory school age (2026): https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/virtual-school/personal-education-plans-early-years-and-statutory-school-age

## 9. Appendices

### Appendix A: CEO Report Template

1) Numbers on roll (CIC/PCIC/IAPCIC) and Local Authorities involved.

2) Attainment & progress (headline, gaps, interventions).

3) Attendance (PA %, actions taken).

4) Exclusions (number, reasons, mitigations, reintegration).

5) PP+ spend and impact (attainment, attendance, inclusion, wellbeing).

6) Safeguarding themes and actions (risk assessments, multi-agency work).

7) Improvement priorities for the next term/year.

### Appendix B: Designated Teacher Termly Checklist per CIC Pupil

| | |
|---|---|
| Child Details<br>Child Name:<br>Year Group:<br>Local Authority:<br>Carer:<br>Social Worker:<br>Virtual School Contact:<br>DT completing form:<br>Term: | PEP Compliance<br>☐ PEP completed this term<br>☐ All sections completed to expected standard<br>☐ Child voice included meaningfully<br>☐ PP+ spend recorded and aligned to needs<br>☐ Actions from previous PEP reviewed |
| Attendance & Inclusion<br>☐ Attendance reviewed this term<br>☐ Persistent absence identified (<=90%)<br>☐ Actions in place for PA<br>☐ Suspensions recorded this term<br>☐ Reintegration plan completed (if applicable)<br>☐ Concerns escalated to DSL | Academic Progress<br>☐ Progress reviewed this term<br>☐ SMART academic targets set<br>☐ Targeted interventions in place<br>☐ Impact of PP+ interventions reviewed |
| Multi-Agency Involvement<br>☐ Carer engaged this term<br>☐ Social worker engaged this term<br>☐ VSH engaged in PEP<br>☐ Minutes uploaded to safeguarding system | Transitions<br>☐ Transition plan in place<br>☐ Key meetings completed |
| Summary & Required Actions<br>Key priorities next term:<br>Immediate safeguarding concerns:<br>Actions for DT/DSL/Teachers: | |

**HAT - PEP Quality Assurance Rubric (Termly for sample for 20% of PEPs)**

| PEP Area | Statement | RAG rating Red-Emerging Amber-Securing Green-Strong |
|---|---|---|
| Child Voice | Child voice recorded clearly | |
| | Aspirations reflected in actions | |
| Academic / Attainment | SMART targets linked to baseline data | |
| | Attendance target included | |
| | Progress data and review evidence | |
| PP+ Planning & Impact | PP+ linked to needs | |
| | Evidence-based rationale | |
| | Impact evaluated | |
| Multi-Agency Involvement | SW, carer, VSH contributions documented | |
| | Responsibilities clearly assigned | |
| Implementation Plan Quality | Actions aligned to needs | |
| | Timelines and roles identified | |
| Overall Quality Rating | | |

Areas of strength:

Areas for Development:

Recommended Actions for next term: