Isha Academy

Looked After Children Policy

Introduction

Isha Academy, as a homeschooling and tuition centre, is committed to providing high-quality education for all students, ensuring equality of opportunity, access, and outcomes. We recognise the educational challenges that looked-after and previously looked-after children may face and are dedicated to implementing best practices outlined in the **Department for Education's (DfE) Guidance on Promoting the Education of Looked After Children (2018)**.

This policy ensures that Isha Academy provides:

- **High expectations** for looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- **An inclusive environment** that promotes stability and continuity.
- **Early intervention** and prioritisation of support.
- **A listening and supportive culture** that values the voice of the child.

Role and Responsibility of the Designated Teacher

The **Designated Teacher's** role is to:

- Act as the **central point of contact** for looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- Ensure **joined-up communication** between tutors, carers, social workers, and Virtual School Heads (VSHs).
- Promote a **whole-centre culture** of high expectations and personalised learning.
- Ensure staff understand the **emotional and social needs** of looked-after children, particularly regarding attachment awareness.
- Work with staff to:
    - Set **high academic targets** and monitor progress.
    - Support students in managing **transitions between learning environments**.
    - Ensure **Personal Education Plans (PEPs)** are developed and reviewed regularly.
    - Involve parents, carers, and social workers in key educational decisions.
    - Provide training on **effective strategies** for supporting looked-after children.

Supporting Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

At Isha Academy, we ensure:

- **All staff are aware** of the unique challenges faced by looked-after children.
- Children are **treated as individuals** and not stigmatised.
- Staff receive **training in trauma-informed teaching** to understand the impact of loss and separation.
- We actively support students to:
    - Engage in **extra-curricular and enrichment activities**.
    - Take part in **decision-making** about their education.
    - Plan for their **future education and career pathways**.

Educational Support and Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

Each looked-after child attending Isha Academy has a **Personal Education Plan (PEP)**, which outlines:

- **Academic support** and interventions.
- **Emotional and social development** strategies.
- **Targeted resources**, including tuition support or one-to-one mentoring.
- **Transition planning** for changes in learning environments or education stages.

The Designated Teacher will liaise with social workers and Virtual School Heads to ensure that the PEP is regularly reviewed and updated.

Monitoring Progress and Attendance

- **Attendance and punctuality** are closely monitored to ensure consistency in learning.
- The Designated Teacher reviews **academic progress** termly and reports concerns to the leadership team.
- Any safeguarding concerns are **immediately escalated** in line with the **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**.

Training and Professional Development

To effectively support looked-after children, Isha Academy ensures:

- The **Designated Teacher** receives **ongoing professional development** in supporting vulnerable learners.
- Staff receive **regular training** on attachment awareness, mental health support, and trauma-informed teaching.
- Staff are **informed of their responsibilities** in supporting looked-after children's education and well-being.

Review and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed **annually** to ensure it reflects the latest best practices and statutory guidance. Any changes will be shared with staff, parents, and external stakeholders.

Review Date: Autumn 2027
