

Berridge Primary & Nursery School



Child In Care

Reviewed by Governors: Spring 2026

School Policy for Children in Care (CIC)

Designated teacher for Children in Care & Previously Children in Care:

Alison Aldridge

Governor with responsibility for CIC & Previously CIC: Maj Hussain

Virtual school head is Jasmin Howell

Berridge Primary and Nursery School recognises that all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broad-based curriculum and aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in public care. The school and the governing body endorses Nottingham City Council policy and welcomes Children in Care (CIC) and Previously CIC who may be looked after by our local authority or those who may be in the care of another authority but living in Nottingham City.

This policy includes requirements set out in statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of CIC under 22(3A) of the Children and Young Person's Act 2008, chapter one of the Child and Family Social Work Act 2017; Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children – statutory guidance for local authorities 2018; and associated guidance on the education of children in care.

It also includes requirements set out in statutory guidance on The Designated Teacher for Children in Care and Previously Children in Care, February 2018.

Berridge Primary and Nursery School's approach to encouraging and supporting the educational achievement of CIC and Previously CIC is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education set within an inclusive context which makes reasonable adjustments to ensure a personalised curriculum;
- Listening to the CIC and Previously CIC;
- Working closely with home, voluntary and statutory agencies;
- Promoting attendance, through a programme of early intervention, priority action, reducing exclusions and promoting stability within a positive learning environment;
- Identifying need, including social and emotional as well as learning needs or gifted and talented skills and abilities;
- Targeting support, including accessing resources from other agencies as well as provision from school resources;
- Having high expectations

Rationale – Every Child Matters

Many children and young people who are in care have suffered abuse or neglect. Despite having as broad a range of abilities as their peers, CIC and Previously CIC are particularly vulnerable to underachievement. Barriers to their progress include a high level of disruption and change in school placements, lack of motivation or involvement in extra-curricular activities.

Berridge Primary and Nursery School believes that the educational experience of all children should be positive and powerful and aims to provide a learning environment in which every child in care can be successful. We believe that this school has a major part to play in ensuring that children in care are able to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic wellbeing, in line with Every Child Matters.

Admission Arrangements

The school recognises that due to care arrangements, CIC and Previously CIC may enter school mid-term and that it is important that they are given a positive welcome and where appropriate additional support and pre-entry visits to help them settle.

The school recognises that CIC and Previously CIC are an ‘excepted group’ and will prioritise CIC in the school’s oversubscription criteria following the Department for Education’s School Admissions Code (September 2015).

Support and Resources

The Governing body will ensure that the school allocates resources, including professional time and expertise, to support appropriate provision for CIC and Previously CIC, meeting the objectives set out in this policy.

Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher

The duties of the Designated Teacher will include:

- Ensuring that CIC and Previously CIC are welcomed into the school; necessary meetings are held and arrangements are put in place to ensure their needs identified and met. This may include providing basic equipment and resources if necessary and providing appropriate support in meeting uniform requirements if needed;
- Maintaining an up-to-date record of the CIC and Previously CIC in school, including those in the care of other authorities and ensuring all necessary information is passed to other staff as required;
- Monitoring and tracking progress of CIC and Previously CIC in school and intervening if there is evidence of individual underachievement;
- Holding a supervisory brief for all children being looked after and acting as advocate for the CIC and Previously CIC in school;

- Liaising with teaching and non-teaching staff in school, including the person responsible for Safeguarding as well as pastoral and subject staff to ensure they are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage CIC may face;
- Establishing and maintaining regular contact with home, statutory and voluntary agencies;
- Ensuring PEP review meetings are held regularly and information passed to all those concerned, including the local authority;
- Attending training as required to keep fully informed of latest developments and policies regarding children in care.
- Attending all CIC reviews and other Social Care meetings
- Applying for funding to support the needs of CIC & Previously CIC e.g. Pupil Premium Plus

Record Keeping and Information Sharing

The Designated Teacher will keep an up-to-date record of CIC and Previously CIC in school and will ensure that relevant information is made known to appropriate staff.

A Personal Education Plan (PEP) should be initiated within 10 school days of the CIC and Previously CIC starting at the school or being taken into the care of the LA and will be reviewed regularly and as necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the CIC. The PEP will provide a regular opportunity to review progress, note any concerns and ensure all relevant parties are informed accordingly.

Copies of reports and appropriate documentation will be sent to authorised carers and agencies involved with the child as well as any receiving school at point of transition.

It is vital that the CIC and Previously CIC is aware of information being recorded, in what circumstances and who will have access to it. How this is shared with them will depend on their age and level of understanding. The storage of all information will be compliant with GDPR.

Exclusions

Berridge Primary and Nursery School recognises that CIC and Previously CIC are particularly vulnerable to exclusions.

Where a CIC and Previously CIC is at risk of exclusion, the school will try every practicable means to maintain the child in school. A multi-professional meeting will be arranged, bringing together all those involved with the young person to discuss strategies to minimise the risk of exclusion. Nottingham Virtual School (or other Authority Virtual schools, depending where the CIC or Previously CIC has a care order) will be contacted immediately.

The child or young person's PEP will reflect strategies to support the child and where relevant, those employed in other educational support plans.

All relevant measures and resources will be considered to provide support and perhaps alternative educational packages to prevent an exclusion from happening.

Staff Development and Training

Arrangements will be made to ensure that the Designated Teacher is kept up to date with developments relating to the education and attainment of CIC and Previously CIC.

Other staff will receive relevant training and support to enable them to work sympathetically and productively with CIC and Previously CIC, including those who are underachieving or at risk of underachieving; or who have additional needs. These may include being new to English or having English as an additional language; being able, gifted and talented or having learning or physical needs.

Teachers with responsibility for special educational needs provision (SENDCo) and for children who are gifted and talented will be informed of those CIC and Previously CIC who have particular gifts, talents or learning needs and will work with them appropriate.

Home-school Liaison

The school recognises the value of a close working relationship between home and school and will work towards developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable CIC and Previously CIC to achieve their potential.

Consultation evenings as well as PEP and Care Plan review meetings provide opportunities to continue to develop this partnership working.

Links with Other Agencies

The school recognises the value of working together with other agencies and organisations and will work closely with colleagues from services involved with the CIC and Previously CIC including Social Care teams; Community Educational Psychologist; Health services, CAMHS; Youth Offending Teams and Nottingham Virtual School.

Current Guidance from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

Looked after children (children in care) and previously looked after children (previously children in care)

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe.

In particular, they should ensure that appropriate staff have access to the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order) and the child's contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They should also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The designated safeguarding lead has details of the child's social worker and the name of the Virtual School Head (Jasmin Howell- Nottingham City) in the authority that looks after the child.

A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

At Berridge these details are held on the child's Arbor system and also on a secure software called CPOMS where school stores all the safeguarding information. CPOMS records are available to all staff members responsible for safeguarding.

The designated teacher

At Berridge Mrs Alison Aldridge is the designated teacher and she works with local authorities to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are in care. With the commencement of sections 4 to 6 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, designated teachers have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales. Statutory guidance: Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children contains further information on the role and responsibilities of the designated teacher.

Virtual School Heads

Virtual School Heads manage pupil premium plus for children in care and receive this funding based on the latest published number of children looked after by the local authority. In maintained schools and academies, the designated teacher should work with the Virtual School Head to discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of children in care in the school and meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan. The designated teacher should also work with the Virtual School Head to promote the educational achievement of previously children in care. As with designated teachers, following the commencement of sections 4 to 6 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, Virtual School Heads have responsibilities towards children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship, or child arrangement orders or who were adopted from state care outside England or Wales. Their primary role for this group will be the provision of information and advice to relevant parties.

Statutory guidance on Promoting the education of children in care and previously children in care contains further information on the roles and responsibilities of Virtual School Heads.

In addition to their statutory duties, the role of Virtual School Heads was extended in June 2021, to include a non-statutory responsibility for the strategic oversight of the educational attendance, attainment, and progress of children with a social worker.

In offering advice and information to workforces that have relationships with children with social workers, Virtual School Heads should identify and engage with key professionals, helping them to understand the role they have in improving outcomes for children. This should include designated safeguarding leads, social workers, headteachers, governors, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators, mental health leads, other local authority officers, including Designated Social Care Officers for SEND, where they exist.

Non-statutory guidance on promoting the education of children with a social worker contains further information on the roles and responsibilities of Virtual School Heads.