

# ISP Education Policy

This policy outlines how ISP foster parents, staff and advisory teachers promote, support, and monitor the education and achievement of children and young people placed in our care.

This policy reflects current statutory requirements and guidance including:

- The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011
- Fostering Services National Minimum Standards (2011)
- Children Act 1989 (as amended)
- Promoting the Education of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children (DfE, latest version)
- SEND Code of Practice: 0–25 years (2015, updated)

ISP registrations ensure that children and young people are supported to achieve their full educational potential. Education is actively promoted as a key protective factor and integral to positive outcomes, independence, and future life chances.

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|--------------------------------------------|-----------------|
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## Introduction

We recognise that children in care often experience disruption to their education and may face barriers to learning due to trauma, instability, and unmet needs. As such, ISP is committed to providing stable, nurturing placements that prioritise education, attendance, engagement, and achievement.

We place strong emphasis on:

- High educational aspirations for every child
- Stability of school placements
- Early identification of need and timely intervention
- Collaborative working with education professionals
- The voice of the child in their educational journey

Foster parents and staff will promote structured routines, including time and space for study, and ensure consistent communication with schools.

We demonstrate our commitment to education through the following:

- Ensuring all placements are carefully matched, taking full account of a child's educational needs
- Promoting placement stability to minimise disruption to schooling
- Maintaining clear expectations that education is a priority for all children

## Regulatory Responsibilities

Local authorities have a duty to promote good educational outcomes for children and young people in foster care. When making a placement, the local authority must think about what effect it might have on the child's education and consider the child's view.

Throughout the foster placement, the child's local authority must:

- Ensure that the child has a suitable school place, which meets their needs.
- Mediate on behalf of the child if they experience problems at school.
- Ensure that the care plan and placement plan reflect the child's educational needs.
- Ensure that the child has an effective Personal Education Plan (PEP).
- Put funding in place to support additional needs that arise.

Local authorities appoint a Virtual School Head (sometimes a virtual school team) to ensure that they have effective systems in place to meet their responsibilities. In addition, every school must have a designated teacher for looked after children. This teacher plays an active role in supporting them and promoting their achievement.

Within foster placements, there are clear requirements to promote educational attainment (NMS 8). These requirements include:

- A foster home that supports the child's development and promotes a learning environment
- Resources at home to support learning
- Ensuring that the child attends school or any alternative provision regularly
- Providing support to foster carers to enable them to work with the school/education provider to maximise the young person's achievement
- Foster parents maintaining contact with the school/education provider and attending meetings and events, advocating for the child whenever needed

## Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

All looked after children must have an up-to-date Personal Education Plan (PEP) which is a detailed record of the child's educational attainment, progress and potential. The child's local authority will initiate the first PEP and complete it in partnership with the child's school and carers. A PEP should be in place within 20 days of a child becoming 'looked after' or changing school. The government recommends that the PEP is reviewed every term, and the school is responsible for PEP reviews.

The PEP will:

- Include the child's voice and aspirations
- Identify educational strengths, needs, and barriers to learning
- Set clear, measurable, and aspirational targets
- Identify interventions and support strategies
- Clarify roles and responsibilities of professionals
- Be reviewed in line with statutory requirements

Implementing and reviewing a PEP includes a meeting, which usually takes place in school, involving school staff, the child's social worker and the foster parents. The child must be aware of the meeting and attend if appropriate. Other representatives from the virtual school team, education support services and social care might attend if required. The meeting will consider the child's attendance, attainment, targets and how the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) is being used to support their development.

ISP will support foster carers to actively contribute to PEP meetings and ensure actions are followed through.

## Advisory Teacher Role

ISP Advisory Teachers play a key role in supporting educational outcomes. Their responsibilities include:

- Providing specialist advice and guidance to foster carers and staff
- Supporting the understanding of trauma-informed approaches to learning
- Monitoring attendance, progress, and attainment
- Supporting effective use of Personal Education Plans (PEPs)
- Liaising with Virtual Schools, Designated Teachers, and other professionals
- Supporting school transitions and reintegration where required
- Providing training and resources to foster carers
- Checking that every child has an up-to-date Personal Education Plan (PEP), completed within statutory timescales
- Requesting education information prior to or at the start of placement
- Ensuring that Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) are secured and implemented
- Confirming that children have access to suitable education provision from the start of placement
- Supporting foster parents to advocate for children's educational needs
- Checking that children have access to appropriate resources (e.g. IT, study space)
- Recognising and celebrating achievements
- Ensuring robust plans for transitions are in place including between key stages, class moves and school moves.

The Advisory Teacher will monitor and escalate concerns regarding:

- A reduction in attendance or reluctance to attend education
- Episodes of detention, inclusion or suspension
- Concerns regarding behaviour in school, including potential triggers and responses by the adults around them
- Lack of suitable education provision
- Delays in EHCP processes
- Emerging special educational needs

## The Role of the Foster Parent

Our foster parents play a crucial role in promoting educational success. They are responsible for:

### Supporting Learning

- Promoting a positive attitude towards education
- Providing a structured home environment with clear routines
- Ensuring children have a suitable space and resources for study
- Supporting homework and independent learning

### Attendance and Engagement

- Ensuring children attend school regularly and on time. Foster parents should recognise the value and importance of appropriately accompanying children to and from school.
- Notifying the school and record any absences appropriately
- Avoiding unnecessary absence and discourage term-time holidays

### Network engagement

- Developing and maintaining strong relationships with schools and colleges
- Attending meetings including PEPs, parents' evenings, and reviews
- Sharing relevant information with professionals

### Aspirations and Opportunities

- Encouraging participation in enrichment, extracurricular, and leisure activities
- Promoting further and higher education opportunities
- Supporting career planning, training, and employment pathways

### Advocacy

- Actively advocating for the child's educational needs
- Raising concerns promptly with the ISP team and relevant professionals

## Support for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

ISP recognises that children in care are disproportionately affected by SEND, through life experiences, historic reduced attendance or engagement, and late identification of barriers to learning.

ISP will:

- Ensure early identification of SEND
- Support access to appropriate assessments and provision
- Work in partnership with Local Authorities to secure EHCPs where required
- Work with education provisions to ensure that the support written into the EHCP is in place
- Promote inclusive education and reasonable adjustments

## Monitoring and Quality Assurance

ISP will monitor educational outcomes through:

- Regular review of attendance, attainment, NEET/EET status and progress data
- Supervision and support of foster carers, including provision of training
- Review of PEP quality and timeliness
- Review of EHCPs

- Feedback from children and young people
- Engage in planned service reviews and OFSTED inspections

## Celebrating Achievement

ISP recognises the importance of celebrating all forms of achievement, including:

- Academic progress
- Effort and engagement
- Personal development
- Attendance improvements

Achievements will be recognised in ways that are meaningful to the child.

This policy reflects ISPs commitment to ensuring that every child in its care is supported to thrive educationally and reach their full potential.