Cornwall Education Learning Trust

Children in Care Policy

Safeguarding Policy Suite

Cornwall Education Learning Trust Policies
Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT), Atlantic Centre, Trenance Leisure Park, Newquay, Cornwall TR7 2LZ

Our Mission

At Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT), our mission is clear: to provide every learner with an **exceptional educational experience.** One that enables them to thrive, achieve and succeed in life. We believe in a **100%** mindset, that every learner, in every classroom, in every school, deserves the very best we can offer. For us, 100% means no compromise: no learner left behind, no community overlooked, and no opportunity wasted.

Our strategic goals reflect this ambition. We are committed to empowering and growing our people, building an ambitious all-through entitlement, forging exceptional relationships with our communities, transforming provision through meaningful partnerships, and leading an ethical, effective and innovative organisation. These are not just aspirations; they are promises that shape the way we work and the culture we are building together.



Our Values

Our values are at the heart of everything we do. We believe in the power of **Collaboration**, building strong relationships and working together as one team to achieve our collective goals. We are committed to **Empowerment**, creating a culture where initiative, innovation and trust flourish, and where every individual feels valued, respected and motivated.

As a Trust, we are grounded in promoting **Leadership**, sharing a moral and ethical purpose to improve the lives of others and make a lasting difference for our learners and communities. And we embrace **Transformation**, approaching change positively so that we can all become our best selves and do our best work.

These values guide every decision we make and every action we take. They are the foundation of our Trust and the reason we can offer such exceptional opportunities for our learners and staff. If you choose to join CELT, you will be part of a values-driven organisation where people are supported to grow, contribute, and thrive.

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1. Policy Overview

1.1 Safeguarding commitment

"It could happen here." We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We make every effort to provide an environment in which children and adults feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident to talk if they are worried, believing they will be effectively listened to. The purpose of this policy is to provide staff, volunteers and governors with the framework they need in order to keep children safe and secure at Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT). The policy also informs parents and carers how we will safeguard their children whilst they are in our care.
children whilst they are in our care.

At Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT) we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and we expect all trustees, community champions, staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This policy is part of the following suite of annually updated safeguarding policies.

1.2 Policy Approval and Review

Policy Version Number:	4
Approved By:	Trustees
Approved On (Date):	10th September 2026
Review Period:	Annually by end of September 2027

The policy will be reviewed at least annually and updated sooner where there are significant changes to legislation or statutory guidance.

1.3 Policy Version History

Policy Version	Date Issued	Summary of Changes
1	29.08.2023	First Issue – No Changes
2	29.08.2024	Annual review
3	18.08.2025	Reference to Safeguarding Suite School Level Context
4	09.08.2026	Annual review

2. Introduction

Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT) is committed to ensuring that children in care and previously looked-after children are safe, included, supported and able to achieve and thrive. We recognise that children in care and previously looked-after children may have experienced loss, disruption, trauma or instability and may face additional barriers to education. These experiences must never lead to lower expectations. CELT will champion and advocate for these learners, promote their educational achievement and wellbeing and ensure that they have equitable access to an exceptional educational experience.

Our approach is underpinned by high expectations, strong relationships, stability, inclusion and timely support. Learners will be listened to and involved meaningfully in decisions about their education.

CELT also recognises the potential educational vulnerability of children with a social worker and children in kinship care arrangements. While the statutory duties applying to these cohorts differ from those applying to children in care and previously looked-after children, CELT will work with families, social care, the Virtual School and other partners to identify and respond to barriers to education.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all CELT schools and to all staff, trustees, volunteers and others working on behalf of the Trust, as appropriate to their role.

For the purposes of this policy:

- Children in care (CiC) are children who are looked after by a local authority within the meaning of section 22 of the Children Act 1989.
- Previously looked-after children (PLAC) are children who were previously looked after by a local authority or in state care and ceased to be looked after because they were adopted or became subject to a special guardianship order or qualifying child arrangements order, including eligible children adopted from state care outside England and Wales.
- CELT recognises that some children in kinship care may also meet the definition of a child in care or previously looked-after child. The legal status and individual circumstances of each learner will therefore inform the duties and support that apply.

3. Legal and statutory framework

This policy has been developed with regard to relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- Children Act 1989;
- Education Act 2002;
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008;
- Children and Social Work Act 2017;
- Equality Act 2010;
- School Admissions Code;

- SEND Code of Practice: 0–25 years;
- Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children;
- The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026;
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2026;
- current statutory guidance on suspension and permanent exclusion; and
- current pupil premium conditions of grant and associated Department for Education guidance.

CELT will have regard to subsequent amendments and replacement statutory guidance.

This policy should be read alongside relevant CELT policies and procedures, including:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Attendance Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy;
- Admissions arrangements;
- Equality and Accessibility arrangements;
- Data Protection and Information sharing.

Detailed operational arrangements, including PEP processes, Virtual School liaison, Pupil Premium Plus processes, transition arrangements and escalation routes, are contained within the CELT operational guides on the internal hub page and relevant local authority and Virtual School guidance.

3. Our principles

Across CELT, we will:

- place the learner's best interests, safety, educational achievement and wellbeing at the centre of decision-making;
- maintain high expectations and aspirations for every learner;
- listen to and act upon the learner's voice;
- promote stability, belonging and positive relationships;
- identify barriers to attendance, participation, learning and achievement early;
- provide timely, proportionate and evidence-informed support;
- recognise the potential impact of trauma, loss, separation and disrupted relationships without allowing these experiences to define a learner or lower expectations;
- make reasonable adjustments and provide appropriate SEND support where required;
- avoid unnecessary disruption to education and promote continuity at points of transition;
- work collaboratively with parents, carers, social workers, the Virtual School and other professionals; and
- treat information about a learner's care status sensitively and confidentially.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Trust Board

The Trust Board retains strategic oversight of the Trust's arrangements for children in care and previously looked-after children.

The Board will seek assurance that:

- statutory responsibilities are being met;
- appropriately qualified and experienced Designated Teachers are appointed;
- Designated Teachers have sufficient time, authority, training and resources to fulfil their role effectively;
- educational outcomes, attendance, suspensions and other relevant indicators are appropriately monitored;
- Pupil Premium Plus is used effectively and in accordance with current requirements; and
- the needs of children in care and previously looked-after children are considered within wider Trust strategy and decision-making.

The Board may delegate detailed oversight to an appropriate committee while retaining overall accountability.

4.2 Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented effectively within their school.

They will ensure that:

- a suitably qualified and experienced Designated Teacher is appointed;
- the Designated Teacher has appropriate time, resources and access to senior leadership to fulfil the role;
- staff understand their responsibilities towards children in care and previously looked-after children;
- appropriate systems are in place to identify, support and monitor learners; and
- the school works effectively with the relevant Virtual School, social care and other agencies.

4.3 Designated Teacher

Each CELT school will have a Designated Teacher with responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children in care and previously looked-after children.

The Designated Teacher will:

- champion the educational needs, achievement and aspirations of these learners;
- maintain an overview of their progress, attainment, attendance, wellbeing and participation;
- promote high expectations and ensure barriers to education are identified and addressed;
- ensure high-quality Personal Education Plans are developed and reviewed for children in care;

- ensure the learner's views, strengths and aspirations inform educational planning;
- work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, SENDCo and other relevant staff;
- work collaboratively with carers, parents where appropriate, social workers, the Virtual School and other professionals;
- support effective transitions and seek to minimise unnecessary disruption to education;
- advise staff about appropriate support and evidence-informed approaches;
- contribute to decisions about the effective use of Pupil Premium Plus; and
- undertake appropriate training and maintain up-to-date knowledge of relevant legislation and guidance.

4.4 All staff

All staff will:

- maintain high expectations for children in care and previously looked-after children;
- provide an inclusive, safe and supportive learning environment;
- be sensitive to the learner's individual circumstances and confidentiality;
- identify and respond promptly to emerging barriers or concerns;
- contribute appropriately to educational planning and review;
- support positive relationships, belonging and participation; and
- report safeguarding concerns in accordance with the CELT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

5. Personal Education Plans

Every child in care will have a current Personal Education Plan (PEP) as an integral part of their care plan.

The PEP will be developed collaboratively and will provide a clear and purposeful plan for supporting the learner's educational achievement, attendance, participation and wellbeing.

PEPs will:

- reflect the learner's voice, strengths, interests and aspirations;
- identify educational needs and barriers to learning;
- establish ambitious and meaningful outcomes;
- identify the provision, support and interventions required;
- consider attendance, progress, attainment, SEND and wider educational experiences as appropriate;
- identify how Pupil Premium Plus will contribute to meeting identified educational needs where applicable; and
- be reviewed regularly in accordance with statutory requirements and local Virtual School arrangements.

The Designated Teacher will work with the social worker, Virtual School, carers and other relevant professionals to ensure the PEP remains current, ambitious and effective.

Operational arrangements for completing, submitting and reviewing PEPs are set out within the CELT operational documents and relevant Virtual School procedures.

6. Educational achievement and Pupil Premium Plus

CELT will ensure that children in care and previously looked-after children receive appropriate support to overcome barriers to learning and achieve well.

Pupil Premium Plus will be used in accordance with current Department for Education conditions of grant and guidance.

For children in care, the relevant Virtual School Head is responsible, in consultation with the learner's school, for ensuring that Pupil Premium Plus supports evidence-informed interventions linked to the learner's educational needs and PEP.

For previously looked-after children, the school is responsible for ensuring that Pupil Premium Plus is used effectively to support their educational needs.

Funding will not be treated as an individual entitlement or personal budget. Decisions will be based on identified need, evidence of what is likely to make a difference and the intended educational impact.

7. Safeguarding and wellbeing

CELT recognises that children in care and previously looked-after children may be particularly vulnerable and that effective safeguarding requires agencies to work together and act promptly where concerns arise.

The Designated Teacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead will work closely together and share relevant information appropriately.

Learners will have access to safe adults and will know how and where to seek help.

Staff will remain professionally curious and alert to changes in presentation, behaviour, attendance, relationships or circumstances that may indicate additional need or safeguarding risk.

Any safeguarding concern will be managed in accordance with the CELT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

8. Attendance

Regular attendance is fundamental to educational achievement, safeguarding, belonging and wellbeing.

Schools will monitor the attendance of children in care and previously looked-after children carefully, identify emerging concerns early and work with learners, carers, parents where appropriate, social workers, the Virtual School and other agencies to understand and address barriers.

For children in care, attendance will be considered as part of the PEP and wider care planning where appropriate.

Absence will be recorded, followed up and responded to in accordance with the CELT Attendance Policy and current statutory guidance.

9. SEND and reasonable adjustments

CELT recognises the interaction that may exist between care experience, SEND, disability, trauma and other barriers to learning.

SEND will be identified and supported in accordance with the CELT SEND Policy and the SEND Code of Practice.

Where a child in care has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the school will work with the local authority, social worker, Virtual School and other professionals to coordinate the PEP, EHCP and care planning effectively and avoid unnecessary duplication.

Schools will make reasonable adjustments for disabled learners in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

10. Admissions, transitions and school moves

CELT recognises the importance of educational stability.

Admissions will be managed in accordance with the School Admissions Code and applicable admissions legislation, including the highest priority afforded within oversubscription criteria to looked-after and previously looked-after children as defined by the Code.

Schools will work with the relevant local authority and Virtual School to support timely admission and minimise disruption to education.

Transitions and school moves will be planned carefully. Relevant educational and safeguarding information will be transferred securely and promptly in accordance with statutory requirements.

Where a school move is being considered for a child in care, CELT will work with the Virtual School, social worker and other relevant professionals to ensure that the educational implications and the learner's views are properly considered.

11. Behaviour, suspension and permanent exclusion

Children in care and previously looked-after children are subject to the same high expectations for behaviour as other learners, with appropriate consideration given to individual needs, SEND, disability, trauma and other relevant circumstances.

Where concerns emerge, schools will seek to understand underlying barriers and intervene early.

Where a child in care is at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion, the school will involve the Designated Teacher and relevant professionals at an early stage and work with the Virtual School and social worker to identify appropriate support and alternatives wherever possible.

Any suspension or permanent exclusion will be managed in accordance with current statutory guidance and the CELT Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy.

12. Children with a social worker and children in kinship care

CELT recognises that children with a social worker and children in kinship care may experience additional barriers to attendance, learning, participation and educational achievement.

The statutory responsibilities applying specifically to children in care and previously looked-after children do not automatically extend to every child with a social worker or every child in a kinship care arrangement.

However, CELT will apply the wider principles of high expectations, early identification, inclusion, educational stability and coordinated support to these learners.

Schools will work appropriately with the Virtual School, social care, families, kinship carers and other professionals to identify and address barriers to education.

Where a child in kinship care also meets the legal definition of a child in care or previously looked-after child, the relevant statutory duties within this policy will apply.

13. Information sharing and confidentiality

Information about a learner's care status and personal circumstances will be handled sensitively and shared only where necessary and appropriate.

Schools will ensure that relevant staff have sufficient information to safeguard and support the learner effectively, while respecting their privacy and wishes wherever possible.

Information will be shared with other agencies where necessary to safeguard a child, promote their welfare or fulfil statutory responsibilities.

Records will be stored, transferred and retained securely in accordance with data protection legislation, statutory safeguarding requirements and CELT information governance arrangements.

14. Monitoring and assurance

CELT will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy through its established governance, safeguarding and inclusion assurance arrangements. School and trust leaders will consider relevant information including, as appropriate:

- attendance;
- educational progress and attainment;
- PEP quality and impact;
- suspensions and permanent exclusions;
- SEND and additional needs;
- transitions and school stability;
- use and impact of Pupil Premium Plus; and
- learner voice and wellbeing.

Information presented for governance and assurance purposes will protect individual learners' confidentiality.