



## **Trafford Virtual School – School placement move policy**

The Statutory Guidance 'Promoting the educational achievement of looked after children' published in July 2014 places an increased responsibility on the Virtual School Head to monitor placement moves which may lead to school moves. The following sections apply:

### **Securing appropriate education**

18. When a child becomes looked after his or her local authority will arrange a suitable placement. In doing so, the child's allocated social worker should do everything possible to minimise disruption to the child's education, whatever the child's age but particularly at key stage 4, and this should involve the VSH<sup>4</sup>.

19. If it is not possible to maintain the child's existing education placement, the child's new education placement should be arranged in consultation with the VSH at the same time as the care placement. The VSH has primary responsibility for ensuring that there is suitable education in place for all children looked after by the local authority. Their views should be given appropriate weight as part of decisions on placement moves. There should also be appropriate consultation with the VSH in another local authority where out-of-authority placements are planned and made.

20. In the case of an emergency placement, the authority that looks after the child, should secure a suitable new education placement within 20 school days.

21. In arranging a school placement the child's social worker (working with the VSH and other local authority staff, where appropriate) should seek a school or other education setting that is best suited to the child's needs. That could be a selective, non-selective, maintained or independent, boarding, day or alternative provision.

22. The following principles should apply:

- educational provision should mean a full-time place
- schools judged by Ofsted to be 'good' or 'outstanding' should be prioritised for looked after children in need of a new school. Unless there are exceptional evidence-based reasons, looked after children should never be placed in a school judged by Ofsted to be 'inadequate'
- the choice of the education setting should be based on what any good parent would want for their child. It should be based on evidence that the setting can meet the educational needs of the child and help them make the maximum progress
- the child's wishes and feelings should be taken into account and the suitability of the education setting tested by arranging an informal visit with the child. Where a looked-after child would benefit from attending a boarding school, either in the state or independent sector, VSHs and social workers should be proactive in considering this option. This decision is usually based on the care placement needs of the child and the boarding school's ability to meet these needs

## Process for consultation regarding school moves

