



School Policy for Looked After Children

We are aware that Looked After Children constitute a group in the sense that they may share common experiences as a result of having been taken into Public Care, but that they are also individuals and members of other groups. We will take this into account when planning to meet their needs and avoid any action that may lead to stigmatisation.

Aim

The aim of this policy is to promote educational inclusion for Looked After Children, to enable them to access the full range of educational opportunities available to them and to reach their potential, both academically and personally.

Objectives

Looked After Children in this school will

- receive an appropriate level of monitoring and support
- have access to the full range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities

Teachers and other staff in this school will

- receive an appropriate level of training on the issues affecting the educational achievement and psychological well-being of Looked After Children and use this to guide their interactions with them
- plan for and meet the individual needs of Looked After Children

The Looked After Designated Teacher and Senior Management will

- identify, arrange and/or deliver training to staff to enable the above to take place
- ensure the development of effective and inclusive strategies to address the needs of Looked After Children
- ensure the smooth transfer of information within school and between school, carers and other agencies

1. Induction

To ensure a supportive and sympathetic induction for Looked After Children admitted to our school.

Where possible there will be an initial visit and tour of the school by the student, carer and Social Worker, incorporating meeting relevant staff. At this point, a discussion will be had to determine how the student wishes to be introduced to peers and if there are any specific requirements in school. Both the carer and Social Worker will be added as emergency contacts and it will be agreed who will be contacted regarding routine issues. It will be agreed what the carer will be authorized to permit regarding the student's learning and time in school and what must be referred to the Social Worker.

2. Pastoral Support

Each student has access to a year group Pastoral Officer and a Form Tutor. The Designated Teacher is Mrs Travis who will also meet with the student on a regular basis.

The Designated Teacher will liaise with the Social Worker and Virtual School to agree what additional support is required.

3. Information

- The Designated Teacher will seek and receive information about the academic attainment and other educational issues affecting the learning of newly admitted Looked After Children at an early stage and pass this on to relevant staff to avoid unnecessary breaks in learning. This will include the Personal Education Plan if in place. If there is no current PEP, the Designated Teacher will liaise with the Social Worker to ensure this is part of the initial meeting in school.
- Information about the circumstances of Looked After Children will be shared on a 'need to know' basis. Where no particular arrangements are in place, only teaching staff who are in direct contact with a Looked After Child will be informed of these. If there are learning or behaviour issues for a Looked After Child, all staff will be informed by the Designated Teacher of strategies in place or if the young person is experiencing particular difficulties.
- Essential information will be gathered prior to the student starting school (Appendix 1)
- The Designated Teacher will talk to young people about the information to be recorded about their personal circumstances and make it clear that this is in order to help all the people involved in their lives work together to help them in school. The nature of this conversation will depend upon the age and level of understanding of the young person.

Information about the academic attainment of all Looked After Children in school will be collected as follows:

- Termly progress report to be completed by all relevant teachers. This will also include reference to Attitude to Learning and Homework
- Reading and spelling ages will be obtained during the first week at school.

- Year groups 7-10 will complete end of year assessments and this information will feed into the final progress report.
- Year 11 students will be entered for a full range of chosen GCSEs unless this is not deemed appropriate by the school, Social Worker, carers and Virtual School.
- This information will be analysed by Deputy Headteacher to measure the attainment of Looked After Children against the school population as a whole.

Information about the attendance of Looked After Children will be collected as follows:

- Fortnightly monitoring of attendance by the relevant Pastoral Officer and the Attendance Officer.
- This information will be analysed by the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for attendance to identify individuals or groups of Looked After Children whose attendance is poor so early intervention can take place.

Information about the behaviour of Looked After Children will be collected as follows:

- Behaviour of students is monitored by the relevant Pastoral Officer and Form Tutor.
- This information will be analysed by the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for behavior and the Designated Teacher to identify individuals or groups of Looked After Children who are at increased risk of exclusion so early intervention can take place.

4. Strategies

4.1 Curriculum

If a Looked After Child appears to be having difficulties with the curriculum or to be failing to engage with it, this will be addressed as follows:

- The Designated Teacher will look at all possible contributory factors and gather a wide range of evidence in conjunction with other relevant staff
- Look for factors which may be masking underlying learning difficulties
- Talk to the child
- If a student is struggling with learning this will be brought to the attention of the SENCO who will further liaise with the Social Worker. If there are no known difficulties the SENCO will then arrange to meet with the school's Education Psychologist to discuss the student's needs.
- The school also makes use of Partnership Isolation to support issues with behaviour. A Single Point Referral may be considered appropriate to request Strand 1 behaviour support. All decisions will be made in conjunction with the Social Worker, carer and Virtual School.

We recognise that there are factors which may prevent Looked After Children from achieving as highly as they could, even if there are no apparent learning difficulties. To ensure that under-achievement does not go unrecognised, the attainment of each Looked After Child will be tracked and compared to previous results. If progress is not as could be expected, this will be discussed with the student, carer and Social Worker to determine what the issues are and how the school can best support this.

We are aware that certain aspects of the curriculum, for example activities to mark Mother's Day or to investigate family history, may cause difficulties for Looked After Children and we will ensure this is handled sensitively by planning alternative but relevant activities.

4.2 Attendance

If a Looked After Child is identified as having poor attendance or punctuality

- The Social Worker and carers will be contacted by the relevant Pastoral Officer to gain their support and collect any relevant information
- The Virtual School will be alerted.

4.3 Behaviour

We recognise that psychological trauma and lack of continuity in the lives of Looked After Children may lead to challenging behaviour in school and that it is especially important to employ positive behaviour strategies in these circumstances. The following arrangements are in place to address behaviour problems at an early stage:

- The Social Worker and carers will be contacted by the relevant Pastoral Officer as soon as behaviour problems are identified or if there are significant changes to the behaviour of a Looked After Child.
- It is important that all students recognise the need to accept and follow the school's Behaviour Policy in order to ensure that the school runs effectively. However, there are times when reasonable adjustments may be made to the Behaviour Policy in order to support students as fully as possible.
- If the problem continues, the Social Worker, carers and staff from support services such as the Educational Psychology Service, PRS and The Virtual School will be invited to a meeting with appropriate school staff to determine supportive strategies to reduce the challenging behaviour.
- We recognise that Looked After Children as a group are far more likely to be excluded than the school population as a whole, and that exclusion can place additional pressure on foster placements. To reduce the likelihood of this occurring we ensure that we liaise with all relevant people on a regular basis. It may be appropriate to consider a more personalised timetable or look at alternative provision.

4.4 Homework

Whilst we recognise that Looked After Children may not always find it easy to complete homework, we believe they should be given support and encouragement to do so. There is a homework club available after school which provides support and resources for all students to complete their homework. All carers/parents can access students' homework via Class Charts, for which they are given details about how to access this. In KS4 booster/revision sessions are also available.

4.5 Extra-Curricular Activities

We recognise that Looked After Children are often prevented from joining in with after school activities because of transport arrangements and that they may resist taking part in any school-based activities because of poor relationships with their peers, for example. We believe it is essential that Looked After Children are able to play a full part in school life, and they will be actively encouraged to access the activities available, as well as participating in school trips.

5. Liaison With Outside Agencies

To ensure that all those involved in the education and care of Looked After Children work together in their best interests, the Designated Teacher will devise and implement effective strategies and procedures for

- Accessing additional support, funding or use of funded initiatives
- Liaising with Social Workers to ensure all Looked After Children have a Personal Education Plan
- Participation in and co-ordination of Review and Planning meetings for Looked After Children. Statutory school procedures such as Annual Reviews for children with EHCP's will be timed to coincide with these wherever possible and appropriate.

In addition, school management will do everything possible to enable class teachers or other appropriate staff to attend meetings where this would be in the interests of the young person.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Designated Teacher is Mr Leon Fox-Rice (Assistant Headteacher)

The role of the Designated Teacher is of central importance in enabling Looked After Children to achieve their full potential in school. For this reason the person appointed will

- Attend training sessions organised by the LA
- Cascade this training to school staff
- Ensure the involvement of careers staff with all young people in Years 10 and 11 who are looked-after.

- Liaise with the member of staff responsible for monitoring children on the Child Protection Register
- Work closely with Social Workers and other LA staff to enable the writing of effective Personal Education Plans which will inform Care Plans
- Attend, arrange for someone else to attend or contribute in other ways to care planning meetings
- Work with young people at an appropriate level to enable them to contribute to educational aspects of their care plans

6.2 The Head Teacher and Senior Management

The responsibility for the educational and personal well-being of Looked After Children rests with the Headteacher, although some of the day-to-day tasks may be delegated to other staff. Working with the Senior Leadership Team, the Headteacher will ensure that inclusive strategies are in place for Looked After Children and that staff, particularly the Designated Teacher, are enabled to carry them out.

6.3 The named Governor with special responsibility for Looked After Children is Mr Chris Merrick

The named governor must be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that Looked After Children have equal access to

- The National Curriculum
- Public examinations
- Statutory assessments
- Careers guidance
- Additional educational support
- Appropriate pastoral support
- Extra-curricular activities
- Work experience

7. Evaluation

The general success and appropriateness of this policy will be evaluated annually. In addition, we will monitor and analyse the impact of this policy on pupils, staff and parents of different ethnic groups. The results of the evaluation will be passed to the school Governor with responsibility for Looked After Children before being presented to the Governing Body.

Reviewed: April 2018
Next Review: April 2020

LAC INDUCTION (Appendix 1)



Name:
DOB:
Address:
Carer:
Social worker :
Care Arrangements: (including contact arrangements)
Permission for school trips to be given by:
Transport Arrangements:
After School Arrangements:
School Reports to be sent to: (How?)
Who has Parental Responsibility ?
Information to be shared with?
Parents Evening:
Any aspects of the curriculum to be avoided: