

Oak Green School



Looked After Children Policy

December 2016

Reviewed October 2018

We are aware that Looked After Children (LAC) constitute a group in the sense that they 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 action that may lead to stigmatization.

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 LAC and use this to guide their interactions with them
- Plan for and meet the individual needs of LAC

The Looked After Designated Safeguarding Person 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 LAC
- 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 LAC admitted to our school, the following arrangements are in place:

- Children and their carers will be invited into school to meet the Head teacher in the first instance if they are new to the school. They will be shown around the school, introduced to staff and their prospective class teacher and peers

- The Headteacher and/or the designated person will meet with all carers and professionals involved with the child before entry to school
- The Headteacher will liaise with previous head teacher regarding educational abilities and strategies already in place
- All staff will be aware of the child's needs and the key adults in their life such as carers, support workers and other professionals.

2. Pastoral Support

To ensure LAC continue to receive an appropriate level of support the following arrangements are in place:

Mrs Elaine Barry, the designated teacher for LAC will:

- Ensure that staff are aware of any LAC children in school, know who the carer is, and whether parents have parental rights so they know who should receive copies of newsletters, reports, etc
- Ensure photographs of key people who have authorisation to collect the child from school are displayed on the back of the classroom store cupboard and in the staffroom and main office to safeguard the child
- Liaise effectively with other agencies involved with the child and attend LAC review and epep meetings
- Work in partnership with carers, parents and others with parental responsibility to ensure that LAC receive their entitlement
- Ensure that pep records and provision maps are kept and maintained appropriately
- Provide information to the Governing Body and the Virtual School about the progress and outcomes of LAC on roll.
- Ensure appropriate training to ensure that the school can meet the needs of LAC
- Provide a nurture specialist on site to support LAC as necessary

3. Information

The Designated teacher will seek and receive information about the academic attainment and other educational issues affecting the learning of newly admitted LAC and pass on to relevant staff to avoid unnecessary breaks in learning. This will include the pep (Personal Education Plan) if in place. If there is no current pep, the designated teacher will work with the Virtual School and Social Worker to put one in place.

Information about the circumstances of LAC will be shared on a 'need to know' basis. Where no particular arrangements are in place, only teaching staff in direct contact with the Looked after child will be informed of these. If there are learning or behaviour issues, all staff will be informed by the designated teacher of strategies in place or if the young person is

experiencing particular difficulties. Supply staff and non-teaching staff will be given an appropriate amount of information to be determined by Mrs Elaine Barry.

Each child will have their own folder containing all essential information and this will be kept securely in the safeguarding room.

If not already in place, a Personal Education Plan (pep) will be completed at the earliest opportunity.

The Designated teacher will talk to the young person 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 LAC in school will be collected as follows:

- Termly Pupil Progress meetings
- Termly tracking of progress and inclusion of interventions if necessary
- Consultation Evenings with the class teacher will be held in the Autumn and Spring Term to discuss progress
- A written report will be completed in the Summer Term by the class teacher
- Their progress will also be collated and closely monitored with children who are identified as 'pupil premium'
- Progress will be reported to Governors anonymously termly
- Termly meeting will be held with carers and all professional involved with the child in order to review progress/impact/next steps on PEP
- All staff will adhere to assessment policy
- This information will be analysed by Senior Leadership Team to measure the attainment of LAC against the school population as a whole

Information about the attendance of LAC will be collected as follows:

- Attendance data is collected on a weekly basis for all children in school
- This information is analysed and kept in a secure cupboard within the office complex
- Any absence is followed up according to our attendance policy
- This information is analysed by the Attendance Officer, Mrs Kelloway

Information about the behaviour of LAC will be collected as follows:

- All staff adhere to the behaviour policy and procedures stated within the policy
- Behaviour logs are kept by the Pastoral Manager
- Incident sheets are completed as required
- Behaviour restraint sheets are completed as required
- Achievements will be collated in the child's own red folder for future reference

- Information is analysed by the designated teacher and behaviour support team to identify individuals or groups of LAC who are at risk of exclusion so early intervention can take place.

4 Strategies

A. Curriculum

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

- Mrs Rogerson (SENDCo) 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
- All staff adhere to the Special Educational Needs Policy

We recognise that there are factors which may prevent LAC 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 LAC will be tracked and compared to previous results. If progress is not as could be expected:

- Interventions will be put into place (academic and nurture)
- When required professional agency involvement will be sought by SENDCo

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

B. Attendance

If attendance is identified as poor or punctuality is poor, the designated person will contact the social worker and carers to gain their support and collect relevant information. The Virtual School will also be alerted. Good attendance is celebrated termly by 100% Attendance certificated and yearly awards. Attendance is tracked and acted upon weekly.

C. Behaviour

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

- Social Worker and carers will be contacted by designated person as soon as behaviour problems are identified or if there are significant changes to the behaviour of a LAC.

- All staff will follow Behaviour policy and procedures as the strategies within these documents take into account all children's needs.
- If problem continues, the social worker, carers and staff from support services such as the Educational Psychology Service and the Virtual School will be invited to a meeting to determine supportive strategies to reduce challenging behaviour. The responsibility for organising such a meeting lies with the designated person.
- We recognise that LAC 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.

D. Homework

Whilst we recognise that LAC may not always find it easy to complete homework, we believe they should be given support and encouragement to do so. If a child is unable to complete their homework jigsaw at home then a child is allowed to do it in school on a Monday lunchtime.

E. Extra-curricular activities

We believe it is essential that LAC are able to play a full part in school life, the following strategies are in place to help them do this:

- The designated teacher will monitor the involvement of LAC in extra-curricular activities
- The designated teacher will liaise with the young person, carers and social workers to try to promote involvement in extra-curricular activities through pep meetings.

The success of all school strategies and use of funded initiatives will be monitored and evaluated by:

- Collection and analysis of information at discussions at pep meetings
- Discussions with Looked After Child

5 Liaison with outside agencies

To ensure that all those involved in the education and care of LAC work together in their best interests, the designated person will access additional support or use of funded initiatives by liaising with Social Workers and the Virtual school to ensure all LAC have a pep. The designated person will participate in and co-ordinate Review and Planning meetings for LAC and will carry out annual reviews for children that have Education and Health -Care Plans (EHCP) to coincide whenever possible.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Teacher is of central importance in enabling LAC to achieve their full potential in school. The majority of the roles and responsibilities are implicit in the above sections of this policy. In addition the Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Attend training sessions organised by Bucks Local Authority
- Cascade training to all staff
- Liaise with members of staff to monitor LAC
- Work closely with social workers and the Virtual school to enable the writing of effective peps.
- Attend all meetings for LAC or arrange a deputy safeguarding lead to attend
- Work with young people at an appropriate level to enable them to contribute to educational aspects of their care plans

The named Governor for Safeguarding and Looked After Children is Mrs Sue Newling and she reports to the governing body and the local authority annually. The named Governor ensures that LAC have equal access to the national curriculum, statutory assessments, additional educational support, appropriate pastoral support and extra-curricular activities.

7. Evaluation

The general success and appropriateness of this policy will be evaluated annually. The results of the evaluation will be passed to the named Governor for safeguarding before being presented to the Governing Body.

The next review will be February 2018

Appendix 1 – Personal Education Plan (pep) for Buckinghamshire Local Authority

Personal Education Plans (pep) for Buckinghamshire Local Authority

The statutory guidance on the duty of local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under s52 of the Children's Act 2004 makes it clear that the Personal Education Plan (pep) is not only an integral part of the Care Plan but also provides the means by which a looked after child's educational progress and achievement can be monitored. The pep should reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning which secures good basic skills, stretches aspirations and builds life chances.

The pep is the joint responsibility of the Local Authority and the school but should involve all those with an interest in the child's education including

- The young person
- The social worker
- The designated safeguarding lead
- The carer
- The parent (where appropriate)

Effective and high quality peps should:

- Be a comprehensive and enduring record of the child's experience, progress and achievement (academic and otherwise)
- Be linked to information in other education plans such as EHCPs, provision maps, etc
- Identify developmental and educational needs (short and long term) in relation to skills, subject knowledge and experiences
- Set short term targets and aspirations
- Document identified actions specific individuals intended to support the achievement of agreed targets
- Identify if the child is eligible for Pupil Premium and if so how the allowance will be used to support the targets in the pep.

With effect from 1st September 2013, the Education Support Team for Looked After Children will co-ordinate and facilitate the initial pep.

The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for:

- Arranging for the young person to complete their section of the pep so the young person's views can be taken into account
- Completing the sections relating to attainment, progress, attendance, support needs and school interventions
- Identifying those education colleagues who will have a contribution to make at the meetings

The social worker is responsible for:

- Consulting with carers and parents who should be encouraged to attend the meetings
- Completing sections of the pep relating to personal details, care details, responsibilities

Reviewing the pep

The pep will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it takes into account progress, changes and transitions. The meeting should include the views of all those involved. The pep must be reviewed every six months but is usually termly or more frequent if a change of school is involved. The Virtual School is responsible for reviewing the Plan.