

Lakeside Community Primary School

Looked After Children (LAC) School Policy



Designated Teacher for LAC: Reviewed in October 2017	L Knibbs
Support For Looked After Children	M Peasgood
Governor with responsibility for LAC:	E Parsons

The school is aware of and implements the guidance contained within the key documents outlined in Appendix 1 and specifically from the Governance Handbook (DfE Nov 2015, p46/47) which are outlined below:

1. Admission authorities are required, with some limited exceptions, to give priority to looked after children, children adopted from care under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 and those who left care under a 'Special Guardianship Order' or 'Residence Order' in their oversubscription criteria. The practical effect of this is that in a school's published admission arrangements, the first and highest oversubscription criterion must be looked after children (see paragraph 1.7 of the Admissions Code). Provisions also apply to schools with a religious character and grammar schools (paragraphs 1.37 and 1.19 of the Admissions Code).
2. The law gives a local authority that looks after a child the right to direct the admission authority of any maintained school to give them a place. This applies, even where the school is currently full, or is in another local authority area (see paragraph 3.19 of the School Admission Code).
3. Boards of all maintained schools are required to appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of looked after children who are on the school roll. Academies are under an obligation to do this through their funding agreements.
4. Boards must ensure, as a minimum, that:
 - a designated teacher is appointed;
 - the teacher undertakes appropriate training;
 - it considers an annual report from the designated teacher; and
 - it acts on any issues that the report raises.

5. Regulations specify that the role should be carried out by:
 - a qualified teacher, within the meaning of section 132 of the Education Act 2002, who has completed the appropriate induction period (if required); or
 - the headteacher or acting headteacher at the school.
6. All looked after children have a personal education plan (PEP) as part of the care plan that is drawn up by the local authority that looks after them. The PEP forms part of the child's education record.

Who are Looked After Children?

The term 'looked after' originates from the **Children Act 1989** and is the legal term for children in care. You may also hear the terms 'children in public care' or 'children who are looked after'.

When is a child 'looked after'?

A child is looked after under the following circumstances:

- The child is in accommodation commissioned and provided by the Local Authority for more than 24 hours.
- The child is the subject of an Emergency Protection Order, Interim Care Order or Care Order either living at home or placed away from home with relatives, friends or local authority carers.
- The child is remanded to Local Authority Care.
- The child is subject to a Secure Order under the Children Act 1989.
- The child is placed for adoption but the adoption order has not been made.
- The child is an unaccompanied minor.
- The child is in receipt of a series of Short Term Breaks as part of a Family Support plan for periods of 24 hours or more. (These children are only looked after for the time that they are placed away from home and do not need to be on your register of Looked After Children; nor do they need Personal Education Plans.)

When is a child NOT 'looked after'?

A child ceases to be looked after when:

The child returns home to live and is not the subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order or Emergency Protection Order.

- The child reaches independence and is not the subject of a Care Order.
- The child reaches 18.
- The child dies.
- The child is adopted.

- The child is made subject to a special guardianship order (SGO) or child arrangement order

Allocation of resources

The Governing Board will ensure that the school allocates resources to support appropriate provision for LAC.

Staff will be encouraged to attend courses and termly LA Network meeting that help them to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to support LAC. Part of the Designated Teacher's role is to develop awareness with school staff and Governors of issues associated with LAC.

Pupil Premium Plus funding will be applied for and used to "close the gap" in educational outcomes. The process by which this is done varies between Local Authorities.

Monitoring the progress of LAC

The social worker for the LAC should initiate a Personal Education Plan – PEP - within 10 days of joining the school, or of entering care, and ensure that the young person is actively involved. It is vital that the school assesses each LAC's attainment on entry to ensure continuity of learning.

The school will monitor and track the achievement, attainment and progress of all LAC at regular intervals. LAC will require their PEP to be reviewed, according to their needs, as initiated by the Reviewing Officer, Social Worker or Designated Teacher. The young person's views should be sought by the Designated Teacher and noted on the PEP.

The Designated Teacher will know who are all the LAC in school and will have access to their relevant contact details including parents, carers and social worker, PEPs and attainment and progress data. The Designated Teacher will also know about any LAC from other Local Authorities. It is important that the school flags LAC status appropriately in the school's information systems so that information is readily available as required.

Partnership working

At school we firmly believe in developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable LAC to achieve their potential. LAC Review meetings and ePEP meetings are an opportunity to further this partnership working.

We also recognise the important contribution that external support services make in supporting LAC. Colleagues from the following support services may be involved with individual LAC:

- Derby City Virtual School for LAC

- educational psychologists and SEN services
- medical officers
- school nurses
- The LA named nurse for Looked After Children
- CAMHS
- Education Welfare Officers
- Social Care Workers/ Children's Practitioners/ Residential Child Care Worker
- Youth Offending Service
- Multi-Agency Teams.

LAC policy review and evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's provision for LAC

The LAC policy will be reviewed annually.

The school will undertake a self-evaluation exercise using the National Association of VSH self-evaluation framework. The outcome of this will inform the developmental actions which are necessary to improve practice.

APPENDIX 1

- Governance handbook for trustees of academies and multi academy trusts and governors of maintained schools DfE November 2015
- The Role & Responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children - statutory guidance for school governing bodies, 2009
- Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children - Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008 / Children Act 1989
- Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England - A guide for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion, 2012
- Department for Education, School Admissions Code, Feb 2012
- Supporting Looked After Learners - A Practical Guide for School Governors 2005
- Advice on the Education of Summer Born Children, July 2013

APPENDIX 2 - Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher

(The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children DCFS 2009, p4/5)

The role of the designated teacher within the school

- The designated teacher should have lead responsibility for helping school staff understand the things which affect how looked after children learn and achieve.
- The designated teacher should:
 - promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how looked after children learn
 - make sure the young person has a voice in setting learning targets
 - be a source of advice for staff about differentiated teaching, if required
 - implement strategies appropriate for individual children and support staff; making full use of assessment and tracking systems
 - make sure that looked after children are prioritised in one-to-one tuition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home
 - have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of the child's personal education plan (ePEP) within the school.

The role of the designated teacher in developing the personal education plan (ePEP)

- All looked after children must have a PEP as part of their overall care plan. The PEP should be sent to the designated teacher when the child becomes looked after or joins the school. Each Local Authority has its own PEP documentation, so as a school we will complete what is necessary.
- The PEP is a shared document which includes the information that everyone needs to help their conversations, planning and the delivery of strategies required to make sure the child gets the support and provision needed to succeed.
- The designated teacher leads on how the PEP is used as a tool in school to make sure the child's progress towards education targets is monitored. S/he makes sure that it is updated and available in time for the local authority review of the child's wider care plan. For each statutory review of the care plan the PEP must include:

- any new information about progress towards education targets since the last PEP review
 - information about what has not been taken forward.
- The designated teacher has a key role in helping looked after children make a smooth transition to their new school or college, including making sure there are effective arrangements in place for the speedy transfer of information.

The relationship of the designated teacher to others beyond the school

- The designated teacher has a key role in making sure there is a central point of initial contact within the school who can manage the process of how the school engages with others (e.g. social workers, virtual school heads), works in a joined up way and minimises disruption to the child's education.
- The designated teacher should make sure that:
 - there is an agreed process in place for how the school works with others in focusing on how everyone contributes to promoting the child's educational achievement;
 - school policies (e.g. around Home School Agreements) are communicated to social workers and carers;
 - the school does everything possible to maximise educational stability for the child, especially by finding ways of sharing information through the PEP and in providing advice to the local authority about the impact of disrupting education.

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