

Looked After Children (LAC) Policy 2020/2021

CONTEXT and PRINCIPLES

Nationally, Looked After Children (LAC) significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. We acknowledge that the school has a major part to play in ensuring that LAC are enabled to achieve and thrive to their best ability.

Helping LAC succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority for the school. This policy takes account of:

DfES Statutory Guidance to Governing Bodies: "Supporting Looked After Learners" 2006.

The Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2007.

The Local Authority's duty under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 to promote the education of looked after children (LAC).

"Show Me How I Matter: a guide to the education of looked after children" LGA and IDEA publication 2006.

The school's approach to supporting the educational achievement of LAC is based on the following principles:

- Having high expectations
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes
- Promoting attendance
- Early intervention and priority action
- Targeting support
- Minimising exclusions
- Achieving continuity and promoting stability
- Listening to children
- Promoting a wider learning experience
- Promoting health and wellbeing
- Working in partnership with carers, parents (where appropriate), social workers and other professionals

ACTIONS

As for all our learners, the school is committed to helping every LAC to achieve the highest standards they can, including supporting career aspirations for further and higher education. This can be measured by improvement in their achievements and attendance.

The SLT and Governing Body is committed to providing quality education for all students and will adhere to the following statutory requirements in respect of LAC:

Ensure a Designated Teacher for LAC is identified and enabled to carry out the responsibilities set out below – named Lead Sally Davey

Ensure an E-Personal Education Plan (EPEP) is put in place, implemented and regularly reviewed in line with statutory and Kirklees guidance on EPEP's for every LAC.

Identify a Nominated Governor for Looked After Children – Sue Bonham

This policy links with a number of other school policies and it is important that Governors have regard to the needs of LAC when reviewing them:

Behaviour for Learning Policy
Anti-Bullying Policy
Safeguarding Policy
Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Policy

The school will champion the needs of LAC, raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them, in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest possible level.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HEADTEACHER

Identify a Designated Teacher for LAC, whose role is set out below. Cover arrangements will need to be in place should the designated teacher not be available to carry out these legal duties.

Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor and track the progress, attendance and exclusions (if any) of LAC and that appropriate action is taken where outcomes fall below expectations.

Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of LAC.

Ensure staff within the school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

Identify a Nominated Governor for LAC.

Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of LAC.

Ensure the school as a whole has an overview of the needs of all LAC, regardless of their originating authority.

Allocate resources to meet the needs of LAC. Ensure other policies and procedures support their needs.

This Headteacher/LAC Lead will:

Monitor the academic progress of LAC, through a report to the Governing Body. The report will include:

- The number of LAC on roll and dates of joining and/or leaving.
- Their attendance, as a discreet group, compared to other learners.
- Their results as a discreet group, compared to other learners.
- The number and duration of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any), as a discreet group, compared to other learners.
- The destination of learners who leave the school.

The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the learners concerned.

Ensure systems are in place to share the above annual report with School Improvement Partners, the Local Authority and OFSTED in line with current statutory requirements.

Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of education, by ensuring the school implements policies, practices and procedures to ensure LAC achieve and enjoy their time within the school.

Ensure the school has a Designated Teacher for LAC and that they are enabled and supported, along with the headteacher and other staff, to carry out their responsibilities as below.

THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHERS ACROSS THE SCHOOL

Government guidance says that the Designated Teacher should be “someone with sufficient authority to make things happen; who should be an advocate for looked after children, accessing schools and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them.”

It is strongly recommended that this person should be a member of the Senior Leadership Team. It should also be noted that the remit of OFSTED inspectors and School Improvement Partners includes a focus on LAC, monitoring how the School has promoted their inclusion and attainment, and the effectiveness of joint working with other schools and stakeholders involved with them.

Our Designated Teachers will:

Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the E-Personal Education Plan (EPEP) to plan that transition in consultation with the child's social worker.

Endeavour to ensure each EPEP is completed with the child, their social worker, carer and other relevant people, adhering to statutory guidelines.

Ensure that each LAC has an identified member of staff they can talk to: this need not be the designated teacher, as it will be based on the child's own situation and wishes. It should be noted that members of staff who take on this role may also need to make use of:

- The Designated Teacher;
- SLT as requirements are linked to their responsibility;
- staff leading curriculum areas;
- staff working directly with LAC in a pastoral capacity (i.e. group staff or attached staff)

Track academic and other progress and target support appropriately.

Coordinate any support for LAC that is necessary within the school and from outside.

Ensure confidentiality for individual learners, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.

Facilitate and encourage LAC to join extra-curricular activities and maximise out of school learning opportunities.

Ensure as far as possible attendance at planning and review meetings.

Act as an advisor to staff, raising awareness of the achievements as well as needs of LAC.

Set up timely meetings with relevant parties (eg carer, social worker, birth family, other professionals) where the learner is experiencing difficulties within the school or is at risk of exclusion.

Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and where appropriate within the school.

Be pro-active in supporting transitions and planning when moving to a new phase in their education.

Promote inclusion across the school.

Be aware that a significant majority of LAC nationally say that they are bullied, so will actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the anti-bullying policy.

Raise awareness of financial and other supports that are available to LAC for further and higher education.

Work closely with the Virtual School Headteacher and implement/adhere to expectations set down by the Virtual School Head

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF

All our staff will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of LAC, as for all students.
- Maintain LAC's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond positively to a learner's request to be the named member of staff whom they can talk to when they feel it necessary.
- Respond promptly and within deadline to the designated teacher's requests for information.
- Work to enable LAC to achieve stability and success within the school.
- Promote the self-esteem of LAC.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of LAC.
- Be aware that a significant majority of LAC say they are bullied, so work to prevent bullying in line with the anti-bullying policy.