



Looked After Children Policy

Rationale

Many children and young people who are in care have suffered abuse or neglect. Despite having as broad a range of abilities as their peers, LAC and previously-LAC are particularly

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vulnerable to underachievement. Nationally, LAC and previously-LAC significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Their academic and social progress is likely to be affected by their experiences, and compounded by instability in their personal circumstances. Helping LAC and previously-LAC succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority for our trust.

Corvus Education Trust recognises that LAC and previously-LAC can experience specific and significant disadvantage within a school setting, and is committed to ensuring that they reach their potential in all areas. We are aware that LAC and previously-LAC may have specific difficulties in transport and attendance, doing homework, getting parental consent for activities, obtaining funding for extra activities, obtaining correct uniform and equipment, as well as stigma about their circumstances. Corvus Education Trust recognises that LAC and previously-LAC may have very specific needs and may be coping with trauma, abuse or rejection, and are likely to experience personal distress and uncertainty.

Corvus Education Trust endeavours to provide positive experience and offer stability, safety, continuity and individual care and attention for all our pupils. We believe that each trust school has a major part to play in ensuring that LAC and previously-LAC can be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic wellbeing. Children who are looked after or previously looked after require special treatment and positive discrimination in their favour in order to improve their situation.

With this in mind, we aim to:

- Encourage pupils to reach the highest standards of which they are capable and to make good progress from what they are currently already able to do.
- Ensure that pupils enjoy high quality teaching and are enjoying a curriculum that meets their needs.
- Plan realistically and using the school's resources efficiently in order to ensure the school meets the needs of the children.
- Promote a positive approach in all aspects of school life.
- Help pupils develop their cultural, moral and social understanding.

Trustee Responsible:

Mr Mike Marshall

Designated Teacher for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children:

Miss Diane Bainbridge

Definitions

- Looked after children are defined as, children or young people who are subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989.
- Children who are placed in foster care, children's residential homes, with relatives or friends, in semi-independent or supported independent accommodation.
- If a child is subject to a Care or Interim Care Order whilst placed with a parent, they are classed as looked after, since the LA has parental responsibility.
- Children who are not subject to an order, but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents, are regarded as looked after.

- Previously looked after children are children that are no longer looked after by a LA because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order.
- Children who were adopted outside England and Wales from 'state care' are defined as previously looked after children.

Roles and Responsibilities**Governing Body Responsibilities**

- Ensuring the school has a coherent policy for LAC and previously-LAC
- Reviewing the school's policies and procedures in conjunction with legislation and statutory guidance
- Ensuring the designated teacher for LAC and previously-LAC has received the appropriate training
- Ensuring LAC and previously-LAC have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and that reasonable adjustments are made, if necessary
- Reviewing the annual report produced by the designated teacher to evaluate the progress of LAC in the school
- Ensuring they receive feedback from the head teacher regarding the effectiveness of the policy on an annual basis

Head Teacher /CEO Responsibilities

- Appointing a designated teacher for LAC and previously-LAC
- Allowing the designated teacher, the time and facilities to succeed in carrying out their duties
- Overseeing the policy and monitoring its implementation, feeding back to the governing body annually on the following:
 - The number of LAC and previously LAC on the school
 - An analysis of assessment scores as a cohort, compared to other pupil groups
 - The attendance of LAC and previously LAC, compared to other pupil groups

- The level of fixed term and permanent exclusions, compared to other pupil groups
- Ensuring all members of staff aware that the support of looked after children is a key priority.
- Promoting actively challenging negative stereotypes of looked after children.

The Designated Teacher for LAC and previously LAC Responsibilities

- Building relationships with health, education and social care partners and other partners so that the Virtual School Head understands the support available to LAC and previously LAC
- Promoting the educational achievement of LAC and previously LAC at the school
- Acting as the main contact for social services and the education department
- Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations
- Ensuring LAC are involved in setting their own targets
- Advising staff on teaching strategies for LAC and previously LAC
- Ensuring that LAC and previously LAC are prioritised for intervention and support
- Leading on how the child's personal education plan PEP is developed and used in school to ensure the child's progress towards targets is monitored
- Working with the child's VSH and social worker to develop and implement their PEP
- Working with the head teacher to submit an annual report to the governing body, which details the progress of all LAC and previously LAC

The SENDCo Responsibilities

- Ensuring they are involved in reviewing the PEP and care plans for LAC and previously LAC
- Liaising with the class teacher, designated teacher, specialists and parents when considering interventions to support the progress of previously LAC

Staff Responsibilities

- Being aware of Looked After Children and Previously LAC in their classes.
- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of looked after children and previously LAC, as for all pupils.
- Preserving confidentiality, where appropriate, and showing sensitivity and understanding.
- Respond positively to a pupil's request to be the named member of staff to whom they may talk with.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- Be aware that 60% of looked after children say that they are bullied so being vigilant for any signs of bullying towards LAC and previously LAC.
- Promoting the self-esteem of looked after children and previously LAC. Work to enable looked after children and previously LAC to achieve stability within the school.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of looked after children and previously LAC.

Record keeping and information sharing

- The Designated Teacher will keep an up-to-date record of LAC and Previously LAC in school and will ensure that relevant information is made known to appropriate staff.
- A Personal Education Plan will be initiated by the Social Worker within 10 school days of the Looked After Child starting at the school or being taken into care and will be reviewed termly and as necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the LAC.

The PEP will provide a regular opportunity to review progress, note any concerns and ensure that all relevant parties are informed accordingly.

- Copies of reports and appropriate documentation will be sent to authorised carers and agencies involved with the child as well as any receiving school at point of transition.
- It is vital that the Looked After Child is aware of information being recorded, in what circumstances and who will have access to it. How this is shared with them will depend on their age and level of understanding.

Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

- Every looked after child must have a personal education plan (PEP), which is used to support the child in fulfilling their educational potential.
- In Norfolk we use www.Welfare.Call.com to record and review the Looked After Child's Personal Education Plan in the form of an ePEP. This record is initiated by the Virtual School for children in care and shared with the Designated Teacher and Social Worker.
- This is an evolving record of what needs to happen for the child to enable them to make their expected progress.
- The PEP will reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning which meets the identified educational needs of the child.
- The school will work with other professionals and the child's carers to use the PEP to support the child's educational needs, raise the child's aspirations and improve their life chances.
- All the relevant bodies, such as the LA, the designated teacher and other teachers, will work with the child in creating the PEP.
- The PEP will include access to nursery provision that is appropriate to the child's age.
- On-going catch-up support will be made available for children who have fallen behind with work (including use of effective intervention strategies).
- Provision of immediate suitable education if a child is not in school because of temporary or permanent exclusion.
- If a child is moving to a new school, transitional support will be provided and will be factored into their PEP.
- Support will be provided to help the child meet their aspirations
- The PEP will include extended services such as after school clubs, study support and leisure interests.
- Support will be provided for improving attendance and behaviour.

Communicating with Agencies and the Virtual School Head (VSH)

- The school will ensure that copies of all relevant reports are forwarded to the looked after children's social workers, in addition to carers or residential social workers.
- The school will co-ordinate their review meetings, for example, hold their annual review of looked after children with their statutory care review.
- The school will work with other agencies to exchange information such as changes in circumstances, exclusions or attendance issues.
- Behaviour management strategies will be agreed between the VSH and the school, to ensure challenging behaviour is managed in the most effective way for that individual child.
- The designated teacher for LAC and previously-LAC will communicate with the VSH and child's social worker to facilitate the completion of the PEP.

- Through the designated teacher, the school will work with the VSH, social worker and other relevant agencies to monitor any arrangements in place so that actions and activities recorded in the child's PEP are implemented without delay.
- The designated teacher will communicate with the VSH and agree on how pupil premium plus (PP+) can be used effectively to accommodate the child's educational attainment and progress.
- PP+ for previously-LAC will be allocated directly to, and managed by, the school.
- The school will work with the VSH to manage allocation of PP+ for the benefit of our cohort of LAC, or previously-LAC, and according to their needs.
- If deemed necessary, the school will allocate an amount of funding to an individual to support their needs.
- The designated teacher will ensure consistent and strong communication with the VSH regarding LAC who are absent without authorisation.
- The school will share their expertise on what works in supporting the education of LAC and previously-LAC.

Training

- The designated teacher and other school staff involved in the education of LAC and previously-LAC have received the appropriate training

Pupils Mental Health

- LAC and previously-LAC are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues which can impact their behaviour and education. Designated teachers will have awareness, training and skills regarding a child's needs and how to support them in relation to behaviour management and mental health.
- The designated teacher will work with the VSH to ensure the school is able to identify signs of potential mental health issues, understand the impact issues can have on LAC and previously-LAC, and knows how to access further assessment and support, where necessary.
- To regularly measure the emotional and behavioural difficulties experienced by LAC and previously-LAC, a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire will be used to help social workers and other relevant professionals to form a view about LAC's emotional wellbeing. Teachers will regularly complete their element of the questionnaire to assist social workers in their assessment.

Exclusions

- Past experiences of LAC and previously-LAC will be considered when designing and implementing the school's Behaviour Policy.
- The school will have regard to the DfE's statutory guidance 'Exclusions from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England' and, as far as possible, avoid excluding any LAC.
- Where the school has concerns about a child's behaviour, the VSH will be informed at the earliest opportunity.
- Exclusion will only be considered as a last resort; where exclusion is considered, the school will work with the VSH, and others, to consider what additional support can be provided to prevent exclusion, and any additional arrangements that can be made to support the pupil's education in the event of exclusion.
- The school will inform parents that they can seek the advice of the VSH on strategies to support their child to avoid exclusion.

Pupils with SEND

- Support for LAC with SEND, who do not need an EHC plan, will be covered as part of the child's PEP and care plan reviews.
- The SENDCo, class teacher, designated teacher and specialists will involve parents when considering interventions to support their child's progress.
- If appropriate, the VSH will be invited to comment on proposed SEND provision for previously-LAC.

Allocation of Resources.

- The DFE Guidance is clear that the Pupil Premium + (PP+) for LAC and previously LAC, must be used by schools for the benefit of the child's educational needs as outlined in their PEP. The impact of the PPG+ must be measurable and evidenced.
- PP+ funding for previously Looked After Children is allocated directly to the child's school and is managed by Corvus Education Trust
- In Norfolk the VSH administers the funding for LAC and we can apply for the top up. From April 2018 the VSH will give the PP+ directly to the school on completion and sign off the Looked after Child's PEP and if we require further funding for exceptional circumstances we are required to apply to the VSH.
- PP+ is not a personal budget for individual children; however, both the VSH and Corvus Education Trust may choose to allocate an amount of funding to an individual to support their needs.

Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the designated teacher and executive head teacher.
- The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2019