

# Looked After Children Policy



**WARREN FARM**  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

**Approved by:** Governors **Date:** 19/10/2023

**Last reviewed on:** 08/10/2023

**Next review due by:** 08/10/2024

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 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 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, the following arrangements are in place:

- Children and their carers will be invited into school to meet with the Head Teacher in the first instance.
- A second visit will be arranged. During this second visit the child and carers will be shown around school, introduced to staff and introduced to their prospective class teacher and peers.
- At least one more visit into school to spend time with their class teacher and peers will be encouraged before they are admitted full time. During this visit the child will be supported by a carer or known adult for as long as necessary to ensure the child feels safe and secure.
- The Head Teacher and/or the designated teacher will meet with all carers and professionals involved with the child before entry to the school
- If the child has already been in an educational establishment then the Head Teacher will liaise with the Head Teacher of this establishment.
- An individual plan for transition into the school will be developed by the Head Teacher, designated teacher, professionals and carers to ensure a smooth transition.
- All teachers will be made aware of the child's needs and key adults in their life such as carers, support workers and other professionals.

### **2. Pastoral Support**

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

Mrs Mandip Nandhra, the designated teacher for Looked After Children will:

- ensure that staff are aware of any looked after 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 stockroom door, on the staffroom wall and in the main office to safeguard the child.
- liaise effectively with other agencies involved with the child and attend review meetings
- work in partnership with carers, parents and others with parental responsibility to ensure that looked after children receive their entitlement.
- ensure that records and plans are kept and maintained appropriately
- provide information to the Governing Body about the progress and outcomes of looked after pupils on the school roll.
- secure training for the designated teacher or others as appropriate to ensure that the school can meet the needs of looked after pupils

### **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. Supply teachers and non-teaching staff will be given an appropriate amount of information, to be determined by Mrs Catherine Osborne.
- Each child will have their own folder containing all essential information and this will be kept in the safeguarding cupboard in the Head Teacher's office.
- The information on this sheet will be shared with all members of the Senior Leadership Team.
- If not already in place a Personal Education Plan will be completed at the earliest opportunity
- Mrs Osborne will ensure that any arrangements recorded are adhered to by all staff involved.
- 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 Pupil Progress Meetings
- Termly Tracking of progress and inclusion of interventions if necessary
- Consultation Evenings will 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' or 'Early Years Pupil Premium'
- All progress will be reported anonymously to governors termly
- Termly meeting will be held with carers and all professional involved with the child in order to review progress / impact / next steps of individual Personal Education Plan.
- All staff will adhere to the assessment policy.
- This information will be analysed by the Senior Leadership Team to measure the attainment of Looked After Children against the school population as a whole.
- All children in school including Looked After Children are tracked on a termly basis. Progress is tracked and interventions are arranged if required.
- All children including Looked After Children have 'outstanding' progress targets set at the beginning of the year.
- Looked After Children will be tracked and their progress will be analysed against other children in school to ensure they are making progress in line with their peers.

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

- Attendance data is collated on a weekly basis for all children in school including Looked After Children.
- This information is analysed and kept in a secure cupboard in the Head Teachers office
- Any absence is followed up and if absence falls below 96% carers and professionals will be invited into school to meet with the Head Teacher.
- All staff will adhere to the Attendance policy
- This information will be analysed by Mrs Gillian Barr 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:

- All staff will adhere to the behaviour and discipline policy and procedures stated within that policy will be followed.
- Behaviour logs will be kept by the class teacher – including positive and challenging behaviours
- Incident books will be completed if required
- This information will be analysed by 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:

- Mrs Nandhra (DHT) and Miss Gosling (SENCO) 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 in school will adhere to the Inclusion Policy

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:

- Interventions will be completed (wellbeing and resilience intervention) and academic

- interventions,
- When required professional agencies involvement will be sought by Mrs Nandhra or Miss Gosling.

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 Mrs Osborne to gain their support and collect any relevant information
- Attendance is celebrated termly by '100% Attendance Awards'
- Each week a 'cool cat' is presented to the class who have the best weekly attendance in each Key Stage.
- Attendance and lateness is tracked on a weekly basis and acted upon if required.

#### **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 Mrs Osborne as soon as behaviour problems are identified or if there are significant changes to the behaviour of a Looked After Child.
- The staff will follow the school Pastoral / Behaviour policy. The strategies included within these documents take into account all children's needs.
- If the problem continues, the Social Worker, carers and staff from support services such as the Educational Psychology Service, Pupil and School Support and Behaviour Support will be invited to a meeting with appropriate school staff to determine supportive strategies to reduce the challenging behaviour. The responsibility for organising such a meeting lies with Mr Taylor (HT).
- 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.

#### **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.

#### **4.4 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. As we believe it is essential that Looked After Children are able to play a full part in school life, the following strategies are in place to help them to do this:

- The Designated Teacher will monitor the involvement of Looked After Children 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 Personal Education Plan meetings*

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

- Collection and analysis of information
- Discussion with school staff, carers, Social Workers and staff from LA Support Services, both informally and during meetings eg those set up to write Personal Education Plans
- Discussions with Looked After Children
- Responsibility for monitoring and evaluation of school strategies lies with the senior leadership team.

## **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 Statements of SEN 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 Mrs Mandip Nandhra**

The role of the Designated Teacher is of central importance in enabling Looked After Children to achieve their full potential in school.

The majority of the roles and responsibilities of the Designated Teacher are implicit in the above sections of this policy. In addition, the Designated Teacher will:

- Attend training sessions organised by the LA
- Cascade this training to school staff
- Arrange and/or deliver training to all staff, including those newly appointed, on issues affecting the educational attainment of Looked After Children and the ways in which educational disadvantage can be overcome
- 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 Head Teacher, although some of the day-to-day tasks may be delegated to other staff. Working with the Senior Management Team, the Head Teacher 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 Mrs Judith Dovey**

The named governor will report to the Governing Body on an annual basis:

- The number of Looked After pupils in the school
- A comparison of test scores for Looked After Children as a group, compared to those of other pupils
- The attendance of pupils as a discrete group, compared to other pupils
- The level of fixed term/permanent exclusions
- Pupil destinations

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
- Statutory assessments
- Additional educational support
- Appropriate pastoral support
- Extra-curricular activities

## **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.

### **Personal Education Plans for Looked After Children**

The statutory guidance on the duty of local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under S52 of the Children 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 child/young person
- The social worker
- The designated teacher
- 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, including a statement of special educational needs and IEPs;
- identify developmental and educational needs (short and long term) in relation to skills, knowledge, subject areas and experiences;
- set short term targets, including progress monitoring against each of the areas identified against development and educational needs;
- set long term plans and educational targets and aspirations (e.g. in relation to public examinations, further and higher education, work experience and career plans and aspirations);

- document identified actions for specific individuals intended to support the achievement of agreed targets;
- identify whether the child is eligible for the Pupil Premium and if so how the allowance will be used to support the targets set in the PEP;

### **The initial PEP**

The statutory guidance states that it is the social worker's responsibility to initiate the PEP and that every child and young person looked after should have a PEP in place for the first statutory review of the Care Plan (within 20 days). It is expected that a PEP will be completed for all compulsory school age children, those in Early Years provision and those over compulsory school age who are in education.

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

(See below for guidance on PEP reviews)

On receiving information that a child or young person has become LAC, a member of the team will

- Liaise with the social worker, the designated teacher/early years provider and the carer(s) to arrange an initial PEP meeting as soon as possible
- Identify any additional professionals involved and invite them to the meeting if appropriate
- Request that the social worker complete Part A of the PEP
- Request that the designated teacher complete Part B of the PEP
- Request that the designated teacher supports the child/young person to complete their section of the PEP
- Attend and chair the initial PEP meeting
- Complete Part C of the PEP
- Collate all parts of the PEP, ensuring all the necessary information is included
- Ensure the completed document is uploaded to CareStore and copies are distributed to all relevant parties

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the progress the child/young person is making, identify any barriers to progress, agree appropriate targets and develop an action plan that will support the child/young person in achieving their objectives. It is important therefore that as much information as possible is gathered in advance and made available to the meeting.

The child/young person and parent(s) should be involved as far as is appropriate and possible.

If a child/young person is without education provision, the Education Manager for Looked After Children will be consulted.

**The Designated Teacher** is responsible for:

- Arranging for the child or young person to complete their section of the PEP, which gives an opportunity for the child to have their views taken into account and valued.
- Completing the sections of the form which require information relating to attainment, progress, target setting, attendance, support needs and school interventions
- Identifying those education colleagues who will have a contribution to make to the meeting

**The Social Worker** is responsible for:

- Consulting with carers and parents who should be encouraged to attend the meeting as they have a key role to play as the first line of support for the child or young person's education
- Completing the sections of the form which require information relating to personal details, care details, responsibilities

### **Reviewing the PEP**

The PEP will need to be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it takes account of progress, changes and transitions. The review should always involve a meeting so that the views of all those involved can be taken account of in developing the action plan – if holding a meeting to review the PEP is not possible the Education Manager for Looked After Children must be consulted.

The PEP must be reviewed every 6 months but may be reviewed earlier if there is a significant change that impacts on education – particularly a change of school.

### **The child's social worker is responsible for arranging the PEP review.**

This will involve

- Arranging a date for the review meeting
- Inviting relevant professionals, carer, parent and child/young person to the meeting
- Ensuring the paperwork is updated
  - Part A by the social worker
  - Part B by the designated teacher
  - The child/young person's views
- Ensuring that Part C is completed at the meeting
- Ensuring that the completed paperwork is collated, uploaded to CareStore and distributed to those who attended the meeting

The Education Manager for Looked After Children will monitor the PEP process, working with those directly involved to ensure PEPs are making a positive contribution to improving educational outcomes.

### **The PEP process**

#### **When a child/young person becomes looked after:**

1. The Education Support Team will
  - i. Contact the designated teacher, social worker and carer(s) to arrange a meeting
  - ii. Request that the social worker
    - Completes PEP Part A – Core Information
  - iii. Request that the designated teacher
    - Completes PEP Part B – Core Information
    - Ensures the child/young person has opportunity to complete their section of the PEP
  - iv. Identify, consult with additional educational professionals and invite them to the PEP meeting if appropriate
  - v. Ensure that carers, and if appropriate parents, are invited to the PEP meeting

## **The initial PEP meeting:**

1. The meeting should focus on
  - i. Sharing relevant information
  - ii. Acknowledging strengths and achievements
  - iii. Agreeing SMART targets (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely) – these may be targets already identified in existing plans eg IEPs, PSPs.
  - iv. Considering longer term goals and identifying any actions necessary to support progress towards those goals
  - v. Identifying any barriers to progress and agreeing appropriate action to reduce the impact on learning
  - vi. Considering how the Pupil Premium could support the action plan
  - vii. Agreeing a date to review the PEP
2. The discussion and decisions made at the meeting should be recorded.
3. The Education Support Team will ensure the PEP proforma is completed, circulated to everyone invited to the meeting.

## **Implementing the plan**

The designated teacher should ensure the PEP is implemented. This will involve liaising with colleagues and monitoring the impact of the agreed actions, strategies and interventions.

## **Reviewing the plan**

The plan should be reviewed as agreed, within 6 months or earlier if circumstances change significantly. **The child's social worker is responsible for ensuring the PEP is reviewed within the agreed timescales – see additional guidance above.**