

West Haddon Endowed School

Policy Document

CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER POLICY

A child may be 'looked after' but a local authority under a court order or through a voluntary arrangement made with the child's parents. Children looked after (CLA) may be living in foster or adoptive homes, children's residential homes, with a relative or with their birth parent(s).

Local authorities are under a statutory duty under Section 22 (3A) of the Children's Act 1989 to promote the education achievement of looked after children. This also applies to children who have been placed for adoption until the court makes the adoption order giving parental responsibility to adoptive parents.

All looked after children must have an electronic Personal Education Plan (PEP) which is part of the child's care plan. Information that must be covered in the PEP are specified in Schedule 1 (paragraph 2) of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 as amended. The PEP must include the contact details of the Virtual Schools Head for the authority that looks after the child.

The most common reason for children being looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect (paragraph 81, Keeping Children Safe, 2016). The Governing Body will ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep CLA safe.

The majority of CLA will have special educational needs. We will ensure that the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) works with care plan; and as part of the PEP process arrangements are in place to ensure any undiagnosed special educational needs are addressed through the SEND (special educational needs) framework as soon as possible (guidance, paragraph 29).

We are committed to providing quality education for all our pupils including CLA. It is nationally recognised that CLA significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion when compared with their peers. Therefore, we believe we have a duty 'to safeguard CLA, to promote their education achievements and to ensure they are able to achieve and reach their full potential'. (Children Act 2004).

Aims

- To promote the educational achievements of CLA by having high expectations in helping looked after children to achieve their full potential in education
- To ensure looked after children given the highest priority within a school admission arrangements

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Procedure

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body:

- Understands a local authority's duty as a corporate parent to promote a looked after child's educational achievement, and the main reasons why, as a group, looked after children underachieve.
- Understand the importance of specific professional training and development for senior leaders and designated teachers in supporting the achievement of looked after children
- Understands the powerful role a school can play in significantly improving the quality of life and educational experience of looked after children

The Governing Body will:

- Appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after and ensure they have appropriate training.
- Ensure arrangements are in place for the Designated Teacher to have appropriate information including: the child's legal status, contact arrangements with birth parents and those with parental responsibility, the child's care arrangements
- Ensure arrangements are in place for the designated safeguarding lead to have details of the child's social worker and name of the Virtual School Head in the authority that looks after the child.
- Ensure looked after children given the highest priority within a school admission arrangements
- Responsibility for ensuring LAC have equal access to admission to school, the National Curriculum, examinations, out of school learning and extra-curricular activities
- Responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy
- Responsibility for ensuring policies are made available to parents
- Nominated a link governor to visit the school regularly, to liaise with the designated teacher and to report back to the Governing Body;
- Responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy
- As far as possible avoid excluding looked after children, and where the school has concerns ensure arrangements are in place so that at the earliest possible opportunity the school can consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place
- Receive an annual report from the Head Teacher (see role of Head Teacher)

Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- A designated teacher is in place who is an advocate for CLA;
- Appropriate support and training is provided for the CLA teacher;
- Ensure all school personnel and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- That tracking procedures are in place to monitor admissions, attendance, exclusions, progress, behaviour and support;
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy;

- The Governing Body receives an annual report that outlines the following:
 - The number of CLA in the school
 - An analysis of test scores, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils
 - Attendance figures compared to other pupils
 - The level of fixed term and permanent exclusions compared to other pupils
 - The number of complaints
 - The destinations of CLA pupils when they leave the school

Role of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher is a strong advocate for CLA and will ensure that:

- Establish arrangements to take into account the child's views in identifying and meeting their educational needs
- All CLA and their carers receive a positive and smooth induction into the school;
- An appropriate Personal Profile is completed;
- Each CLA has an identified member of staff, other than their class teacher, that they can talk to (H Pulling or K Packer).
- Strong and positive home/school relationships are in place;
- CLA are included in all areas of school life;
- CLA are not bullied in any form by actively monitoring and preventing bullying by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy;
- All staff and governors are kept up to date on all issues relevant to CLA and receive the necessary training;
- All CLA receive the necessary support within the school;
- Strong links are in place with all agencies dealing with CLA;
- Urgent multi agency meetings will be convened if a CLA is experiencing difficulties or at risk of exclusion;
- CLA have full access to the National Curriculum;
- Out of hours learning and extra-curricular activities are promoted for CLA;
- Procedures are in place to provide confidentiality for all CLA;
- Academic progress, attendance and behaviour is tracked with appropriate support given;
- All information is transferred quickly and efficiently when CLA move to another school or phrase;
- The nominated Governor is kept up to date;
- The Governing Body receives an annual report on CLA
- Pupil Premium: children looked after attract pupil premium plus funding to assist in improving attainment and closing the attainment gap with their peers
- PEP: quality of the PEP is a joint responsibility of the local authority that looks after the child and the school - need to work closely together, alongside child, parent/relevant family member.

Role of the School Personnel

All teaching and support staff will:

- Be made aware of and will be familiar with the Guidance on CLA;
- Liaise with the Designated Teacher to enable CLA to achieve stability, success and to overcome any problems they may experience;

- On request provide relevant information for Personal Education Plans and review meetings;
- Encourage CLA to achieve their full educational and personal potential which will be celebrated at weekly achievement assemblies and the Annual Presentation of Awards;
- Constantly endeavour to promote self-esteem;
- Prevent bullying in line with the school's anti-bullying policy;
- Accept a request to be a CLA's named person to whom they can speak with when they feel it necessary;
- Ensure CLA are supported sensitively;

Role of Parents

Parents will be made aware of and will comply with this policy.

Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy

Annually the effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed, or when the need arises, and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be made to the governors.