

Laburnum Primary School

Looked After Children Policy



Updated by: Deputy Head Teacher

Approved Date: December 2021

Last reviewed: January 2021

Next review due by: January 2023

The Children Act (1989) introduced changes in terminology. The term 'in care' now refers solely to children who are subject to Care Orders. Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are 'accommodated' by the local authority. Both these groups are said to be 'Looked After children' (LAC) or children in care or 'children Looked After' (CLA) by the local authority. Accommodated children also include those in receipt of respite care – if it exceeds 20 days in one episode or over 120 days a year.

It is important not to confuse a young person's legal status with their living arrangements.

For example, a child on a Care Order can be living with:

- Foster carers
- In a children's home
- In a residential school
- With relatives, or
- Even with parents – under supervision of Children School and Family Services

Similarly, an 'accommodated' child can be living:

- In foster care
- In a children's home, or
- In a residential school

This policy incorporates requirements set out in the statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of Looked After children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004 AND Central Bedfordshire's 'Looked after children placements strategy' 2018.

For every child that is looked after by Central Bedfordshire, the local authority will receive £600 per term following the submission of a good Personal Education Plan. The payments will be made within the last two weeks of each term. If the child ceases to be looked after, the payment will cease at the end of that financial year.

Laburnum Primary School's approach to encouraging and supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children is based on the following principles:

- Ensuring an appropriately trained Designated Teacher is appointed, who will be responsible for all Looked After children.
- All Looked After Children will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) drawn up between the school, the child, and the child's social worker, which will identify the child's individual needs and the support they require
- Having high expectations for the child and ensuring equal access to a balanced and broadly based education
- Recording, monitoring, and improving the academic achievement of the child in addition to their health and wellbeing
- Achieving stability and continuity
- Prioritising reduction in exclusions and promoting attendance
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes
- Promoting good communication between all those involved in the child's life and listening to the child

- Maintaining and respecting the child's confidentiality wherever possible
- Ensuring staff awareness of, and sensitivity to, the difficulties and educational challenges of Looked After Children

The role of the Designated Teacher

The name of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children: Minke Dawes (Deputy Head Teacher)

Within school:

- To ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by 'Looked After' children and young people and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them
- To inform members of staff of the general educational needs of children who are 'Looked After', and to promote the involvement of these children in school homework clubs, extra curricular activities, home reading schemes, school councils, etc.
- To act as an advocate for children and young people designated as 'Looked After'
- To develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers and colleagues in Children School and Family services
- To hold a supervisory brief for all 'Looked After' children, e.g. to ensure all relevant education and care information is available to school staff and carers, and that this information is kept up to date
- To monitor the educational progress of all children who are 'looked-after' in order to inform the school's development plan
- To intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement or absence from school
- To inform the planning for Looked After children by the Secondary school through transfer meetings
- To ensure that the educational targets within an Individual Support Plan are implemented fully and that all relevant staff are aware of them
- To ensure best value when spending the additional budget share made available specifically for children Looked After to support achievement
- To advise on the rationale for the allocation of the Personal Education Allowance during the Personal Education Planning meeting
- To be responsible for the appropriate allocation of the Pupil Premium for children Looked After and to be accountable for how it is spent
- To report to the Governing Body on a termly basis on the outcomes for Looked After children
- To have Designated teachers attend training as appropriate
- To support the Quality Assurance Process for schools on working with Looked After children
- To enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their Care Plan;
- To ensure that a Home-School Agreement is drawn up with the primary carer and signed by the Social Worker

With individual children:

- To work with individual children, possibly alongside a carer, to arrive at a statement about their care arrangements and circumstances that they would be happy to share with staff and/or pupils

- To supervise the smooth induction of a new Looked After child into the school
- To develop in-school strategies to promote and accelerate the achievement of Looked After children and close the gap between them and their peers.
- To fully support additional learning opportunities that may be available from the Virtual Learning Environment and partner agencies

Liaison:

- To liaise with Designated Safeguarding Leads
- To help communication with Children School and Family services staff so that the Individual Support Plan can inform the child's Care Plan
- To attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or to contribute in other ways to care planning meetings and statutory reviews
- To be named contact for colleagues in Children's School and Family services
- To ensure the speedy transfer of information between agencies and individuals, and report on the progress of all Looked After children on the school role to the Corporate Parenting Officer as requested

Training:

- To develop knowledge of Children School and Family services procedures by attending training events organised by the Local Authority;
- To cascade training to school staff as appropriate.
- To attend any Designated Teachers' conference and participate in area cluster groups for additional training and to share good practice.

The role of all staff

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children, as for all pupils
- Maintain Looked After Children's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information
- Work to enable Looked After Children to achieve stability and success within school
- Promote the self-esteem of all Looked After Children
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of Looked After Children

The role of the Governing Body:

The name of the Designated Governor for Looked After Children: Mrs Pauline Duncombe

The governor will report to the Governing Body on an annual basis using the report from the Designated Teacher as source information:

- The number of looked-after pupils in the school
- A comparison of progress and attainment data as a discrete group, compared with 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 governor should be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that looked-after pupils have equal access to:

- The National Curriculum
- Public examinations
- Additional interventions to support educational progress
- Additional education support
- Extra-curricular activities

Record keeping and information sharing

- The Designated Teacher will keep an up-to-date record of Looked After Children and Young People in school and will ensure that relevant information is made known to appropriate staff.
- A Personal Education Plan will be initiated within 20 school days of the Looked After Child or Young Person starting at the school or being taken into care and will be reviewed regularly and as necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the Looked After child. 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 or Young Person 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.