

St. Saviour's CofE Primary School

Education For Looked After Children (LAC) Policy

Adopted: Autumn 2016

To be reviewed: Autumn 2018

Designated teacher for LAC: Joy Clarke, Deputy Head & Inclusion Leader

Governor responsible for LAC: Philipa Downs

Introduction

Who are our Looked After Children?

Children and young people become 'Looked After' either if they have been taken into care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most LAC will be living in foster homes but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even be placed back at home with their natural parent(s).

Aims Statement

The Governing Body of St. Saviour's CofE Primary School is committed to providing high quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes.

We recognise that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement amongst Looked After Children, when compared with their peers, and are committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in DfE Circular 0269/2000 and DfE/DOH Guidance 2000 and the Children Act (2004).

The Children Act places a duty to safeguard LAC, to promote their educational achievements and to ensure that they are able to 'achieve to and reach their full potential'. The Guidance recognises the collective responsibility of local authorities and schools to achieve good parenting and sets out six principles:

- prioritising education
- having high expectations
- inclusion - changing and challenging attitudes
- achieving continuity and stability
- early intervention - priority action and
- listening to children

The Guidance introduced two key measures:

- ensuring Designated Teachers are nominated in every school
- ensuring Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are in place for all Looked After Children.

This Governing Body is committed to ensuring that Designated Teachers and staff are enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher:

- is an advocate for Looked After Children
- ensures a smooth and welcoming induction for the child and carer/s (and parent/s where possible)
- notes any specific requirements, including care status
- ensures that a PEP is completed within 20 days of entering care or joining the school.

This should be prepared with the child and the carer/s (and parent/s if possible), in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies. Where appropriate, the PEP should take account of any Individual Educational Plan (IEP), Pastoral Support Plan (PSP), Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP), career plan or any other relevant plans.

- ensures that each Looked After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to
- co-ordinates support for the child in school and liaises with other professionals and carers as necessary
- ensures staff and governors receive relevant information and training
- ensures confidentiality for individual children and only shares personal information on a need to know basis
- provides written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible
- encourages Looked After Children to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of school hours learning
- seeks urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded.

Roles and Responsibilities of All Staff

All staff:

- as with all children, have high aspirations and celebrate the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children
- are familiar with the Guidance on Looked After Children and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings
- liaise with the Designated Teacher where a Looked After Child is experiencing difficulty

Roles and Responsibilities of the Governing Body

The Governing Body:

- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and *Guidance for Looked After Children*
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Looked After Children
- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the Governing Body
- for child protection and confidentiality reasons, ensure that information will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity, and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned
- review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years
- ensure that the school's other policies and procedures give looked after children equal access in respect of:
 - admission to school
 - the National Curriculum and public examinations
 - additional educational support where this is needed.
 - extra curricular activities

Training

The Headteacher, Designated Teacher and Continuing Professional Development Co-ordinator will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in the guidance from the DCSF.