





## LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

<b>Date Reviewed</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> December 2024
<b>Signed Headteacher</b>	
<b>Signed Chair of Curriculum &amp; Standards</b>	
<b>Date Revised</b>	Autumn Term 2025

### **1. The rationale behind the policy:**

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of Looked After Children (LAC) at our school.

Research shows that children in care face additional barriers to learning. National statistics highlight poor educational attainment in comparison with the general school population, a high level of disruption and changes to school placements and a lack of involvement in school life. Therefore, it is essential that our school ethos and policy ensures the needs of LAC are met but also that best practice ensure participation and learning for all.

### **2. Definition of Looked After pupils:**

A Looked After Child is a child or young person under the age of 18 who is provided for by a local authority, acting in its social service capacity, with accommodation for a continuous period of more than 24 hours, is subject to a care order (to put the child into the care of the local authority) or is subject to a placement order (to put the child up for adoption)

### **3. The name of the designated teacher for Looked After Children is Mrs Amy Warden (Inclusion Manager).**

### **4. The Role of the Named Teacher (within school systems) is to:**

Ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have an understanding of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by Looked After Children and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them.

- Inform members of staff of the general educational needs of Looked After Children, to ensure a smooth induction and to promote the involvement of these children in school homework clubs, extracurricular activities, home reading schemes, school councils etc.
- Act as an advocate for Looked After Children; develop in-school strategies to close the gap between LAC and their peers.
- Develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers, Social workers and the local authority.
- Ensure that all relevant education and care information is available to school staff and carers, and that this information is kept up to date.
- Monitor the educational progress of Looked After Children in order to inform school self evaluation.
- Enable LAC to contribute to the educational aspects of their care plan.
- Ensure all LAC pupils have a Personal Education Plan or PEP. This should be initiated by the young person's social worker.
- Liaise with the DSL and staff responsible for monitoring children on the Child Protection Register.
- Co-ordinate and attend PEP and LAC review meetings in accordance with statutory deadlines and in consultation with the Local Authority,
- Arrange the speedy transfer of information between agencies and individuals.
- To attend training events organised by the local authority to ensure up to date knowledge of procedures for all vulnerable children and cascade training to all staff as appropriate.

### **5. The named Governor with special responsibility for Looked after Children is Sarah Ingram**

The named Governor will liaise termly with the designated teacher to monitor progress of, attendance and provision for looked after children.

- The named Governor will also monitor exclusions and how the Pupil Premium for looked after children is used to support the children.

- The designated teacher in consultation with the named Governor will present an annual report to Governors relating specifically to LAC, which will include activities and targeted provision to help improve outcomes. The report will also be shared with the Headteacher of the Virtual School.

## **6. Responsibility for Looked After Children in School**

It is important that all teaching staff who are in contact with the child or young person are aware that he/she is being looked after by the Local Authority. The responsibility for the transfer of this information should be that of the Headteacher and/or the designated teacher for Looked After Children.

It is appropriate for Teaching Assistants to have knowledge that the young person is being looked after only when directly involved in the teaching of the young person.

In the absence of the usual class teacher, some information regarding the child's circumstances should be shared with the teacher covering the class. The extent of this sharing should be determined by the Head teacher or the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children.

## **7. Admission Arrangements**

On admission, records (including the PEP) will be requested from the pupil's previous school and a meeting will be held with carer/parent/social worker. A date will be agreed upon for a new Personal Education Plan. An appropriate school induction will take place.

## **8. Involving the Young Person**

It is important that a young person is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. How this is shared with them clearly depends on their age and understanding. The explanation should emphasise that the School, Social Worker and carers are working together to promote their education.

## **9. Communication with Other Agencies**

School should ensure that a copy of all reports should be forwarded to the young person's Social Worker in addition to the foster carer or residential social worker.

Where possible school and all involved agencies should endeavour to co-ordinate their review meetings, e.g. to have an Annual Review of Statement or IEP review combined with Statutory LAC review.

School and Social Services will need to exchange information between formal reviews if there are significant changes in the young person's circumstances, e.g. if school is considering an exclusion, there is a change of care placement or there are significant attendance issues.

## **10. Assessment, Monitoring and Review Procedures**

Each Looked After pupil will have a Care Plan which will include a PEP (Personal Education Plan) that the Social Worker takes a lead in developing. This will identify specific areas of concern and include achievable targets.

The PEP will also include the child's views, academic/social targets and achievements.

The PEP will be updated termly, as part of the Statutory Review Process carried out by Children's Services.

All LAC records and plans will be stored securely in a locked cupboard.

