



THE DEAN TRUST
Broad oak School

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

REVIEWED SEPT 17

Signature of Chair of Governors:

Objective

Broad oak School aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of all children including Looked After Children.

The Designated Person for Looked After Children is:

Mrs Ayshea Worswick
In her absence ... Mrs C. Hammond

The governing body is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes. This policy includes requirements set out in "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" Broad oak aims to contribute towards achieving the five outcomes of Every Child Matters, which is the government aim for every child, whatever their background or circumstances:

- **Stay safe**
- **Be healthy**
- **Enjoy and achieve**
- **Make a positive contribution**
- **Achieve economic well being**

Aim

The policy aims to make clear the steps that the school undertakes in order to make Broadoak School a safe and secure environment in which looked after children can thrive and their needs are specifically addressed.

The policy sits alongside other policies that reinforce our commitment to the Safeguarding of pupils. (Child Protection, Safeguarding, Anti-bullying, Physical Intervention)

The principles are to:

- ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for children who are Looked After as for all children.
- ensure that all Looked After Children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual's needs and ability.
- ensure that Looked After Children take as full a part as possible in all school activities
- ensure that carers and social workers of Looked After pupils are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment.
- ensure that Looked After pupils are involved, where practicable and appropriate, in decisions affecting their future provision.

See Appendix 1 - Roles and Responsibilities

Who are Looked After Children?

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is Looked After by a local authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They fall into four main groups:

- children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section20)
- children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section38)
- children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and46)

- children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21).

The term **'in care'** refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 - they may live with foster carers, in a Children's home, in a residential school, with relatives or with parents under supervision. Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are **'accommodated'** by the local authority under section 20 of the Children Act – they may live in foster care, in a Children's home or in a residential school. All these groups are said to be **'Looked After Children'** - LAC. They may be looked after by our local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

Implementation

- to ensure that all staff, teaching and non-teaching are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by young people who are 'Looked After' 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, school councils etc.
- to act as an advocate for Looked After Children.
- to develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers, and Children's Services within the Local Authority.
- to hold a supervisory brief for all Looked after Children on the school roll, e.g. to ensure all relevant education and care information is available to school staff and carer's and that this information is kept up to date.
- to monitor the educational progress of all Looked After Children.

- to intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement, absence from school or truancy.
- to ensure the involvement of the internal Careers Services or other agencies as required.

Working with Individual Looked After Children

- to work with individual children, possibly through a carer, to arrive at a statement about their circumstances that they would be happy to share with staff and/or pupils
- to enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their Care Plan
- to help ensure that each pupil has a Personal Education Plan (PEP). The PEP is a joint document drawn up by school and the young person's Social Worker. It is reviewed termly via a scheduled meeting and the child's thoughts, wishes and feelings are recorded and discussed.
- to supervise the smooth induction of a new Looked After Child into the school.

Liaison

- to liaise with the member of staff responsible for monitoring children subject to a Child Protection Plan, where this is relevant
- to help co-ordinate education and PEP review meetings, so that the Personal Education Plan (PEP) can inform the child's Care Plan
- to attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or contribute in other ways to Statutory Review meetings
- to be the named contact for colleagues in Children Services and the carer where applicable
- to ensure the speedy transfer of information between the agencies and individuals, and report on the progress of Looked After Children.

- to ensure staff are fully aware of any changes in the Looked After status of a child.

School Staff

It is recognised that all staff have a role to play in supporting and addressing the needs of children who are Looked After. We believe training is important to develop awareness of issues associated with Looked After Children. This training can be cascaded to school staff as appropriate

(See appendix 1 for the roles and responsibilities of all staff)

The Role of the Governing Body

The Designated Governor for Looked After Children is:

Mrs Val Thorpe

The governing body will:

- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for Looked After Children
- ensure there is a Designated teacher for Looked After Children
- request a regular report to form part of the governors' report, including the following information:
 - the attendance of Looked After Children as a discrete group, compared with other pupils
 - the level of fixed term/permanent exclusions
 - pupil destinations
- ensure that the school's policies and procedures give Looked After children equal access in respect of:
 - Admission to school
 - National Curriculum and examinations, both academic and vocational out of school learning and extra-curricular activities, work experience and Careers Advice.

Responsibility for Looked After Children

- It is important that all teaching staff who are in contact with the child or young person are aware that they are Looked After by the/a Local Authority. The responsibility for the transfer of the information is that of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children and/or the Head Teacher.

Admission Arrangements

On admission, records will be requested from the young person's previous school. A meeting will be arranged with the carer/parent/Social Worker as appropriate. There should always be someone there with parental responsibility. This will provide information to inform the Personal Education Plan. An appropriate school induction will take place.

Involving the Young Person

It is important that the young person is aware that the information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. How this is shared with them clearly depends on their age and understanding. The school with the social worker, carer(s) are working together to promote the education of those young people in care who attend Broadoak.

It is important that the child's views of their changed circumstances are established and also what they want others to know. At Broadoak we have a named mentor for each Looked After Child whom the child trusts. This mentor will discuss any changes with the child to determine their thoughts, wishes and feelings.

It is important to ensure that the child is prepared for situations where they may be asked about home by other pupils for example. At Broadoak we work with the Social Worker and Carer(s) to ensure they are equipped to face such situations. We offer counselling support if required along with ongoing support from the child's mentor in school and will always work with the child to identify their feelings on information sharing, whether to staff or peers. Where necessary, and via liaison with the social worker and carer other agencies may be involved to help develop a child's self-esteem and ability to manage difficult situations or changes in their circumstances.

Communication with other Agencies

We also recognise the important contribution that external support services make in supporting Looked After Children to achieve their potential. Colleagues from support services may be involved with individual Looked after Children. These may include:

- LAC teams
- Educational psychologists
- SEN services
- Medical officers
- School nurse
- CAMHS
- EWO
- YOS
- Young Carers

The school will ensure a copy of all reports are forwarded to the young person's

- Social Worker
- Carer(s)
- Residential Child Care Officer (if appropriate)
- Parent (if appropriate)

Assessment, Monitoring and Review Procedures

The Social Worker and the Designated Teacher are jointly responsible for leading and initiating this process and ensuring that the young person is actively involved. The child will have a Care Plan, which will include a Personal Education Plan (PEP). The PEP identifies specific areas of concern and includes achievable targets. This may include:

- Attendance
- Achievement record
- Behaviour
- Homework
- Involvement in extra-curricular activities
- Special needs
- Development needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge of subject areas and experiences)

The school will monitor and track the achievement of the children at regular intervals. The PEP will be reviewed termly or sooner, according to the child's needs. The young person's views will be sought by the Designated teacher and recorded on the PEP.

Local Authority Contact Details

Virtual Headteacher	Ms Lynsey Burridge
PEP Co-ordinator	Ms Lindsay Nelson
Well-being Worker	Ms Aislinn Marek

APPENDIX 1

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Rationale for roles and responsibilities:

Looked After Children – (LAC) - are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational underachievement when compared to their peers. For example, they may experience:

- a high level of disruption and change in school placements
- lack of involvement in extra- curricular activities
- inconsistent or no attention paid to homework.

This may result in:

- poor exam success rates in comparison with the general population
- underachievement in further and higher education.

These issues may also affect adopted young people.

The majority of children who remain in care are there because they have suffered abuse or neglect. To date the outcomes achieved by Looked After Children have historically been poor and the Government is committed to addressing this disparity. As corporate parents we all have a part to play in this by vigorously applying the principles of good parenting by:

- giving priority to education
- listening to children
- providing stability and continuity
- taking corporate responsibility
- promoting inclusion
- raising standards
- intervening early
- celebrating success.

The Designated Teacher will:

- be an advocate for Looked After Children within school
- give regard to the impact of relevant decisions for Looked After Children on both the child and the rest of the school community
- know who are all the Looked After Children in school, including those in the care of other authorities, and ensure the availability of all relevant details from school record-keeping systems as required
- attend relevant training about Looked After Children, including attendance at the Local Authority's forums
- act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to Looked After Children, seeking advice from the Virtual School within the Local Authority when appropriate
- ensure that Looked After Children receive a positive welcome on entering school, especially mid- year and, if necessary, offer additional support and a pre-entry visit to help the new pupil settle ensure that the young person contributes to the plan

- in communication with the child's social worker, keep PEPs and other records up to date and review PEPs at transfer and on a termly basis thereafter. As part of this process, the use of Pupil Premium funding will be discussed, agreed and applied for. Its impact will be reviewed in future PEP meetings and as part of the LAC reviews which will be chaired by an independent reviewing officer from the Local Authority responsible for the child
- convene an urgent multi-agency meeting if a Looked After Child is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion
- ensure confidentiality of individual children, sharing confidential and personal information on a need to know basis, bearing in mind the wishes of the individual pupil
- act as the key adviser for staff and governors on issues relevant to Looked After Children
- ensure that care and school liaison is effective including invitations to meetings and other school events
- actively encourage and promote out of hours learning and extra-curricular activities for Looked After Children
- ensure a speedy transfer of information, records and coursework, where appropriate, when a Looked After Child transfers to another educational placement
- contribute information to Looked After Child reviews when required
- report to the Governing body on Looked After Children in the school and inform of relevant policy and practice development
- agree with the social worker the appropriate people to invite to parents' evenings etc
- prepare reports for Governors' meetings to include:
 - the number of Looked After Children on roll
 - confirmation that they have a Personal Education Plan – PEP.
 - their attendance compared to other pupils.
 - the destinations of pupils who leave the school
 - their attainment compared to other pupils
- attend governor meetings as appropriate – such as the admission, disciplinary and exclusion of Looked After Children

- arrange a mentor or befriender (adult and /or pupil) to whom the young person can talk, possibly through the learning mentor scheme, particularly when the pupil is new to school
- ensure that any Special Educational Needs are addressed in conjunction with the SENCO and in accordance with the Code of Practice for SEN. (Looked After Children are more likely to have an Education Health and Care Plan than the general school population).

The school staff will:

- follow school procedures
- keep the Designated Teacher informed about the progress of all Looked After Children
- have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of Looked After Children
- positively promote the raising of a Looked After Child's self- esteem
- ensure any Looked After Child is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained
- be familiar with the school's policy and guidance on Looked After Children and respond appropriately to requests for information to support PEPs and review meetings
- liaise with the Designated Teachers where a Looked After Child is experiencing difficulties
- give only official exclusions and only use exclusions in line with the school's exclusion policy, and relevant national guidance, being mindful to the difficulties this may create in the care placement
- contribute to regular liaison with social care colleagues and other appropriate professionals and keep carers fully informed at all times
- keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to other professionals/ parents/carers/pupil as appropriate
- make extra copies of reports available when required.

The Governing Body will:

- ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritises Looked After Children according to the DfE Admissions Code of Practice
- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for Looked After Children
- ensure there is a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children
- liaise with the headteacher, Designated Teacher and all other staff to ensure the needs of Looked After Children are met
- nominate a governor with responsibility for Looked After Children who links with the Designated Teacher or member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
- receive regular reports from the Designated Teacher
- ensure that the school's policies and procedures give Looked After Children equal access in respect of:
 - admission to school
 - National Curriculum and examinations, both academic and vocational
 - out of school learning and extra-curricular activities
 - work experience and careers guidance
- regularly review the effective implementation of the school policy for Looked After Children
- ensure that the Designated Teacher is invited to the exclusion meetings of Looked After Children

APPENDIX I



Process for accessing Pupil Premium Funding through Trafford Virtual School

Need identified at the PEP meeting, noted as a target and cost included in the Pupil Premium section of the PEP.

Virtual School Resource Panel - referral completed by Social Worker/Designated Teacher to request access to funding.

PEP and Referral considered at Virtual School Resource Panel and funds allocated if appropriate.

Resource allocation noted in monitoring documentation for audit purposes.

Impact of resource to be noted in review PEP and monitored by Virtual School Head through Education Surgeries and PEP quality assurance