

St Andrew's CE Primary School



Looked After Children Policy

Reviewed: Summer 2022

Next date of review: Summer 2023

Every Child A Champion in Their Own Right. Matthew 5.16 - "Let Your Light Shine."

St Andrew's CE Primary School aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in public care.

Governor with responsibility for LAC: L Russell

Designated Teacher – L Harrison

At St Andrew's Primary School, we do not discriminate against any child or adult on the grounds of race, disability, gender, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. We embrace the individuality of all our community members and comply fully with the Equality Act 2010.

Introduction

Looked After Children (LAC) and previously Looked After Children are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational under achievement when compared to other groups. Raising levels of achievement has been strongly and clearly highlighted as a major part of improving the life chances of Looked After Children and schools play a pivotal role in this.

St Andrew's Primary School is committed to ensuring that all children receive access to a broad and balanced curriculum which motivates and inspires pupils to learn. The gaps in LAC and previously LAC learning are likely to have become significant barriers to their progress. Therefore, St Andrew's Primary School carries out careful planning, monitoring and evaluation to ensure the best possible outcomes for LAC and previously LAC.

Definition of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children Children in care are referred to Looked After Children. A child is 'looked after' if they are in the care of the Local Authority for more than 24 hours. Legally, this could be when they are:

- Living in accommodation provided by the Local Authority with the parents' agreement
- The subject of an interim or full care order
- The subject of an emergency legal order to remove them from immediate danger
- In a secure children's home, secure training centre or young offender institution
- Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

A previously looked after child is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because he or she is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales.

Aims

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 and previously looked after children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004.

The aims of the school are to:

- ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for LAC as for all children;
- ensure that all LAC have access to the rainbow curriculum, adapting teaching and learning styles to suit the needs of individuals;
- provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual's needs and ability;
- ensure that LAC pupils take part, where possible, in all school activities;
- ensure that carers and social workers of LAC pupils are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment
- ensure that LAC pupils are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision;
- allow LAC to share their opinions and views using pupil voice sheets which will have an impact into the curriculum.

The Designated Teacher

The role of the designated teacher became statutory in September 2009 under the Children and Young Person's Act 2008. The designated teacher must be a qualified teacher and should ideally be a senior member of staff. The responsibilities of the designated teacher are:

- Maintain a detailed record of all Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children – including information relating to current status, type of placement, name and contact details of the social worker, virtual school head, relevant health information, SEN status, PEP information, current and historic assessment information.
- Ensure that the PEP is completed when a child enters the school and is then reviewed at least every six months – taking into account the opinions of the social worker, class teacher, carers and young person.
- Complete and keep PEPs updated.
- Ensure that safeguarding concerns are responded to quickly and effectively.
- Co-ordinate support for the child in school, liaising where necessary with other parents and carers.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantages faced by looked after children and understand the need for positive systems to support them.
- Ensure information remains confidential, sharing only personal information on a need-to-know basis.
- Prepare reports for an attend LAC meetings.
- Monitor the educational progress/ achievement and absence from school of all Looked After Children.
- Submit termly data to the Hull Virtual School Headteacher.
- Produce an annual report to the Governing Body which will include information on staff training, links with external agencies and for each child; current progress, attendance, concerns, how the PEP has been implemented and whether plans put in place are effective for addressing the learning needs of the child. The report will remain confidential.

The Governing Body

The Children and Young Persons Act 2008 places a duty on the Governing Body to designate a member of staff to have responsibility to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children. The Governors should:

- Ensure that provision is being made for any pupil who is a Looked After Child or previously Looked After Child.
- Ensure that designated teachers are given the appropriate level of support and have the opportunity to keep up to date with relevant training.
- Ensure the designated teacher disseminates relevant training and provides support for all members of staff that will influence teaching and learning for Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children.
- The Governors in partnership with individual Headteachers are responsible for monitoring how well the role is working. As part of this monitoring an annual report will be received from the Designated Teacher.
- Annually review the implementation of the school's LAC policy.
- Ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritises LAC according to the DfES Admissions Code of Practice.

Personal Education Plans (PEP)

All Looked After Children (LAC) must have a Personal Education Plan (PEP), which their social worker will take the lead in developing. The PEP is a record of the child's education and forms part of the overall Care Plan. It provides a clear and shared understanding about the teaching and learning provision to ensure academic progress and achievement. The social worker, parents, carers and the child may be invited to the PEP meeting to ensure the views of all stakeholders are considered. The school's role in the PEP is crucial and the designated teacher will attend the meeting to review this.

The PEP will set clear objectives or targets which relate to academic achievement as well as out of school activities and if necessary, behavioural targets. If a child moves school then the PEP should be forwarded to the new school as a matter of urgency.

Previously LAC do not require a PEP but the designated teacher should continue to consider their educational needs.

Funding

LAC are entitled to additional funding to help improve their outcomes and narrow the gap between their outcomes and those of their peers. St Andrew's Primary School is committed to ensuring effective use of dedicated funding, to provide additional, personalised support to ensure progress in order to improve outcomes.

Partnership Working

St Andrew's Primary School works with parents/ carers, social workers, the Virtual School Head and other external agencies to ensure we are providing the best possible life chances for our Looked After Children. At school we firmly believe in developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable LAC to achieve their potential. Review meetings are an opportunity to further this partnership working.

Colleagues from the following support services may be involved with individual LAC:

- Virtual School Head Teacher and Children in Need Education Team.
- Social Care Worker/ Community care worker/ Residential child care worker
- Educational Psychologists and others from Local Authority SEN services
- Medical Officers
- School Nurses
- CAMHS
- Education Welfare Officers
- Youth Offending Service
- RAPP (Rights and Participation Worker)
- KIDS (Advocate for LAC with disabilities)