

MARLBOROUGH ROAD ACADEMY

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

BACKGROUND

Marlborough Road Academy is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. We recognise that, nationally, Looked After Children significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion, compared to their peers and are committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in the statutory guidance: “The roles and responsibilities of the designated teacher for Looked after children” and “The Children and Young Persons Act 2008”, also the “Designated Teacher (Looked After Pupils etc.) (England) Regulation 2009. The Children Act 1989 places a duty to safeguard Looked After Children, to promote their educational achievements and to ensure that they are able to “achieve to and reach their full potential”.

Who are our 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 (section 20)
- children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
- 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 Salford local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

LAC will have a care manager who arranges their care plan. All schools have a designated officer for LAC and at Marlborough Road Academy we have a link governor responsible for Looked After Children. LAC reviews, involving the Academy, will take place up until an adoption order has been granted. Pupil Premium Plus funding will continue for LAC until they are 16 year’s old.

Designated teacher:
Link Governor:

AIMS

To provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children.

To support our looked after children and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential, enjoy learning and take as full a part as possible in all school activities.

To ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for LAC as for all children.

To work with the Virtual School and ensure that carers and social workers of LAC pupils are kept fully informed of the child's progress and attainment.

To fulfil our school's role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our Looked After Children, by asking the question, 'Would this be good enough for my child?'

IN PURSUIT OF THESE AIMS WE WILL

- Nominate an appropriately trained Designated teacher for Looked After Children who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them.
- Nominate a school governor to ensure that the needs of Looked After Children in the school are taken into account at a school management level and to support the Designated Teacher.
- Support the Designated teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend training on Looked After Children.
- Have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) drawn up between the school, the child, and where they have one, the child's social worker, which will identify the child's individual needs and the support they require
- Work in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals
- Have high expectations for the child, ensuring equal access to a balanced and broadly based education.
- Record, monitor, and improve the academic achievement of the child in addition to their health and wellbeing.
- Strive to achieve stability and continuity
- Aim to minimise exclusions and promote full attendance.
- Promote inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes.
- Promote good communication between all those involved in the child's life.
- Maintain and respect the child's confidentiality wherever possible.
- Ensure staff awareness of, and sensitivity to, the difficulties and educational disadvantages of Looked After Children.

Responsibility of the Principal

- Identify a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children
- Ensure a PEP is in place for all Looked After Children
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusion of Looked After Children and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of Looked After Children to all parties involved.
- Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

Responsibility of the Governing Body

- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Looked After Children
- Ensure that the Designated teacher is given the appropriate level of support in order to fulfil their role.
- Ensure that, through their training and development, the Designated teacher has the opportunity to acquire and keep up to date the necessary skills, knowledge and training to understand and respond to the specific teaching and learning needs of LAC.
- Ensure that the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Looked After Children.

- Allocate resources to meet the needs of Looked After Children.
- Ensure that other school Policies and Procedures support their needs.
- Receive a termly report setting out:
 1. The number of looked-after pupils on the school's roll (if any).
 2. Their attendance, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
 3. Their Teacher Assessment, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
 4. Any concerns regarding behavior
 5. How the PEP has been implemented and whether the actions put in place are effective in addressing the learning needs of LAC,
 6. Training undertaken for carrying out the role effectively.
 7. How the Designated teacher works in partnership with other Agencies.
 8. The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any).
 9. The destination of LAC pupils who leave the school.

The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.

The role of the Designated Teacher

The role became statutory in September 2009 under the Children and Young Persons' Act 2008 (the 2008 Act). The designated teacher must be a qualified teacher or a member of staff who is likely to gain QTS. Ideally, s/he should be a senior member of staff who has enough status and experience to advise and provide training to school staff on issues relating to LAC. They need to be able to influence decisions about the teaching and learning of these children.

Responsibilities

- Maintaining an up-to-date record of the Looked After Children in school, including those in the care of other authorities and ensuring all necessary information is passed to other staff as required.
- Attending relevant training about LAC and acting as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to LAC.
- Promoting a culture of high expectation and aspiration for how LAC should learn.
- Helping school staff understand the issues that affect the learning of LAC such as differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children and in making full use of AfL.
- Ensuring any LAC new to the school are welcomed positively and assessed when they start at the school to identify strengths and weaknesses in their learning. This will be used to inform planning and teaching.
- Developing personalised learning packages for LAC in conjunction with the relevant teaching staff.
- Making sure that LAC are prioritised in one-to-one tuition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home.
- Ensuring that the LAC in their school have a voice in setting learning targets for themselves.
- Removing the barriers to learning for LAC.
- Ensuring that each Looked After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher, but should be based on the child's own wishes.
- Establish and maintain regular contact with home, statutory and voluntary agencies.
- Championing for LAC, acting as advisor to staff and governors, raising awareness of the needs of LAC
- Promoting inclusion in all areas of school life and encourage Looked After Children to join in extracurricular activities and out of school learning.
- Leading on developing and implementing the PEP within the school. (The social worker is responsible for initiating the PEP process and completing the front page of the PEP form).
- Monitoring the child's progress against the targets on the PEP and extending these targets if they have been achieved.

- Liaising with the Virtual School in all aspects of the LAC progress and support.
- Convening urgent multi-agency meetings if a LAC is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion.
- Producing at least one annual report to the governing body
- Promoting good home-school links and the importance of education as a way of improving life chances for LAC.
- Ensuring confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
- Being pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education.
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored.

The responsibility of the all staff

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children, as for all pupils.
- Respond positively to a request from a Looked After Child to be the named person that they can talk to when they feel it is necessary.
- 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.

Confidentiality

Information on looked after children will be shared with school staff on a "need to know" basis.

The Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with which school staff at the PEP meeting. Once this has been agreed with the social worker, carer, young person, and other parties, complete confidentiality will be maintained.

Record keeping and information sharing

The Designated Teacher will keep an up-to-date record of Looked After Children and will ensure that relevant information is made available to appropriate staff.

A Personal Education Plan will be initiated within 20 school days of the Looked After Child 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 LAC. 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 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.

Exclusions

Marlborough Road Academy recognizes that Looked After Children are particularly vulnerable to exclusions.

Where a LAC is at risk of exclusion the school will try every practicable means to maintain the child in school. A multi-professional meeting will be arranged, bringing together all those involved with the young person to discuss strategies to minimise the risk of exclusion.

The child's Personal Education Plan will reflect strategies to support the child and where relevant those employed in the Pastoral Support Plan. All relevant measures and resources will be considered to provide support and provide alternative educational packages to prevent an exclusion from happening.

Staff development and training

Arrangements will be made to ensure that the Designated Teacher is kept up to date with developments relating to the education and attainment of Looked After Children.

Other staff will receive relevant training and support to enable them to work sympathetically and productively with Looked After Children, including those who are underachieving or at risk of underachieving or who have additional needs. These may include EAL, being Gifted and Talented or having learning or physical needs.

Teachers with responsibility for Special Educational Needs provision and for children who are Gifted and Talented will be informed of those Looked After Children who have particular gifts, talents or learning needs and will work with them appropriately.

Support and resources

The Governing body will ensure that the school allocates resources, including professional time and expertise, to support appropriate provision for Looked After Children, meeting the objectives set out in this Policy.

Home-school liaison

The Academy recognises the value of a close working relationship between home and school and will work towards developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable Looked After Children to achieve their potential.

PEP and Care Plan review meetings provide opportunities to continue to develop this partnership working

Admission arrangements

We recognise that due to care arrangements LAC may enter school mid-term and that it is important that they are given a positive welcome and where appropriate additional support and pre-entry visits to help them settle.

The school recognises that Looked After children are an 'excepted group' and will prioritise Looked After Children in the school's oversubscription criteria following the DfE Admissions Code (Admissions of Looked After Children (England) Regulations 2006).

Links with other agencies

The school recognises the value of working together with other agencies and organisations and will work closely with colleagues from services involved with the Looked After Child or Young Person including Social Care teams; Educational Psychologist; Health Services, CAMHS; Youth Offending Teams.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following Policies:

- Admissions
- Behaviour
- Anti-bullying
- Home School Agreement
- Equalities
- SEN and Inclusion
- Safeguarding

For more information please see: The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children – Statutory guidance for school governing bodies.

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/01046-2009BKT-EN.PDF>

Improving the Educational Attainment of Children in Care (Looked after Children)

<http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-00523-2009.pdf>

Improving the attainment of looked after children in primary schools – Guidance for Schools

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/01047-2009.pdf>

Improving the attainment of looked after young people in secondary schools – Guidance for Schools

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/01048-2009.pdf>

DOCUMENT STATUS

Version	Date	Action	Ratified by Governing Body	
			Signature	Date
1	September 2017	First Issued (JR)		
2				
3				

This Policy has been impact assessed to ensure that it does not have an adverse effect on age; religion or belief; sexual orientation; race; gender or disability equality