

SCHOOL POLICY ON THE EDUCATION OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

A route to a positive future :

Committed to providing a quality education to pupils with complex needs, including autism and sensory impairment in West Berkshire and Greater Reading



Brookfields
Specialist SEN School

Reviewed : Autumn 2016
Due for Review : Autumn 2017
Policy Holder : Catherine Bernie

Brookfields School Equalities Statement

All pupils at the school are offered a broad, balanced, stimulating and relevant curriculum regardless of their background, culture or ability. Each pupil is valued for who they are and what they bring to the school. We appreciate and celebrate the richness of diversity within the school community as well as the wider community. Through the work we do across the school on developing Values, we actively promote the importance of tolerance, co-operation, courage, determination, friendship and respect. Through this approach, pupils develop independence, confidence and integrity which prepares them for their future lives.

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, either via a legal route under The Children's Act 1989 or where a voluntary agreement has been reached with the birth family. Most Looked After Children 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 birth family.

Brookfields School believes that in partnership with West Berkshire District Council as Corporate Parents we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of Looked After Children.

Aim

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 their potential and enjoy learning.

To fulfil our schools' 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 This Policy We Will:

- Nominate a 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 the termly Designated Teacher Network meetings and any specific training on Looked After Children which is required to ensure that they have the most up to date information on supporting Looked After Children.
- Review all policies and procedures regularly to ensure that they adequately address the needs of Looked After Children and that those children have access to all aspects of

education, particularly with regard to admissions, curriculum, examinations, extra support, extra curricular activities, work experience and careers guidance (where applicable).

- Have a clear and consistent plan for attendance at all Personal Education Plan meetings (Designated Teacher/ Class Tutor etc) to ensure coherence and efficiency in planning and attaining targets. The members of staff attending need to be free or made free from teaching commitments to attend PEP meetings.
- PEP meetings will be called at least annually and more regularly if required.
- Papers required for each PEP meeting will be available prior to the start of the meeting or there will be reading time at the start of the meetings if new papers are tabled (see PEP Agenda).
- Where appropriate or unless otherwise agreed the child or young person agreed should attend all or part of the meeting and should be released from lessons to do so.
- Following a PEP meeting, Targets and Actions will be circulated to all relevant teaching and support staff immediately after the PEP meetings or as soon as Minutes are received from the Social Worker.
- Further details raised at PEP meetings will be circulated to other teaching and support staff on a 'need to know' basis as agreed at the meeting and, in best practice, agreed with the child or young person concerned.
- Discuss issues relating to attendance and/or exclusions with the Virtual School Headteacher or a member of LACES to ensure that there is as little disruption to a child's education as possible. When considering a permanent exclusion, a discussion will be held with the Corporate Director of Children and Young People.

The Designated Teacher will:

- Be an advocate for any Looked After Children in school.
- Maintain an up to date record of all Looked After Children who are on the school roll. This will include:
 - Status i.e. care order or Section 20 accommodation.
 - Type of placement i.e. Foster, Respite, Residential.
 - Name of Social Worker, area office, telephone number.
 - Daily contact and numbers e.g. name of parent and carer or key worker in children's home.
 - SEN Code of Practice – School Action/School Action Plus where appropriate.
 - Child Protection information when appropriate.
 - Baseline information, including an assessment of preferred learning styles and all test results.
 - Attendance figures.
 - Exclusions.
- Ensure that there is a Personal Education Plan for each child/young person to include appropriate targets and above information. This must be compatible with the child's/young person's Care Plan and, where applicable, include any other school plan eg Statement of

Special Educational Need and associated plans, Transition Plan, Pastoral Support Programme.

- Ensure that someone attends Childrens' Services Reviews on each child/young person and/or always prepares a written report which promotes the continuity and stability of their education.
- Liaise with LACES on a regular basis with regard to the performance, attendance and attainment of Looked After Children.
- Provide the LA with termly attainment data to enable the Virtual School Headteacher to have clear tracking data for all Looked After Children.
- Ensure that if/when the child transfers school all relevant information is forwarded to the receiving school as a matter of priority.
- Ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when Looked After Children are underachieving and have early interventions to improve this in line with existing school policy including access to 1:1 tuition.
- Ensure that systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about Looked After Children where and when appropriate.
- Ensure that Looked After Children, along with all children, are listened to and have equal opportunity to pastoral support in school.
- Ensure that they keep the school up to date with current legislation and its implication for the school in respect of Looked After Children.
- Report to the Governing Body annually on the academic performance, attendance and exclusions of the Looked After Children who are on the roll of the school.
- Ensure that the school evaluates the performance data for all Looked After Children and that it is recorded in the school's self evaluation documentation.

All staff will:

- As with all children, have high aspirations and celebrate the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children;
- Ensure entry to examinations for Looked After Children;
- Be 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. These may be academic, pastoral, behaviour and/or attendance issues.

All governors will:

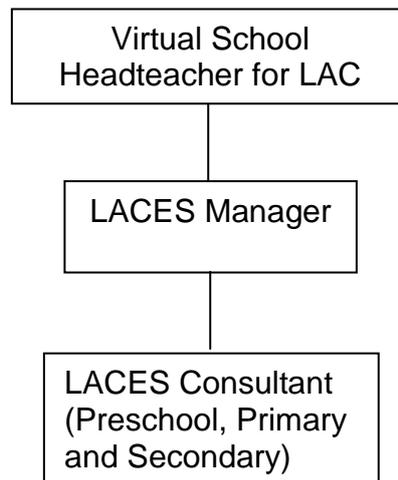
- Ensure that admission criteria (Aided and Foundation) prioritise Looked After Children according to the Code of Practice on Admissions;
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Looked After Children;
- Ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Looked After Children;

- Nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body;
- For Safeguarding and confidentiality reasons, ensure that information will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect of 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
 - Work experience and careers guidance.
- Support the local authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children
- Ensure that appropriate systems and procedures are in place in the school even if there are no Looked After Children on roll at the time and that the Designated Teacher continues to attend training and is up to date in regards to the legal processes.

**Additional Information:
Structure of educational support for Looked After
Children**

Virtual School and Looked After Children's Education Service (LACES)

West Berkshire LACES aims to support young people, schools, social workers and other key people in raising the attainment of children in care.



Virtual Headteacher

The service is led by the Virtual Headteacher, who maintains an overview of the Virtual School and the local authority's strategic direction. Key responsibilities are:

- To support CYP in the care of WB District Council in educational and preschool settings within the district or outside of the area and to offer support to those in the care of other authorities but placed in West Berkshire schools or settings
- To raise the educational attainment and achievement of LAC and other vulnerable groups
- To ensure that LAC have equal access to educational, training and employment opportunities
- To ensure that LAC participate and progress within a wide range of educational and broader activity within and extending beyond schools
- To ensure that the services are responsive to and informed by the voice and needs of LAC and those from other vulnerable groups

LACES Manager

The role of LACES Manager has been in place since September 2001. The overall aim of the centrally employed post is to improve the educational outcomes of looked after children. This is achieved by:

- Operational responsibility for LACES and the line management of the primary and secondary support consultants

- Ensuring all PEPs are chaired and that PEPs are written up and sent out to social workers for checking and distribution within 10 working days.
- Supporting young people post 16, particularly those going into Higher Education
- Planning the education of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children
- Taking an active part in both the pre and post 16 Life Chances Teams
- Organising the annual Celebration of Achievement Event for children in care
- Training designated teachers through the Network Meetings
- Providing training to foster carers and social workers on the education system and processes involved
- Writing and updating local policies in line with national legislation and ensuring that these policies are communicated to all stakeholders
- Supervising and training the XTRA 4U tuition service
- Advocating for young people through the admissions and exclusions process
- Signposting services to other professionals

LACES Consultants

LACES Consultants for looked after children support children and young people from preschool right through to the end of statutory education. Their aim is to support the academic outcomes of looked after children by:

- Chairing and minuting Personal Education Planning Meetings
- Participating in the Pre 16 Life Chances Team
- Contributing to the training programme for foster carers and social workers
- Providing guidance and training on issues relating to LAC, e.g. separation, trauma and loss, the significance of early attachments, etc
- Advising social workers on the education of looked after children
- Signposting services to other professionals

The Pupil Premium funding for Looked After Children

The Pupil Premium Plus grant is to support Looked After Children (adopted children are also eligible for the Pupil Premium but this funding is not managed by the local authority). The PPP grant **MUST** be used to provide additional support for looked after children to reach their full potential. It can be used to support academic, social and emotional needs, as long as

these are linked to the pupil's progress. The use of the Pupil Premium for Looked After Children will be discussed at the Personal Education Plan meetings where the support can be identified and evaluated for impact. The LACES team will provide advice and guidance on the use of the Pupil Premium. It is a requirement of the grant that the use of the funds is published on the school website with a commentary on the impact of the funding on a child's educational outcomes. The child **MUST NOT** be able to be identified, so schools should be careful about the information that is made available to meet this requirement.

Signed:
Policy Holder

Date:

Signed:
Headteacher/Governor

Date: