

Duddon Saint Peter's School



Looked after children Policy

Children and young people become 'Looked After' either if they have been taken into care by the local authority (LA), or have been accommodated by the LA (a voluntary care arrangement). Most LAC 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 natural parent(s). LAC will have a care manager who arranges their care plan.

The governing board of the school is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes.

This governing board recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of LAC, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in DfEE Circular 0269/2000 and DfEE/DOH Guidance 2000 and the Children Act (2004).

The Children Act 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". The guidance recognises the collective responsibility of LAs and schools to achieve good parenting and sets out six principles:

- Prioritising education
- Having high expectations
- Inclusion – changing and challenging attitudes
- Achieving continuity and stability
- Early intervention – priority action
- Listening to children

The guidance introduced two key measures:

- To ensure designated teachers are nominated in every school
- To ensure personal education plans (PEPs) are in place for all LAC

This governing board is committed to ensuring that designated teachers and staff are enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

Role and responsibility of the designated teacher

The designated teacher should:

- Be an advocate for LAC
- Ensure a smooth and welcoming induction for the child and carer/s (and parent/s where possible). Note any specific requirements, including care status
- Ensure that a PEP is completed (within 20 days of entering care or joining a new school). This should be prepared with the child and the carer(s) (and parent(s) if possible), in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies. Where appropriate, the PEP should take account of any individual educational plan (IEP), pastoral support plan (PSP), individual behaviour plan (IBP), career plan or any other relevant plans. The PEP should inform and be reviewed
- Ensure that each LAC has an identified member of staff that they can talk to
- Ensure entry to examinations for all LAC
- Co-ordinate support for the child in the school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary
- Ensure staff and governors receive relevant information and training
- Ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis
- Provide written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible
- Encourage LAC to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning
- Seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded

Roles and responsibilities of all staff

- As with all children, have high aspirations and celebrate the educational and personal achievement of LAC
- Ensure entry to examinations for LAC
- Be familiar with the guidance on LAC 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 LAC is experiencing difficulty

Role and responsibility of the governing body

The governing board of this school will:

- Ensure that admission criteria (aided and Foundation) prioritise LAC, according to the Code of Practice on Admissions
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for LAC
- Ensure that there is a named designated teacher for LAC
- Nominate a governor who links with the designated teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body
- For child protection and confidentiality reasons, ensure that information will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity, and respect 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 LAC 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

Training

The head teacher, designated teacher and professional development co-ordinator will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in the guidance from the DCSF and DoH (as above).

Signed:

Governor responsible

Signed:

Head teacher

Date: *July 2016*

Date of review *Summer 2017*