

<p><b>Dronfield Henry Fanshawe School</b></p> 	<p><b>Policy No: S57</b></p>	Author:	MMI/SLT
		Committee:	Statutory
		Review Cycle:	Every two years
	<p><b>Looked After and Previously Looked After Children Policy</b></p>	Initial Date Adopted:	December 2019
		Latest Date Adopted:	December 2019
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		Review Date:	December 2021

### Definition

‘Looked After’ is a term that refers to children for whom the Local Authority is sharing parental responsibility. This can happen either with parental agreement or when a Court makes a Care Order. The child may be living with foster carers in, a residential unit, with family members or sometimes with their parents. These children are therefore subject to corporate parenting. This policy includes requirements set out in “Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004” and associated guidance on the education of Looked After Children (LAC).

A previously looked after child is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he 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.

A child is in ‘state care’ outside of England and Wales if s/he is in care of or accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.

DHFS recognises that ‘Looked After Children’ and ‘Previously Looked After Children’ may have very specific needs and may be coping with trauma, abuse or rejection, and are likely to experience personal distress and uncertainty.

### School Commitment

DHFS recognises that all students are entitled to a balanced, broad-based curriculum and aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of students in public care. The school and the governing body welcomes LAC who may be looked after by our local authority or those who may be in the care of another authority.

Nationally, ‘Looked After Children’ (LAC) and ‘Previously Looked After Children’ (PLAC) significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Their academic and social progress is likely to be affected by their experiences, and compounded by instability in their personal circumstances. 75% of LAC and PLAC leave education with no formal qualifications. Only 12% go on to further education compared with 68% of the general population. Helping LAC and PLAC succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority in our school.

DHFS recognises that LAC and PLAC can experience specific and significant disadvantage within a school setting, and are committed to ensuring they reach their potential in all areas. We are aware that LAC and PLAC may have specific difficulties in transport and attendance, doing homework, getting parental consent for activities, obtaining funding for extra activities, obtaining correct uniform and equipment, as well as stigma about their circumstances.

DHFS is committed to enhancing the achievement and welfare of LAC and PLAC in the following ways:

- Ensuring an appropriately trained Designated Teacher is appointed, who will be responsible for all LAC and PLAC.
- All LAC will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) drawn up between the school, the young person and the young person's social worker, which will identify the young person's individual needs and the support they require
- Having high expectations for the young person and ensuring equal access to a balanced and broadly based education.
- Recording, monitoring, and improving the academic achievement of the young person in addition to their health and wellbeing.
- Achieving stability and continuity.
- Prioritising reduction in exclusions and promoting attendance.
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes.
- Promoting good communication between all those involved in the young person's life and listening to the young person.
- Maintaining and respecting the young person's confidentiality wherever possible.
- Ensuring staff awareness of, and sensitivity to, the difficulties and educational disadvantages of LAC and PLAC.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Headteacher**

- Identify, or be, the Designated Teacher for LAC and PLAC, whose role is set out below. It is essential that another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take sick leave.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusions of LAC and PLAC and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of LAC and PLAC to all parties involved.
- Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

### **Governing Body**

- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of LAC and PLAC.
- Ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of LAC and PLAC.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of LAC and PLAC.
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.
  
- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Support the Headteacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of LAC and PLAC are recognised and met.

- Receive a report once a year setting out:
  1. The number of LAC and PLAC students on the school's roll (if any).
  2. Their attendance, as a discreet group, compared to other students.
  3. Their Teacher Assessment, as a discreet group, compared to other students.
  4. The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any).
  5. The destinations of students who leave the school.
  6. The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the students concerned.

### **Designated Teacher**

Government Guidance says that the Designated Teacher should be “someone with sufficient authority to make things happen, who should be an advocate for LAC and PLAC assessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them.” It is strongly recommended that this person should be a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

### **Record keeping and information sharing**

The Designated Teacher will keep an up-to-date record of LAC and Young People in school and will ensure that relevant information is made known to appropriate staff.

A Personal Education Plan will be initiated within 20 school days of the Looked After Child or Young Person 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/YP. 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 or Young Person 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.

### **Our Designated Teacher will:**

- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the young person and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan to plan for that transition in consultation with the young person's social worker.
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed with the young person, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people, at least two weeks before the Care Plan reviews.
- Ensure that each LAC and PLAC has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher, but should be based on the young person's own wishes.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately.
- Co-ordinate any support for the LAC and PLAC that is necessary within school.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual students, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
- Encourage LAC and PLAC to join in extra-curricular activities and out of school learning.
- Ensure, as far as possible, attendance at planning and review meetings.
- Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of the LAC and PLAC.
- Set up timely meetings with relevant parties where the student is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion.
- Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and if the student changes school-to a new school.

- Be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately.
- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life.
- Be aware that 60% of LAC and PLAC say they are bullied, so will actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy.
- Ensure that attendance is monitored.

### **Staff**

All our staff will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of LAC and PLAC, as for all students.
- Maintain LAC and PLAC confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- Work to enable LAC and PLAC to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all LAC and PLAC.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of LAC and PLAC.
- Be aware that 60% of LAC and PLAC say they are bullied so work to prevent bullying in line with the School's policy.

### **Confidentiality**

Information on LAC 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 is to be maintained.