



THE DEANES SCHOOL

POLICY: LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

Effective From: July 2016

Authorised by:

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Headteacher

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Chair of the Curriculum Committee:

Date: 4th July 2016

WORKLOAD IMPACT ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

<input type="checkbox"/>	The school has an agreed system to monitor the workload and working hours of teachers and the headteacher.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The policy complies with and is consistent with the teachers' contractual entitlements
<input type="checkbox"/>	The policy and any related procedures were introduced following consultation with the relevant staff
<input type="checkbox"/>	The policy and any related procedures include a specific statement regarding workload impact
<input type="checkbox"/>	The policy has been piloted/ trialled to enable an assessment of workload impact to be made.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The impact of the policy and related procedures is that they have not added additional hours of working.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The policy does not duplicate any other existing policy.
<input type="checkbox"/>	All policies have been reviewed in order to assess whether any are outdated and unnecessary.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The school has identified the resources necessary to support the policy, including staff time, any additional staffing and appropriate equipment.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Implementation of this policy will not result in any additional meetings/ activities that have not been identified within the school calendar, published and revised in consultation with relevant staff.
<input type="checkbox"/>	All staff (including the headteacher) have had training to ensure that the policy and any related procedures are carried out without increasing workload burdens.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The policy and related procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that additional workload burdens have not been added over time.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body when the Headteacher will report on its operation and effectiveness.

Background

Historical underachievement of Looked After Children:

- Poor exam success rates in comparison with the general population
- A high level of disruption and change in school placements
- Lack of involvement in extra curricular activities
- Inconsistent or no attention paid to homework
- Underachievement in further and higher education

It is, therefore, essential that schools promote the achievement of such vulnerable children, who may also face additional barriers because of their race, ethnicity, religion and beliefs, sexual orientation or because they are disabled. All schools should have a policy for Looked After Children is subject to review and approval by the Governing Body. The policy should set out not only the ethos of the school in its approach to meeting the needs of children looked after by a local authority but also the procedures that will ensure participation in high quality learning and progress.

The Children Act (1989)

Definitions of care

The term 'in care' now refers solely to children who are subject to Care Orders. Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are 'accommodated' by the local authority. Both these groups are said to be 'looked after children' (LAC) or children in care or 'children looked after' (CLA) by the local authority. Accommodated children also include those in receipt of respite care – if it exceeds 20 days in one episode or over 120 days a year.

Different living arrangements

It is important not to confuse a young person's legal status with their living arrangements. For example, a child on a Care Order can be living with:

- Foster carers
- In a children's home
- In a residential school
- With relatives
- With parents – under supervision of Children's Services.

Similarly, an 'accommodated' child can be living:

- In foster care
- In a children's home
- In a residential school.

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 under section 52 of the Children Act 2004, the Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher – Statutory Guidance for School Governors (2009) .

The Deanes School Policy for Children Looked After

The Objective:

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in care.

The Name of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children for the school:

K. Hampstead

The Role of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children

Within School Systems:

- To act as an advocate for looked after children and young people.
- To develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers and colleagues.
- To hold a supervisory brief for all looked after children, e.g. to ensure all relevant education and care information is available to school staff and carer(s), and that this information is kept up to date.
- To monitor the educational progress of all looked after children in order to inform the school's development plan.
- To intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy.
- To ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by looked after children and young people and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them.
- To inform members of staff of the general educational needs of looked after children and to promote the involvement of these children in school homework clubs, extra curricular activities, home reading schemes, school councils, etc.
- To ensure that the educational targets within the Personal Education Plan are implemented fully and that all relevant staff are aware of them.
- To co-ordinate the appropriate allocation of the Disadvantaged Pupil Fund for looked after children and to be accountable for how it is spent.
- To report to the Governing Body at least on an annual basis (preferably each term) on the outcomes for looked after children.
- To attend training as appropriate.

Work with Individual Looked After Children:

- To work with individual children, possibly alongside a carer, to arrive at a statement about their care arrangements and circumstances that they would be happy to share with staff and/or pupils.
- To enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their Care Plan.
- To supervise the smooth induction of a new looked after child into the school.
- To develop in-school strategies to promote and accelerate the achievement of looked after children and close the gap between them and their peers.
- To fully support additional learning opportunities that may be available from the Virtual School and partner agencies

Liaison:

- To liaise with the member of staff responsible for monitoring children on the Child Protection Register.
- To help communication with LA/Social Care staff so that the Personal Education Plan can inform the child's Care Plan.
- To attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or to contribute in other ways to care planning meetings and statutory reviews.
- To be named contact for colleagues.
- To ensure the speedy transfer of information between agencies and individuals, and report on the progress of all looked after children on the school role.

Training:

- To develop knowledge of Looked After Children procedures by attending training events organised by the Local Authority and in particular the Virtual School.
- To cascade training to school staff as appropriate.
- To attend the annual Designated Teachers conference and participate in area cluster groups for additional training and to share good practice.

Governor

The name of a Governor with special responsibility for Looked After Children in the school:

G. Baynes

The role of that governor

The named governor will report to the Governing Body on an annual basis using the report from the Designated Teacher as source information:

- The number of looked-after pupils in the school;
- A comparison of progress as a discrete group, compared with those of other pupils;
- The attendance of pupils as a discrete group, compared to other pupils;
- The level of fixed term/permanent exclusions;
- Pupil destinations

The named governor should be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that looked-after pupils have equal access to:

- The Curriculum;
- Public examinations;
- Additional interventions to support educational progress e.g. 1 to 1;
- Careers and Youth Service guidance;
- Additional education support;
- Extra-curricular activities.

School Responsibility

It is important that all teaching staff who are in contact with the child or young person are aware that he/she is being looked after by the Local Authority. The responsibility for the transfer of this information should be that of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children.

It is appropriate for a classroom support assistant to have knowledge that the young person is in care only when directly involved in the teaching of the young person.

In the absence of the usual class teacher, some information regarding the child's circumstances should be shared with the teacher covering the class. The extent of this sharing should be determined by the Headteacher or the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children.

Admission Arrangements

On admission, records will be requested from the pupil's previous school and a meeting will be held with carer/parent/Social Worker as appropriate – but always involving someone with parental responsibility (*1). This will provide information to inform the Personal Education Plan. An appropriate school induction will take place.

Involve the Young Person

It is important that a young person is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. How this is shared with them clearly depends on their age and understanding. The explanation should emphasise that the school, the Social Worker, and their carer(s) are working together to promote their education.

It is important that the young person is supported to complete the Pupil Voice section of the Personal Education Plan by the Designated Teacher or a designated member of staff, to inform the PEP and Care Plan review meetings

It is important to establish the child's view of their changed circumstances and what they want others to know. It is also important to ensure that a Social Worker/teacher/carer prepares the child for situations when they may be asked about home, e.g. by other pupils.

Communication with Other Agencies

Schools should ensure that a copy of all reports (e.g. End of year reports) should be forwarded to the young person's Social Worker in addition to the foster carer or Residential Social Worker and if appropriate parent/s and the Virtual School.

Schools and education and social work colleagues should endeavour to co-ordinate their review meetings, e.g. to have an Annual or a Statement Review and a Personal Education Plan meeting or review.

It is important to exchange information between formal reviews if there are significant changes in the young person's circumstances, e.g. if school is considering an exclusion, there is a change of care placement or there are significant attendance issues.

Assessment, Monitoring and Review Procedures

Each looked after pupil will have a Care Plan that will include a Personal Education Plan (PEP) that is developed jointly by the Social worker and Designated Teacher. This will identify specific areas of concern and include achievable targets. Areas for consideration will include:

- Attendance.
- Achievement Record (academic or otherwise).
- Behaviour.
- Extended learning opportunities.
- Involvement in Out of School Hours Activities.
- Special needs (if any);
- Development needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge or subject areas and experiences).
- Long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations).

The PEP will be updated and reviewed at least annually or at the point of any major change and contribute to the Statutory Reviewing process carried out by the Independent Reviewing Officer. The Designated Teacher is accountable for the implementation of the educational targets within the Plan.

The named governor will report annually to the Governing Body on the progress of all looked-after children against the key indicators outlined above.

*1

Education Law defines who is a parent very widely. It includes anyone who has parental responsibility for a child or who has care for them. This means it is possible for someone who does not have parental responsibility to be a 'parent' because they have care of the child in question for example the foster carer.

Ref

Section 576 Education Act 1996

Children Act 1989 (amended)

'If this were my child' (Local Government Information Unit 2003)