



Brampton Abbots CE Primary School



Bridstow CE Primary School



Oak Meadow Federation

Looked After Children Policy

This policy will be reviewed and updated by the Governing Body at least every three years. All references to 'the school' imply both Brampton Abbots and Bridstow Primary Schools.

Policy approved by Governing Body on 13th July 2020

Signed Daniel Brearey, Headteacher

Paul Mason, GB Chair

Policy due for review July 2023

Policy for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children: Dan Brearey
(Head Teacher)

Deputies: Rossanna Griffith (Assistant SENCO, Bridstow)
Claire Lewis (SENCO, Brampton Abbots)

Our objective

Our objective is for all our pupils, regardless of background and circumstance, to make outstanding progress and achieve. We want them to be resilient and to value effort; we want them to understand that sometimes failure is an essential part of the learning process and to recognise that developing a positive, 'can do' attitude will help them to set and achieve aspirational goals.

Definitions: 'Looked After Children' (LAC)

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
- children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order
- children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection
- 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

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.

Definitions: 'Previously looked after children' (PLAC)

The February 2018 guidance stated that: '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'.

Responsibility for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children:

We recognise that many looked after and previously looked after children have suffered disrupted learning, may have missed extended periods of school, and many of them have special educational needs (SEN). The gaps in their learning and, in many cases the emotional impact of their experiences, are likely to have become significant barriers to their progress. The complexity of this fragmented educational experience with high incidence of SEN, needs careful assessment and planning.

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 Head teacher, the Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children or the Deputy. It is appropriate for non-teaching staff to have knowledge that the young person is being looked-after only when directly involved with the young person.

All staff need to respect the confidentiality and sensitivity of such information.

The Role of Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children Within School Systems:

The designated teacher will be a central point of initial contact within the school. At times this point of contact may be delegated to the deputy who will report directly to the Designated Teacher.

- to ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have an understanding of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by Looked After and Previously Looked After Children 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 and Previously 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 act as an advocate for Looked After Children
- to develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers, Children's Services, and the Virtual School
- to hold a supervisory brief for all Looked After and Previously 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 Looked After and Previously Looked After Children in order to inform the school's development plan
- To intervene if there is evidence of individual under achievement, absence from school or internal truancy.
- Developing strong partnerships with carers, local authorities, and specialist agencies

Work with Individual Looked After Children:

- to enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their care plan
- making it a priority to know the young people well and to build strong relationships
- to help ensure that each pupil has a Personal Education Plan (PEP/ePEP). The statutory guidance states that the PEP should be initiated by the young person's social worker. In Herefordshire, social workers are assisted by the Virtual School team
- to ensure that the home-school agreement is signed by the primary carer.

Liaison:

- to liaise with the member of staff responsible for monitoring children on the Child Protection Register
- to help co-ordinate education and Looked After Children review meetings, 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 Looked After Children care planning meetings e.g. via the Virtual School team
- to be the named contact for colleagues in the Virtual School and Children's Social Care
- to ensure the speedy transfer of information between agencies and individuals.

Training:

- to develop knowledge of procedures for Looked After Children in Herefordshire by attending training events organised by the Local Authority
- to cascade training to school staff as appropriate.

The Governor with special responsibility for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children: Dawn Brown

The role of that Governor:

The named governor will report to the Governing Body on an annual basis (where numbers allow anonymity)

- a comparison of test scores as a discrete group, compared with those of other pupils
- the attendance of pupils as a discrete group, compared with other pupils
- the level of fixed term/permanent exclusions

- individual 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 national curriculum
- public examinations
- careers guidance
- additional (educational) support
- extra-curricular activities

Admission Arrangements:

On admission, records (including the PEP/ePEP) will be requested from the pupil's previous school. An appropriate school induction will take place. A meeting to review the Personal Education Plan will be held.

Involving the Young Person:

It is important that a young person is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances and that their contribution is sought. 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.

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 carer and parent(s). The social worker is responsible for advising a school whether reports should be sent to parents.

Schools, the Virtual School, Children's Social Care, and the SEND Team should endeavour to co-ordinate their review meetings.

Children's Social Care, the Virtual School and schools will need 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.

When information is shared electronically, it should be sent securely via Anycomms or only using a child's initials or UPN.

Assessment, Monitoring and Review Procedures:

Each looked-after pupil will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP/ePEP). This will identify specific areas of concern and include achievable targets. Areas for consideration will include:

- use of LAC Pupil Premium and Pupil Premium Plus
- attendance
- achievement record (academic or otherwise)
- behaviour
- homework
- involvement in Extra Curricular 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/ePEP will be updated at least every term. This may be a face to face meeting, or a 'remote' PEP.