



Ysgol Uwchradd Y Frenhines Elisabeth  
Queen Elizabeth High School

## **POLICY FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The governing body is committed to ensuring success for every child, by:

1. safeguarding each pupil's entitlement to an education which embraces enlightenment, compassion and activity;
2. enabling moral and ethical understanding, identity, responsibility, wisdom and vision to grow;
3. being ambitious in our work and having confidence in each child's capacity for success.

In addition, we subscribe fully to the seven core aims as set out by the Welsh Government, that, whatever their background or their circumstances, children should have the support they need, by means of:

- A flying start in life;
- A comprehensive range of education & learning opportunities;
- Good health, free from abuse and victimisation;
- Access to play, leisure;
- Being listened to, treated with respect;
- Having a safe home & community which supports physical and emotional wellbeing;
- Not being disadvantaged by poverty.

### **LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN**

Children and young people become "Looked After" either if they have been taken into care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most 'Looked After Children' will be living with foster parents but a smaller number may be in children's residential units, living with a relative or may even be placed at home with their birth parents.

For Children Looked After it is recognised nationally that there is considerable educational underachievement when compared with their peers and this Governing body is committed to implementing the principles and practice as outlined in:

- DfEE Circular 0269/2000
- DfEE/DOH Guidance 2000
- NAFW Circular 2/2001

- Children Act 2004, specifically: **“The duty to safeguard looked after children, to promote their educational achievements and to ensure they are able to achieve and reach their full potential”**
- The latest LEA’s Guidance on LAC.

The 2000 Guidance introduced key measures, in order to improve multi-agency coordination and improve educational life chances for ‘Looked After’ Children. These are Designated Teachers for ‘Looked After’ Children [or LAC Coordinators] and the use of a Personal Education Plan for each Child.

The governing body is committed to ensuring that the following roles and responsibilities are carried out effectively in order to fulfil the school’s duty regarding these pupils.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. The Head teacher will:**

- Appoint the LAC Coordinator whose work will be overseen by a designated member of staff;
- Ensure that the LAC Coordinator has received appropriate training;
- Oversee the development of the policy on looked after children;
- Be responsible for all systems to support looked after children;
- Report to the governing body on an annual basis on the following:
  - The number of looked after pupils in the school;
  - An analysis of attainment as a discrete group, compared to other pupils;
  - The attendance of pupils, compared to other pupils;
  - The level of fixed term and permanent exclusions, compared to other pupils;
  - The number of complaints;
- Use exclusions as a last resort, in line with the LAs exclusion advice

### **2. The LAC Coordinator will:**

- Act as an advocate for looked after children;
- Maintain a register of all looked after children on the school roll;
- Ensure that appropriate educational records [especially attendance and attainment] are kept for looked after children, taking action to ensure that these are in line with those for children generally within the school;
- Obtain educational records from the child's previous school;
- Ensure speedy transfer of information when a ‘Looked After’ child transfers into another educational placement.
- Ensure the speedy transfer of information between agencies and individuals and keep this information up to date;
- Contribute information to LAC reviews when required;
- Ensure that the ***Personal Education Plan*** is completed within 20 school days of the child entering care or joining the school, with the social worker and carer. The PEP will be reviewed in accordance with the care plan. The PEP will identify specific areas of strengths and weaknesses and will include achievable targets. Areas to be included in the PEP are as follows: Attendance; Achievement record (academic or otherwise); Behaviour; Homework; Involvement in extra curricular activities;
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by looked after children, informing them of their general needs, promoting the need for positive support systems to overcome them;

- Act as the key advisor for staff and governors on issues relevant to 'Looked After' children;
- Promote the involvement of looked after children in school clubs and extra curricular activities;
- Build positive home/school relationships between parent/carers with regular opportunities for dialogue;
- Support carers and school staff to ensure that any special educational needs of looked after children are met;
- Encourage looked after children and their carers to value education;
- Develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers and the local Department for Education and Children;
- Act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and individuals in relation to 'Looked After' children;
- Convene an urgent multi professional meeting if a 'Looked After' child is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion;
- Ensure that an induction meeting takes place when a looked after child joins the school;
- Provide pastoral care for looked after children, being sensitive to their family circumstances and racial, cultural and social background;
- Attend appropriate courses in order to maintain an up to date knowledge of relevant issues and current legislation;
- Cascade training to school staff as appropriate;
- Ensure confidentiality on individual children, sharing confidential/personal information on a need to know basis;
- Ensure that care and school liaison is effective including invitations to meetings and other school events;

### **3. The Governing Body will:**

- Ensure that children who are looked after have the same right as everyone else in relation to:
  - Admission to school;
  - The National Curriculum;
  - Public examinations;
  - Extra curricular activities;
  - Additional support with their education where needed;
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for 'Looked After' children;
- Ensure there is a 'Looked After' Children Coordinator;
- Liaise with the Headteacher, Coordinator, and all other staff to ensure the needs of 'Looked After' children are met;
- *Nominate a governor with responsibility for LAC who links with the Coordinator;*
- Receive regular reports from the Coordinator;
- Annually, review the effective implementation of the school policy for 'Looked After' children;

### **4. The Nominated Governor will:**

Report to the Governing Body on an annual basis regarding the following:

- The number of looked after pupils in school;
- pupil attendance;
- pupil exclusions, permanent and fixed term;
- pupil participation i.e. Extra-curricular activities;

- national curriculum assessment and/or examination results;

#### **5. Members of staff will:**

- Be made aware that a child is being looked after by the local authority. The LAC Coordinator is responsible for informing staff and for determining the amount of information to be shared;
- Have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of 'Looked After' children;
- Positively promote the raising of a 'Looked After' child's self esteem;
- Ensure any 'Looked After' child is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained;
- Be familiar with the Guidance on 'Looked After' children and respond appropriately to requests for information to support Personal Education Plans (PEPs), and review meetings;
- Respond positively to the request to be a 'Looked After' child's named person;
- Liaise with the Coordinator where a 'Looked After' child is experiencing difficulties;
- If called upon to do, liaise with social care colleagues and other appropriate professionals;
- Keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to other professionals as appropriate;
- Actively seek training to help fulfil their roles with regard to looked after children.

#### **6. The Looked After Child will:**

- Be made aware of the fact that information about his/her personal background is being recorded. This will be relayed to the child in a manner appropriate to their age and understanding with emphasis on the fact that the school, social worker and carer(s) are working together to promote their education.

#### **7. Other Agencies:**

- The looked after child's social worker and carer will receive a copy of all school reports;
- The Department for Education and Children will assist us in coordinating review meetings and will inform us promptly about significant changes in the pupil's circumstances between formal reviews;
- The Corporate Parenting Manager will provide us with general advice and guidance, as well as specific information relating to looked after children.

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**Date established by governing body: 26<sup>th</sup> January 2011**

**Review date: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2013**

**Next review date: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2014**