



Looked After Children (LAC) Policy

September 2021

OBJECTIVES

- Waingels is committed to providing quality education for all our children and young people based on equality of opportunity, equitable practice and access as well as outcomes. We recognise that, nationally, the educational achievement of Looked After and previously Looked After Children, as a group, remains unacceptably low and that gaps in their learning and/or emotional impact of their experiences may have formed barriers to progress. Waingels intends that Looked After Children, and previously Looked After Children who attend our school fulfil their academic potential and make confident steps towards the next part of their educational journey and beyond.
- The Children Act 2004 provides the legislative framework for developing effective and accessible services focused on the needs of children, young people and their families. Section 52 of this Act places a duty on Local Authorities to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children. Amendments made by the 2017 Children and Social Work Act extended this duty to previously looked after children, who are no longer looked after due to a Child Arrangement Order, a Special Guardianship Order or an Adoption Order. Waingels intend, through this policy, to promote the inclusion, well-being and achievement of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children in our care.
- Waingels is committed to implementing the measures defined in statutory guidance from the DFE (and former DCSF) in respect of 'Promoting the Education of Looked After Children (February 2018),' 'Improving the Attainment of Looked After Children in Secondary Schools (2009),' and 'The Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children (February 2018).' The key principles are:
 1. Appointment of a Designated Teacher for every Academy (Section 20 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 and 2017)
 2. Implementing effective schools support for Looked After and previously Looked After Children which is the responsibility of all school staff by
 - Doing the things schools do for all young people but more so by ensuring induction processes reflect the prioritisation for a differentiated learning approach for looked after and previously looked after children, that strengths and weaknesses are identified and progress is rigorously tracked, and personalised interventions are implemented accordingly.
 - Balancing high levels of support with real challenges by setting high expectations and learning targets which are regularly reviewed, but are supported by a collaborative learning approach with other students.

- Linking each young person with a keyworker they relate well with and providing opportunities for mentoring work as well as access to peer role models, as well as training for the keyworker
- Making it a priority to know the young people well and build strong relationships by ensuring the Designated Teacher liaises with the keyworker to make teachers aware of the specific needs of individual young people and to provide early interventions as further needs arise, as well as emphasising the confidential nature of the young person's circumstances
- Develop strong partnership working with carers, local authorities and other specialist agencies by regular communication and a collaborative approach.
- Making things happen and seeing things through by gaining the trust of young people and facilitating keyworkers to act as an advocate and/or mediator during difficult periods
- Ensuring consistency as well as discrete flexibility by raising awareness of the impact of loss and separation from birth families; how this affects social, emotional and mental health, and how this can manifest in extreme and risk-taking behaviours, all of which may require alternative provision to be secured as an alternative to exclusion
- Actively extending the horizons of each young person by encouraging participation in extra-curricular activities and clubs, and participation in school trips.
- Planning for future transition by providing personalised transition from primary to secondary and from secondary to FE, including transfer of records, and to encourage aspirations through links to youth advisors and other positive role models

ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

- To appoint a Designated Teacher for looked after and previously looked after children who is a qualified teacher and who is either the Principal, the SENDCo, or a Senior Leader who has sufficient authority to influence the provision for Looked after Children
- To ensure the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out their responsibilities and receives the appropriate and adequate training

ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

- Ensure that previously looked after children are eligible for support by asking the child's parents/carers for evidence of their previously looked after status.
- Promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations for the education and learning of looked after and previously looked after children
- Ensure the young people have a voice in setting their learning targets
- Advise staff about differentiated learning strategies and reviewing progress
- Ensure effective use of the pupil premium, including keeping abreast of the Academy calendar to identify trips and residential visits which would be of benefit to the learning experience of Looked After and previously Looked After Children

- Prioritise one-to-one tuition for young people to support their learning, ensuring carers understand the importance of learning at home.
- Ensure that all staff understand the key principles outlined at 1.3.2, including the need for sensitivity and confidentiality in terms of information relating to Looked After and previously Looked After Children
- Liaise closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead where there are any additional safeguarding challenges, and with the SENDCo to consider whether the child has any special education needs, and if these have been identified and met. This may include any mental health needs. The Designated Teacher should understand the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and promote an 'attachment aware and trauma informed' approach across the Academy on behalf of Looked After and previously Looked After Children.
- Call early review meetings when a child is experiencing difficulties to avoid the need for exclusions
- Promote good home-school links with carers, parents or guardians
- Take a lead for the development and implementation of the young person personal education plan (PEP)
 - Ensure receipt of the PEP on admission of Looked after or previously Looked After child to school
 - Contribute to the PEP for children newly in care
 - Ensure transfer of PEP when a young person moves to another educational provision
 - Ensure information is collected from key members of staff to inform the PEP review process
 - Ensure the PEP is effectively used as an active tool to support educational progress by identifying strengths and weaknesses, setting short and long term targets which are agreed to by the child and career, record actions, monitor information, detail specific interventions/support and record a child's interested in extra-curricular activities
 - Judge the effectiveness of any intervention and strategies used
 - Review the PEP at regular intervals
 - Ensure smooth transition processes are in place
- To ensure that LAC pupils and post LAC pupils achieve progress outcomes in line with national expectations.
 - Pupils are supported to achieve a progress 8 score of 0 or above.
 - The designated teacher is responsible for analysing data at data entry points and liaising with parents, carers and the virtual school to put into place timely intervention where underachievement is noted.
 - Should there be a wider barrier to achievement identified, this will be supported by referral to outside agencies such as Educational Psychologists, CAMHS, The Annex project etc.
 - Alternative education provision may be required to support LAC/PLAC pupils outcomes as discussed with parents, carers and the virtual school
 - Post LAC pupils will have a mentor who will work with their families to support progress and future aspirations.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE LOCAL GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

- Ensure that a Designated Teacher for Looked After and previously Looked After Children is appointed who has the appropriate seniority, professional experience and status to provide leadership, training, information and advice to others that will influence decisions about the teaching and learning needs of Looked After and previously Looked After Children
- Monitor compliance with legal requirements and guidance to assess the effectiveness of the role of the designated teacher
- Receive an annual report from the Designated Teacher which delineates numbers of Looked after and previously Looked After Children on role, levels of progress made, data regarding attendance and exclusions, effectiveness of PEP's, identification of this cohort as gifted and talented and/or SEND, destinations of Looked after and previously Looked After Children, and how their teaching and learning needs are reflected in the School Development Plan.
- Protect the Child's need for confidentiality
- Appoint a named Governor to take a special interest in this area of the School's work

TRAINING

- The Principal, through the Designated Teacher and CPD Leader, will ensure that all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy

Author – Nikki Street

Agreed at: Full Governors Meeting – 16 September 2021