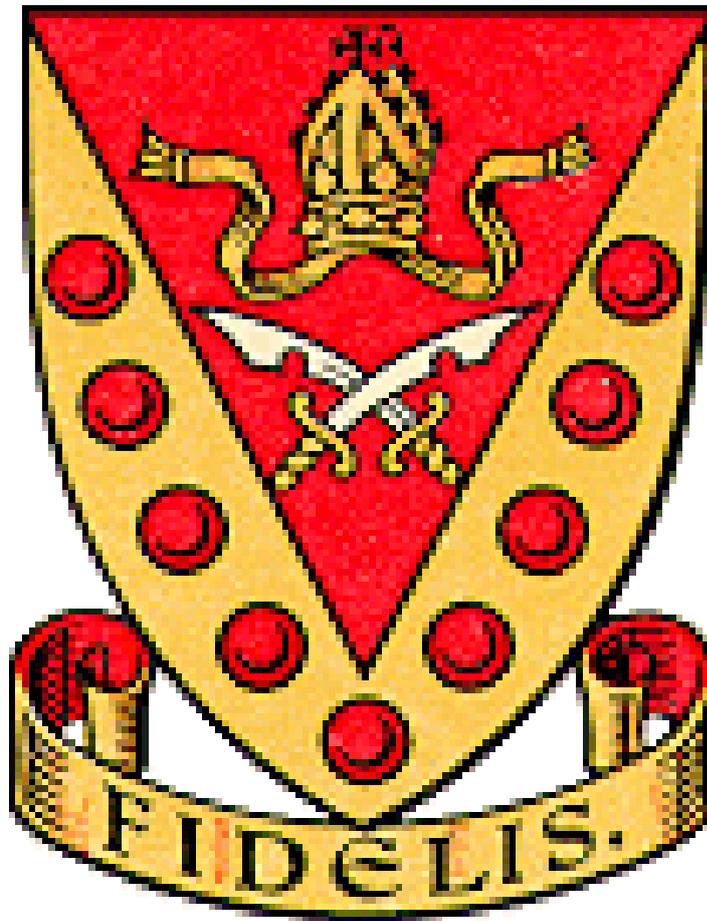


Bishopshalt School

Looked After Children (LAC) Policy



Responsibility	Mrs King	Date reviewed	October 2017
Headteacher	Mr K Rowe	Next review date	October 2018
Ratified by	Governing Body	Date Ratified	

In order to achieve the best for each child we are fully committed to developing with them our core values and Vision Statement.

Our Vision Statement (below) emphasises that we aim to offer an outstanding education to all, but also that we are striving to build on the strong foundations that we have, we always aim to improve.

Vision Statement

We aim to be a self-improving school, in which all members of our community can say we provide our children with an outstanding education that fulfils their potential.

- A school where both students and teachers strive to learn and improve
- A school where we care for every child to enable them to achieve the highest academic progress and personal development possible - to their potential and beyond
- A school that develops traditional values of kindness and tolerance, respect and consideration of all others, and perseverance and hard work in ourselves
- A school that offers a rich learning environment, where every student is encouraged to achieve and engage in every lesson, every day

The Looked After Children Policy makes an invaluable contribution to this by:

- Nurturing students and developing a framework which provides opportunities for everyone to reach their full potential;
- Empowering students by valuing, recognising and rewarding their learning;
- Empowering students to become independent and responsible learners whatever their starting point

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1. Statutory framework

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. Such children fall into four main groups:

- children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (Section 20);
- children who are the subjects of a care order (Section 31) or interim care order (Section 38);
- children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (Sections 44 and 46); and,
- 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 (Section 21).

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.

2. Links to other policies

The following policies may also be relevant to the Looked After Children Policy:

- Safeguarding
- Admissions
- Anti-Bullying
- Behaviour and Discipline

3. Purpose

The school recognises that nationally there is considerable educational underachievement of children in residential and foster care, when compared with their peers. We are committed to providing an educational environment which seeks to significantly improve the life chances for Looked After Children based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes.

This policy sets out for students, staff and parents/carers how we will seek to realise this commitment. In particular:

- to ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for LAC as for all children;
- to ensure that all LAC have access to the school curriculum;
- to provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual's needs and ability;
- to ensure that LAC students take as full a part as possible in all school activities;
- to ensure that carers and social workers of LAC students are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment;
- to ensure that LAC students are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision.

Looked After Children (LAC) - are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational underachievement when compared to their peers. For example, they may experience:

- a high level of disruption and change in school placements;
- lack of involvement in extracurricular activities; and/or,
- inconsistent or no attention paid to homework.
- More likely to have SEBD often as result of the trauma, early childhood experience and disruption they have experienced
- Low levels of attainment at the point of which they enter care

This may result in:

- poor exam success rates in comparison with the general population; and,
- underachievement in further and higher education.
- Increased risk of exclusion

These issues may also affect adopted young people.

The majority of children who remain in care are there because they have suffered abuse or neglect. The Every Child Matters: Change for Children programme aims to improve outcomes for all children. To date the outcomes achieved by LAC have been unacceptably poor and the Government is committed to addressing this disparity. As a school we all have a part to play in this by vigorously applying the principles of good parenting by:

- giving priority to education;
- listening to children;
- providing stability and continuity;
- taking corporate responsibility;
- promoting inclusion;
- raising standards;
- intervening early; and
- celebrating success

4. Implementation

Bishopshalt School will positively welcome students who are Looked After and will offer additional support to enable them to settle into the school.

All maintained schools and academies must appoint a designated teacher who has responsibility for promoting the educational achievement for all looked after children on the roll of their school.

Schools are under an obligation to do this through their funding agreement. Maintained schools are required to appoint a designated teacher under the *Designated Teacher (Looked After Pupils etc) (England) Regulations 2009*.

The statutory guidance *The roles and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked-after children* explains the things to which the school governing body should have regard in relation to this role.

The Governing Body will:

- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for LAC;
- designate a governor with responsibility for Looked After Children (Nancy Rawlings)
- designate a teacher for Looked After Children (Mrs Jane King, Deputy Head)
- designate a member of SLT with line management of Looked After Children (Mrs Jane King, Deputy Head)
- receive regular reports from the Designated Teacher;
- ensure that the school's policies and procedures give LAC equal access in respect of:
 - admission to the school;
 - the school curriculum and examinations;

- out of school learning and extra curricular activities;
 - work experience and careers guidance;
- annually review the effective implementation of the school policy for LAC; and,
 - ensure that the Designated Teacher is invited to the exclusion meetings of LAC.

The Headteacher will:

- ensure the needs of all LAC are fully met throughout the school ;
- monitor the work of the Designated teacher and receive regular reports on the progress of Looked After Children as individuals and as a group.

The Designated Teacher will:

- be an advocate for LAC within the school ;
- have regard to the impact of relevant decisions for LAC on both the LAC and the rest of the school community;
- know who all the Looked After Children in the school are and ensure the availability of all relevant details from record-keeping systems as required;
- attend relevant training about LAC;
- act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to LAC;
- ensure that LAC receive a positive welcome on entering school, especially mid year and, if necessary, offer additional support and a pre-entry visit to help the new student settle;
- ensure that all LAC have an appropriate PEP (Personal Education Plan) that is completed within 20 days of joining the school or of entering care and ensure that the young person contributes to the plan;
- keep PEPs and other records up to date and review PEPs at transfer and at six monthly intervals;
- convene an urgent multi-agency meeting if a LAC is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion;
- ensure confidentiality on individual students, sharing confidential and personal information on a need to know basis, bearing in mind the wishes of the individual student;
- act as the key adviser for staff and governors on issues relevant to LAC;
- ensure that carer and school liaison is effective including invitations to meetings and other school events;
- actively encourage and promote out of hours learning and extra curricular activities for LAC;
- ensure a speedy transfer of information, records and coursework, where appropriate, when a LAC transfers to another educational placement;
- contribute information to LAC reviews when required;
- report to the Governing body and Headteacher on LAC in the school and inform of relevant policy and practice development;
- agree with the social worker the appropriate people to invite to parents' evenings etc;
- prepare reports for Governors' meetings to include:

- the number of LAC on roll and the confirmation that they have a Personal Education Plan;
- their attendance and attainment compared to other students;
- the number, if any, of fixed term and permanent exclusions;
- the destinations of LAC who leave the school
- attend governor meetings as appropriate – such as the admission, disciplinary and exclusion of LAC;
- arrange a mentor or befriender (adult and /or student) to whom the young person can talk, particularly when the student is new to the school ;
- ensure that any Special Educational Needs are addressed in conjunction with the Head of Inclusion and in accordance with the Code of Practice for SEN; and,
- develop staff awareness of issues associated with LAC and arrange for training as appropriate to identified needs.

All staff will be expected to:

- adhere to the school policy and procedures regarding Looked After Children;
- keep the Designated Teacher informed about a LAC's progress and liaise with the Designated Teacher where a LAC is experiencing difficulties;
- have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of LAC;
- positively promote the raising of a LAC's self esteem;
- ensure any LAC is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained;
- respond appropriately to requests for information to support PEPs and review meetings;
- contribute to regular liaison with social care colleagues and other appropriate professionals and keep carers fully informed at all times;
- keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to other professionals/ parents/carers/student as appropriate
- be aware through training and liaison with the Designated Teacher of how their teaching strategies and curriculum delivery can impact of the achievement and behaviour of LAC

5. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

5.1 Monitoring the progress of LAC

The social worker for the LAC should initiate a Personal Education Plan – PEP - within 20 days of joining the school, or of entering care, and ensure that the young person is actively involved in the development of this plan. The Designated Teacher with responsibility for LAC will ensure that individual Looked After Children are assessed on entry to the school to ensure continuity of learning and in order to track progress.

5.2 Partnership with parents/carers and care workers

At Bishopshalt School we firmly believe in developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable LAC to achieve their potential. Review meetings will provide an opportunity to further this partnership working.

5.3 *Links with external agencies/organisations*

We also recognise the important contribution that external support services make in supporting LAC. Colleagues from the following support services may be involved with individual LAC:

- Social Services, this includes Social Workers, foster carers and residential care workers
- The Virtual School Head of Looked After Children and the Virtual School Team
- Educational psychologists and others from Local Authority SEN services;
- Medical officers;
- CAMHS;
- Participation Officers;
- Youth Offending Service

5.4 *Monitoring Progress of Looked After Children*

The school will monitor and track the achievement and attainment of all students at regular intervals in line with the school's Assessment Policy. Looked After Children will additionally require their PEP to be reviewed, according to their needs, as initiated by the reviewing office or social worker, and the young person's views should be sought by the Designated Teacher and noted on the PEP.

The school will monitor the progress of Looked After Children as a group as well as individuals to ensure that their needs are being appropriately met throughout the school.

Monitoring, review and evaluation of this policy and practice will include the quality of provision and impact in relation to:

- Standards of attainment at KS 3/4/5
- Attainment by subject
- Skills and competencies development
- Value-added attainment
- Specialist subject targets by attainment
- Specialist subject targets by participation
- Outcomes of teacher assessment
- Attendance and punctuality
- Behaviour within and beyond the school
- Students' participation rates
- Experiences of learning beyond the school
- Educational visits
- Work placements
- Involvement/engagement with parents/carers
- Incidents of bullying
- Incidents of racism
- Incidents of sexism/homophobia
- Feelings of safety/threat/challenge/support
- Exclusions by gender/ethnic group/year
- Competencies in literacy, numeracy, financial enterprise

- Social skills development
- Self-esteem
- Routes taken age 15+

6. Pupil Premium Plus for Looked After Children

The school recognizes the Pupil Premium Plus is a source of funding for LAC that should be used effectively by the school to raise the individual attainment of LAC.

The Personal Education Plan meeting will be used to discuss how the Pupil Premium Plus will be used most effectively for each individual child according to their needs. The PEP will also be used to review use of PPP.

All uses of Pupil Premium Plus will be approved by the Virtual School Head in accordance with the guidance.

Designated Teacher will monitor the use of Pupil Premium Plus and how effective its use has been in raising the attainment of the individual child at the end of each school year.

7. Review of the Looked After Children Policy.

7.1 The Policy will be reviewed annually.

7.2 Review date: June 2017.

7.3 Person Responsible: Deputy Head, Pastoral