



MARSHLAND HIGH SCHOOL

Policy for Looked After Children

Person Responsible: Mr T Duce **Approved by:** Local Governing Body

Last reviewed on: November 2020

Next review due by: November 2021

The Local Authority is the corporate parent for Looked After Children (LAC). This means that any actions which Marshland High School would usually involve parents, seek parental permission ask for support and advice should come to the Local Authority. As a school we are committed to support the Local Authority in their corporate parenting role and to do all that we can to promote the educational achievement and wellbeing of Looked After Children.

Our designated teacher for LAC is Ms Debi Benson

Our designated governor for LAC is Ms J Horsley

This policy describes our approach to meeting the requirements set out in:

- Statutory Guidance of Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 (Duty on Local Authorities to Promote the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children);
- Care Matters: Time for Change 2007 Guidance (Chapter 4 “A First Class Education”).
- The Children and Young Person’s Act 2008 (Duty on Schools to appoint a Designated Teacher for Children in Care) and Improving the Educational Attainment of Children in Care (Looked After Children).
- Promoting the Education of Looked After Children, Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities February 2018.

The school recognises that the provisions outlined in this policy must be in place regardless of whether there are any LAC currently on the school roll.

1. Governing Body and School commitment to enhanced support for Looked After Children

- The Governing Body and School will ensure that high quality learning opportunities and education are provided for all our pupils.
- We will ensure equality of access to opportunities and learning outcomes for all.
- We recognise that LAC can be especially vulnerable and are sometimes ‘at risk’ of failure in the learning context.

Therefore with specific reference to this cohort of children we will strive to achieve the following aims.

2. Aims for our Looked After Learners

- To ensure that all LAC have access to a broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum.
- To provide personalised learning and curriculum appropriate to needs and ability.
- To support and monitor social progress ensuring key adults prioritise respectful and responsive relationship building with individual children and provide appropriate support for social development within the peer group.
- To ensure that LAC receive full and appropriate education each week.
- To ensure that LAC take as full a part as possible in all school activities and strive to reduce and eliminate any barriers that may stop them from taking part.
- To ensure that carers, social workers and parents (as appropriate) are involved and kept fully informed of their child’s progress and attainment.
- To ensure that wherever appropriate LAC are involved in decisions affecting their learning, the plans for progress and future provision.
- To ensure that success is appropriately recognised and reinforced.

- To ensure that any emerging concerns are followed up in a timely way with skill and sensitivity (e.g. changes in patterns of behaviour and attendance).
- To liaise and cooperate with appropriate partners, in particular the Virtual School Team, to ensure that all plans complement and support the promotion of the educational achievement and wellbeing of LAC.
- To ensure all school policies and procedures are followed sensitively for LAC.

3. Admissions to our School

- This school recognises that LAC children are exempt from the schools admission code and must be admitted in a maintained school and is aware that the Secretary of State can direct an academy to take a Looked After Child.
- The Governing Body supports the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 in that 'Children in public care have the highest priority in their admission arrangements.'
- Our school will ensure that LAC are named a first priority within our school written admissions criteria.
- The Governing Body supports the statutory guidance Promoting the Education of LAC 2018 in that LAC are exempt from the fair access protocol and are excepted pupils in relation to infant class size.
- Sometimes care placement changes lead to LAC entering school mid-term or mid-year if this is thought to be in the best interests of the child. This school will ensure that in these circumstances LAC will be admitted to the school in a timely manner, even if this would mean that this would increase class sizes above the recommended maximum. As necessary, we will give a positive welcome, plan entry, offer additional support and pre-entry visits to help pupils settled into school.

The Virtual School for the relevant Local Authority will work with the school when a pupil is leaving to ensure that it is made as positive an event as possible e.g. leaving events, farewells, information transfer etc.

4. Inclusion and Allocation of Resources

- Our policy recognises that all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broadly based, and stimulating curriculum and learning programme.
- For LAC there can often be a need to develop learning opportunities emphasising personalised planning and planned inclusive approaches.
- The Governing Body will ensure our school makes all appropriate learning provision for LAC. Resources are allocated to support LAC in line with this policy and with our wider school teaching and learning policies and good practice.

The Pupil Premium Plus funding allocated by the Head of the Virtual School for LAC will be used to support the individual learning programmes of the LAC in the school. This will be monitored as part of the PEP process to show impact on learning. Requests are expected to be 'above and beyond' the resources available to other Marshland students.

5. Monitoring the Progress of Looked After Children

- Progress for LAC in school is identified, monitored and supported and is guided by school policies for teaching and learning.
- We will monitor and track the achievement and attainment of pupils at least termly. This will be formally reported to the Virtual School for LAC via the ePEP system. Pastoral Managers conduct, arrange and review ePEP meetings using Welfare Call, signed off by the Designated Teacher.
- The school makes an assessment of the pupil's needs and attainment on entry, to ensure continuity of learning.
- The ePEP is key to the planning and monitoring of education for a LAC and governors are aware that they are statutory school documents.
- The Designated Teacher, working with the Virtual School teacher, will ensure there is an ePEP in place for all LAC in school.
- The Designated Teacher will ensure an ePEP meeting takes place within statutory timelines and ensure the attendance of appropriate staff.

6. Attendance and Exclusion

- The school will monitor the attendance of LAC and will notify all appropriate partners at an early stage if there is an indication that problems with attendance might occur.
- The Local Authorities we work with have a contract with Welfare Call Limited. A member of the Welfare Call team will call or email all schools with LAC daily to ascertain attendance. The school will ensure this information is provided promptly and accurately.
- The school will take all reasonable steps to ensure that exclusion is rarely used for LAC and then is always only as a last resort, after all other avenues have been explored. The school will advise the Virtual School teacher if there is a possibility of exclusion and discuss options with the relevant Local Authority.
- The school will make arrangements for first day provision for any excluded LAC as it would for any non-LAC pupil after day 6 of exclusion.
- This is a statutory variation to exclusion regulations

7. Record Keeping and Information Sharing

- The Designated Teacher will coordinate record keeping for all LAC in school. This will involve consultation with the Virtual School teacher who will be able to advise on specific and appropriate contacts.
- Records will include, up to date progress and attainment records, PEP planning records and personalised information relating to care context as appropriate. These records will be maintained in a single place, having regard to the statutory nature of some of these documents and the confidential information that they contain.
- LAC status is appropriately 'flagged' in school management information systems, ensuring information and planning records are readily available as required.
- The DT will ensure there is ready access to information and up to date contact details for carers, parents (where appropriate), social worker and the named contact in the Virtual School team.
- All appropriate records will be forwarded to the receiving school promptly if there is a transfer to another school.

- Sensitivity is a priority in sharing information with members of the school staff team. We are guided by best practice and use a 'need to know'. Wherever possible pupils' wishes are taken into account in sharing information within the staff team.
- Any incidents of bullying of the LAC or by the LAC will be formally recorded and noted in the PEP and review processes.

8. Appointments within Staff and Governing Body

- The school will adhere to the statutory requirement to appoint a Designated Teacher for LAC. This person will be a qualified teacher and ideally a senior person within the school.
- All staff and governors have a responsibility for the educational achievement and well-being of LAC. The work of the Designated Teacher with responsibility for LAC is to lead in this area, but they do not hold sole responsibility.

9. Staff and Governors' Development and Training

- The Designated Teacher makes particular efforts to develop good awareness and understanding of issues, guidance and developments associated with the LAC context. The Designated Teacher disseminates knowledge and skills to colleagues in school as appropriate and necessary. Partnership working and collaboration with the Local Authority and the Virtual School is essential here.
- There is a specific statutory expectation that the Designated Teacher for LAC will be released to attend a programme of training each year to maintain and extend their personal expertise.
- A Designated Governor will attend appropriate briefings and relevant development opportunities provided by the Local Authority and the Virtual School.

10. Partnership Working

- The school values the views of carers and parents, corporate parents, residential care workers and other specialists to enable pupils to achieve their potential.
- We will develop close relationships and collaborative work to promote the learning and wellbeing of individual children, both in and out of school.
- PEP meetings, other school liaison and consultation processes and informal day to day dialogue are all seen as good opportunities to enhance our partnerships.
- We recognise the essential contributions that external support services make in supporting LAC. We commit to developing positive partnerships with all involved. Our partnerships with community partners are extensive; some of our key partners for these children include:

The Virtual School, Social Care, Family Workers, Education Psychologists, SEND teams, CAMH, Education Welfare Officers, Youth Offending Service, locality teams and advocacy services.