Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children Policy

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1. Purpose

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children within Bentilee Nursery school

2. Rationale

Looked After and Previously Looked After Children (LAC and Pre LAC) start with the disadvantage of their previous pre-care experiences often resulting in disrupted learning, missed extended periods of school and many have special educational needs. The gaps in their learning and in many cases the emotional impacts of their experiences are likely to become significant barriers to their learning.

The statutory guidance, 'The Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children' DfE, 2018, extended the statutory role of the Designated Teacher to include Previously Looked After Children because when children cease to be looked after, their educational needs are unlikely to have changed significantly because their care status has changed.

Attainment data for LAC and Pre LAC shows that these pupils' people do not perform as well at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 when compared to non LAC so this school/Academy aims to close that gap.

Helping Looked After and Previously Looked After Children succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority for this school/Academy.

This school/academy's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education and having high expectations
- Listening to the voice of the pupil and advocating for them
- Promoting attendance and reducing exclusions
- Supporting transition from one class to another
- Targeting support with early intervention and priority actions
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes
- Achieving stability and continuity
- Promoting health and wellbeing
- Working in partnerships with parents, carers, Social Workers, Virtual Schools and other professionals
- Responding to the individual developmental needs of children and young people as appropriate

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

- A child 'looked after by the local authority' is one who is Looked After within the meaning of section 22 of Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

- A Previously Looked After Child is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship order or child arrangements order

Schools must ensure that evidence of Previously Looked After Status is obtained that meets the statutory definition outlined above.

4. Duties and Responsibilities of the Governing Body

- Identify a nominated Governor for LAC and Previously LAC
- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of LAC and Previously LAC
- Ensure that the school/academy has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher has appropriate seniority, professional experience and training to carry out their responsibilities of promoting the educational achievement of LAC and Pre LAC.
- Ensure all policies support the needs of this cohort.
- Be aware that Ofsted will focus on Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children during Inspections and may audit PEPs.
- Ensure that resources are allocated to support appropriate provision for LAC and that they receive the full range of support to which they are entitled to enable them to make progress.

Procedures

- Monitor the academic progress of LAC and previously LAC through an annual report or information produced by the Designated Teacher to be shared with Governors and the Virtual School for monitoring purposes.
- Ensure that Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children are given top priority when applying for places in accordance with the Local Authority/school/Academy's admissions criteria.
- Understand the impact Pupil Premium+ has in supporting the needs of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children and ensure it is used to meet their needs.
- Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school/academy, by ensuring policies and procedures are flexible enough and inclusive to ensure LAC and Pre LAC enjoy their time in education, by recognising the extra problems caused by exclusion.
- Support the CEO/Principal/Headteacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of LAC and Pre LAC are recognised and met.

Receive a report once a year setting out as a minimum:

1. The number of LAC and Pre LAC pupils on the school/Academy's roll (if any).
2. Their attendance, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils.
3. Their EYFS/KS1/2/GCSE results achieved, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils.
4. The attainment and progress of LAC
5. PEP completion and use of Pupil Premium+
6. The number of Fixed Term Exclusions (if any).
7. The destinations of pupils who leave the school/Academy.
8. Information should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.

5. Duties and responsibilities of the CEO/Principal/Headteacher

- Identify a Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children and ensure they receive at least two days training per year as outlined in statutory documentation.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusion of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.

- Ensure that all staff receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.
- Ensure that LAC and Previously LAC receive careers advice that is documented and takes into account their talents and interests.

6. The Role of the Designated Teacher for LAC and Pre LAC

Government Guidance states that the Designated Teacher must be 'someone with sufficient authority to make things happen, who should be an advocate for Looked After Children, assessing services and support, and ensuring that the school/academy shares and supports high expectations for them' - Promoting the Education of looked-after and previously looked-after children. DfE Statutory Guidance 2018

The Designated Teacher for LAC and Pre LAC will;

- Be a qualified teacher working at the school as a teacher or a Head Teacher or Acting Head Teacher of the school with lead responsibility for this cohort
- Advocate for children in this cohort and hold them in mind during decision making
- Be a central point of contact for parents/carers and professionals within the school ensuring a warm welcome and smooth induction for pupils and their parent/carer.
- Track and monitor academic progress and target support appropriately liaising with the SENCo as necessary.
- Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of LAC's PEPs at least once per term and plan for continuity and meeting Pre LAC's educational needs
- Promote a whole school culture where the personalised learning needs of LAC and Pre LAC are met and be a source of advice for teachers and staff
- Undertake appropriate training (at least 2 days per year) and take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand what can affect how LAC and Pre LAC learn and achieve
- Develop and review whole school policies and procedures to include the needs of LAC and Previously LAC
- Ensure that Pre LAC children are eligible for support by considering the evidence of their Pre LAC status.
- Have a leadership role in promoting the educational achievement of every LAC and Pre LAC by being responsible for the impact of the PP+ and build trust with parents/carers about the deployment of this.

7. Duties and Responsibilities of all Staff

All our staff will:

- Have high aspirations for educational and personal achievement of LAC and Pre LAC
- Advocate for LAC and Pre LAC and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Listen to the voice of the pupil and respond positively to a pupil's request to be the named member of staff to whom they may talk with.
- Work to enable LAC and Pre LAC to achieve stability within the school/Academy.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of LAC and Pre LAC and actively promote their self-esteem.
- Be aware that many LAC and Pre LAC say they are bullied, so work to prevent bullying in line with the school/Academy's policy.
- Work at a level commensurate with the pupil's developmental stage not just their chronological age.

Special Educational Needs

The SEN Code of Practice states that the majority of looked after children have special educational needs (up to 70%) and this is manifested in a wide range of needs and in addition to this there are often

social, emotional and mental health needs which may form a barrier to their learning due to past trauma, attachment issues or PTSD. Of these, a significant proportion may require SEN Support or have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan as outlined in the graduated response in the SEND Code of Practice.
This school/academy recognises that some children may have undiagnosed special needs when they start to be Looked After.

As part of the PEP process, there are robust arrangements in place to ensure that any undiagnosed special educational needs are addressed through the SEND framework as soon as possible.