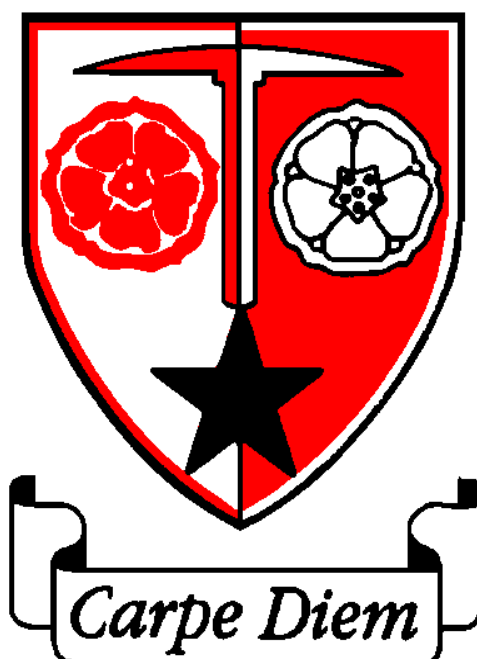


Audenshaw School



CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER (LAC) POLICY

History of Document

This policy is reviewed annually by the Standards Committee.

Issue No	Author/Owner	Date written	Approved by the Standards Committee	Approved by Governors	Comments
Issue 1.9	Kelly Breakell	18/11/2019	04/12/2019	03/12/2020	Minor amendments
Issue 2.0	Elizabeth Warner	09/12/2020	21/01/2021	21/01/2021	Minor amendments
Issue 2.1	Elizabeth Warner	24/05/2022	13/06/2022	13/06/2022	Minor amendments
Issue 2.2	Elizabeth Warner	13/06/2023	11/07/2023	11/07/2023	Minor amendments
Issue 2.3	Elizabeth Warner	09/07/2024	23/08/2024	23/08/2024	Minor amendments

OUR MISSION

Our school aims to provide a quality education in a caring community based on values of respect, responsibility and resilience and a relentless pursuit of excellence in all that we do.

OUR VISION

Our School will be recognised as a fully inclusive, aspirational, high achieving centre of excellence, firmly rooted in the local community.

We will create, develop and maintain a challenging and stimulating personalised learning environment where no student is overlooked or left behind and where teaching and learning is high quality, inspirational and innovative.

We will consistently have high academic standards and expectations for every individual and continue to place considerable value on sport and healthy living and developing strong links with the community.

All members of our school community will be valued and every success will be celebrated.

Our School will maintain a safe, secure and caring environment in which to work and learn.

AUDENSHAW SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

This School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

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1. INTRODUCTION

For the purpose of this Policy, the “School” is defined as employees, governors, students and third parties such as contractors, agency workers and consultants acting on behalf of the organisation.

2. BACKGROUND

All schools should have a policy for CLA which is subject to review and approval from the Board of Governors. The policy should set out not only the ethos of the school in its approach to meeting the needs of children in care, but also the procedures.

There has been concern since the mid-seventies that the education of children in care has been neglected. Conversely, from about the same time, attention was also being drawn to the important part that successful schooling could play in helping children escape from social disadvantage. Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty of local authorities to promote the educational achievement of CLA. Ongoing reports draw attention to:

- Poor exam success rates in comparison to their peers
- A high level of disruption and change in school placements
- Lack of involvement in extra-curricular activities
- Inconsistent or no attention paid to homework
- Underachievement in further and higher education.

It is, therefore, essential that schools promote the achievement of vulnerable children.

Audenshaw School is committed to the promotion, attainment, progress and all round achievement of vulnerable children and takes pride in its delivery of these goals.

3. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of looked after students

4. DEFINITION OF CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she falls into one of the following:

- is provided with accommodation, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours, [Children Act 1989, Section 20 and 21]
- is subject to a care order [Children Act 1989, Part IV]
- is subject to a placement order

It is possible that a placement order is made without a care order or interim care order being made, or the child not being subject to section 20 of the 1989 Act. For example, the Local Authority working with a family and believing that the child should be removed and be placed for adoption. The Local Authority does not have to apply for a care order first (though this would be the usual situation) and then a placement order; it could apply simply for a placement order.

Children Looked After are “accommodated” by the local authority under section 20 when:

- there is no person who has parental responsibility for them;
- the child is lost or abandoned;

- the person who has been caring for him or her is prevented from providing him or her with suitable accommodation or care.

The Local Authority is also empowered to provide accommodation for any child if it will safeguard or promote his or her welfare.

The majority of children who are being accommodated by the Local Authority will be doing so with the full agreement of those who have parental responsibility for them. In practice, children are accommodated because there are particularly difficult family circumstances which mean that they cannot be cared for by their biological parents in a family environment. Whilst they are accommodated, the child's parents [guardian] retain full parental responsibility and may at any time remove them from local authority provided accommodation.

Some children are the subject of a care order. If the local authority believes that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer "significant harm" if s/he remains with his or her birth family then they can apply to the courts for a care order to assume parental responsibility for the child. While it is possible that children on care orders live with their parents or other family members if that is what the courts decide, most will live with foster carers.

Unaccompanied children under 16 years arriving in the UK as asylum seekers or refugees are accommodated under section 20 by the Local Authority.

5. THE NAMED TEACHER FOR CHILDREN IN CARE IS:

Miss Elizabeth Warner

6. THE ROLE OF THE NAMED TEACHER:

Within School Systems:

- To monitor the educational progress of all children who are looked after in order to form part of the school's Development Plan.
- To ensure the effective use of pupil premium plus funding as part of the personal education plan meetings, (one per term).
- To ensure all relevant education and care information is available to employees and carer(s), and that this information is kept up to date.
- To liaise with relevant Curriculum Leaders and teachers, where there is evidence of individual underachievement.
- To ensure the effective and timely reporting of attendance issues and pastoral concerns to the allocated social worker/ carers.
- To ensure appropriate access to careers' advice.
- To ensure all safeguarding policies are in place with regards to the sharing of student photographs and details in school publications and on social media.
- To ensure that all employees are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by children who are looked after and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them.
- To inform employees of the general educational needs of children who are looked after, and to promote the involvement of these children in extra curriculum activities, school homework clubs, school leadership groups etc.

Work with individual children in care

- To work with individual children, possibly through a carer or allocated Social Worker, to arrive at a statement about their circumstances that they would be happy to share with staff and/or students (through the alert list).
- To enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their Personal Education Plan (PEP).
- To ensure that each student has their PEP renewed termly with all appropriate professionals and the student's carers. The student should have the opportunity to attend the PEP meetings should they want to.

Liaison

- To co-ordinate termly Care Review Meetings, so that any Personal Education Plans can form part of the child's Care Plan.
- To attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or to contribute in other ways, such as report writing, to care planning meeting for children who are looked after.

To be the named contact for Children's Social Care Team.

To report on the progress of all children who are looked after.

Training

- To develop knowledge of Services for Children & Young People procedures by attending appropriate training events as required.
- To cascade training to employees as appropriate.

6. THE NAMED GOVERNOR FOR CHILDREN IN CARE IS:

Mr Terry Hall

7. THE ROLE OF THE NAMED GOVERNOR:

The named governor should be satisfied that the School's policies and procedures ensure that children who are looked after have access to:

- The National Curriculum
- Public Examinations
- Careers Guidance
- Extra-Curricular Activities
- Work Experience
- Additional Educational Support
- Appropriate funding and support provided through PEP Plans.

8. RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILDREN IN CARE IN SCHOOL

It is important that all employees who are in contact with the child or young person are aware that he/she is being looked after by the Local Authority. The responsibility for the transfer of this information is the person named as the co-ordinator for looked after children within the school (Miss Elizabeth Warner).

A child's 'looked after' status is shared with staff through Edukey Provision Map and through SIMs' mark sheets.

The Assistant Principal, and Attendance Officer, monitor the attendance and punctuality of all LAC students and report to Governors on a termly basis.

7. ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

On admission, records will be requested from the student's previous school. A meeting will be held with carer/parent/social worker as appropriate to complete base line information to form part of the student's PEP and clarify contact arrangements. An appropriate school induction will take place.

8. INVOLVING THE YOUNG PERSON

It is important that a young person is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. How this is shared with them clearly depends on their age and understanding. The explanation should emphasise that the school, the social worker, and their carer(s) are working together to promote their education.

Student Voice and the child's views are at the centre, with all CLA students able to attend and contribute to their own PEP reviews.

9. COMMUNICATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES

The social worker and the school co-ordinator for LAC will meet when the young person becomes looked after, or when they join the school. This will enable information concerning the child's progress and circumstances to be shared. The monitoring form should help ensure that all information relevant to school is exchanged.

The School will ensure that a copy of all reports (e.g. end of year) will be forwarded to the young person's social worker, and in addition, for example, the foster carer or residential social worker.

Schools, Services for Children & Young People will endeavour to co-ordinate their review meetings, e.g. to have an Annual Review of a Statement combined with a Statutory Care Review.

The school will take part in termly PEP review (Personal Education Plans) with social care, to discuss the progress of each student and to set targets/ offer support. The spending of LAC funding will be discussed at this review and the timely submission of the PEP documents to each local authority will determine if the school will receive funding. The school will also attend or provide reports for 6 monthly LAC reviews

Children's Social Care, and schools, will need to exchange information between formal reviews if there are significant changes in the young person's circumstances, e.g. if school is considering an exclusion, there is a change of care placement or there are significant attendance issues.

10. ASSESSMENT, MONITORING AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

Each looked after child will have a Personal Education Plan. This will identify specific areas of concern and achievable targets.

Areas for consideration will include:

- Attendance
- Achievement Record (academic or otherwise)
- Behaviour
- Homework
- Involvement in Extra Curricular Activities
- Relationship to Care Plan
- Special Needs (if any)
- Developmental Needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge or subject areas and experiences)
- Long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations)
- Access to the Pupil Premium Plus spending.
- Access to careers advice.

Liaison will be undertaken with Attendance Officer/Education Psychology/Social Workers/ the school's SENDco etc in the assessment and review processes as appropriate.