

CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER POLICY AND GUIDELINES

Context and Aims of the Policy

Both in Solihull and nationally, Children Looked After (CLA) have made less progress and achieved less well when compared with their peers. CLA often:

- Have poor exam performance and success in comparison with their peers
- Suffer a high level of disruption in their education provision
- Are not involved in extra-curricular activities
- Do not engage with homework
- Rarely progress to further or higher education

At Heart of England School we seek to promote and encourage the progress and attainment of such vulnerable students as well as catering for their social and welfare needs. This policy will outline our approach and procedures in caring for currently Children Looked After.

Definitions of Care

The term 'in care' refers to children who are subject to Care Orders. Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are 'accommodated' by the Local Authority. Both these groups are said to be Children Looked After (CLA hereafter) and are under the care of the Local Authority. Accommodated children also include those in receipt of respite care – if it exceeds 20 days in one episode over 120 days a year.

Different Living Arrangements

It is important not to confuse a young person's legal status with their living arrangements. For example, a child on a Care Order can be living with:

- Foster Carers
- In a children's home
- In a residential school
- With relatives
- With parents – under the supervision of Children's Services

Similarly an 'accommodated' child can be living:

- In foster care
- In a children's home
- In a residential home.

This policy incorporates requirements set out in statutory guidance to promote the achievement of CLA, Section 52 of The Children Act, 2004, 'The Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher, Statutory Guidance for School Governors', 2009 and The Children Act, 1989.

Heart of England School's Designated Teacher for Children Looked After is: **Mrs Anna Sumner, SENCO**

Mrs Jane Green, Pastoral Inclusion Manager, is the identified Deputy Designated Member of Staff for Children Looked After

The Lead Governor for Children Looked After is: **Mrs Lesley Markham**

The Role of the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After

- To ensure that the educational achievement of each CLA is monitored, tracked and promoted
- To be responsible for any and all additional funding any CLA may receive to ensure the progress and achievement of each CLA is as great as possible
- To ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by CLA and understand the need for positive systems to support them
- To communicate any relevant educational needs pertaining to CLA
- To promote and ensure, where possible, access to enrichment opportunities
- To attend CLA and Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings or any other such meetings associated with CLA students
- To ensure that all information pertaining to CLA students is updated and communicate with carers and other professionals as necessary
- To intervene and support CLA students where needed in order to enhance progress and achievement
- To inform and contribute to the planning for CLA students joining Heart of England School and for CLA students Post 16
- To contribute to an annual report prepared by the Lead Governor for CLA to the Governing Body

The Role of the Lead Governor for CLA

The named governor should be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that CLA students have equal access to:

- **The Curriculum**
- **Public Examinations**
- **Additional Interventions as necessary (e.g. tuition)**
- **Careers guidance**
- **Extra-curricular activities**

In line with the principles of the Pupil Premium Policy, the named governor should ensure that any funding is used effectively to the best advantage of CLA at Heart of England.

An annual report should be prepared by the Governor, in conjunction with the School's Designated Teacher for CLA, addressing:

- The number of CLA at Heart of England School
- The progress and achievement of CLA across the school
- The attendance of CLA
- The level of fixed term / permanent exclusions of CLA
- Destination measures for CLA after leaving Heart of England School

School Responsibility

Heart of England School recognises that it is important that all teaching and support staff who are in contact with students should be able to identify any CLA. The Designated Teacher for Children Looked After will ensure that this information is readily available to staff.

Admission Arrangements

On admission, records will be requested from the student's previous school and a meeting will be arranged with carer / parent / social worker (as appropriate). This will provide information to inform the Personal Education Plan (PEP).

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 progress and attainment.

The young person will be supported to help complete the student voice section of their PEP to help inform the PEP and care plan review meetings.

Supporting Publications

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-children>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>