



Looked After Children Policy

**Nominated Lead Member of Staff: Mrs Sarah Dunston
(Assistant Head Teacher SENCO, LAC & Inclusion)**

Lead Governor: Mr J R Taylor

Next Review Date: September 2018

Introduction

Nationally, Looked After Children (LAC) significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that Looked After Children are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well being, in line with Every Child Matters. Helping Looked After Children succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority for Dyke House Sports & Technology College (DHS&TC). We also recognise the significant challenges that adopted children and their families face. This policy takes account of:

- ✓ Council's duty under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children (LAC).
- ✓ The Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006.
- ✓ Relevant DfES guidance to Governing Bodies
- ✓ Pupil Premium Plus Guidance for Looked After Children 2016-17

DHS&TC's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After & Adopted Children (herein referred to as Looked After Children or LAC) is based on the following principles:

- ✓ Prioritising education.
- ✓ Promoting attendance.
- ✓ Targeting support.
- ✓ Having high expectations.
- ✓ Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes.
- ✓ Achieving stability and continuity.
- ✓ Early intervention and priority action.
- ✓ Listening to children.
- ✓ Promoting health and wellbeing.
- ✓ Reducing exclusions and promoting stability.
- ✓ Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals.

Implications

As for all our pupils, DHS&TC is committed to helping every Looked After Child to achieve the highest standards they can, including supporting aspirations to achieve in further and higher education. This can be measured by improvement in their achievements and attendance. The Governing Body of DHS&TC is committed to providing quality education for all pupils and will:

- ✓ Ensure a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children is identified and enabled to carry out the responsibilities set out below. This will be Mrs S Dunston – Assistant Headteacher (SEND, LAC and Inclusion)

- ✓ Ensure a Personal Education Plan is put in place, implemented and regularly reviewed for every Looked After Child, in line with local authority guidance on Personal Education Plans (PEPs).
- ✓ Identify a governor as Designated Governor for Looked After Children.

This policy links with a number of other school policies and it is important that Governors have regard to the needs of Looked After Children when reviewing them:

- ✓ Admissions Policy
- ✓ The School Code of Conduct.
- ✓ Behaviour Policy.
- ✓ Home School Agreement.
- ✓ Anti-bullying Policy.
- ✓ Equal Opportunities Policy.
- ✓ Child Protection Policy.
- ✓ Special Educational Needs Policy.
- ✓ Accessibility Plan

The school will champion the needs of Looked After Children, raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them, in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible.

Responsibility of the Headteacher

- ✓ Identify a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children, Mrs S Dunston – Assistant Headteacher (SEND, LAC and Inclusion), whose role is set out below. It is essential that another appropriate person be identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take sick leave.
- ✓ Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusions of Looked After Children and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- ✓ Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of Looked After Children.
- ✓ Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

Responsibility of the Governing Body

- ✓ Identify a nominated Governor for Looked After Children.
- ✓ Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Looked After Children.
- ✓ Ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Looked After Children.
- ✓ Allocate resources to meet the needs of Looked After Children.
- ✓ Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.

Procedures:

the Governing Body Will:

- ✓ Monitor the academic progress of Local After Children, through an annual report.
- ✓ Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school, by ensuring the school implements policies and procedures to ensure Looked After Children achieve and enjoy their time at the school, by recognising the extra problems caused by excluding them and by not excluding them except as a last resort.
- ✓ Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his responsibilities as below.
- ✓ Support the Headteacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of Looked After Children are recognised and met.
- ✓ Receive a report once a year setting out:
 1. The number of looked-after pupils on the school's roll (if any).
 2. Their attendance, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils.
 3. Their academic achievement, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils.
 4. The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any).
 5. The destinations of pupils who leave the school.
 6. The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.

The Role of the Designated Teacher

Government Guidance says that the Designated Teacher should 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 shares and supports high expectations for them.” Governors should be aware that all schools are already required to have a designated teacher for LAC. At DHS&TC this person is a member of the Senior Management Team. Governors should also be aware that OFSTED will focus on Looked After Children, monitoring how the School has promoted their inclusion and attainment and the effectiveness of joint working with other services involved with them.

Our Designated Teacher will:

- ✓ Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan to plan for that transition in consultation with the child's social worker
- ✓ Ensure that a Personal Education Plan (not for Adopted children) is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people, at least two weeks before the Care Plan reviews.

- ✓ Ensure that each Looked After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher, but should be based on the child's own wishes. N.B. *Members of staff who take on this role should also be alert to any child protection issues, any disclosures that pupils may make, and know what action to take. The member of staff responsible for LAC is completing training to be one of the school's Designated Teachers for Child Protection.*
- ✓ Track academic progress and target support appropriately
- ✓ Co-ordinate any support for the Looked After Children that is necessary within school.
- ✓ Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
- ✓ Encourage Looked After Children to join in extra-curricular activities and out of school learning.
- ✓ Ensure, as far as possible, attendance at planning and review meetings.
- ✓ Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of Looked After Children.
- ✓ Set up timely meetings with relevant parties where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion.
- ✓ Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and – if the pupil changes school – to a new school.
- ✓ Be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education.
- ✓ Track academic progress and target support appropriately.
- ✓ Promote inclusion in all areas of school life.
- ✓ Be aware that Nationally, a disproportionately high percentage of Looked After Children say they are bullied, so will actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy.
- ✓ Ensure that the audit on attendance, progress and numbers is returned to the LAC Virtual Head at the Local Authority every Term.

The Responsibilities of all Staff

All our staff will:

- ✓ Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children, as for all pupils.
- ✓ Maintain Looked After Children's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- ✓ Respond positively to a pupil's request to be the named member of staff whom they can talk to when they feel it is necessary.
- ✓ Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- ✓ Work to enable Looked After Children to achieve stability and success within school.
- ✓ Promote the self-esteem of all Looked After Children.
- ✓ Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of Looked After Children – including any attachment issues.

- ✓ Be aware that Nationally a disproportionately high percentage of Looked After Children say they are bullied therefore work to prevent bullying in line with the School's policy.