



## **LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY (LAC)**

<b>Policy adopted by the Governing Body of The Wordsley School</b>	
<b>Date adopted by the Governing Body</b>	<b>16/10/2024</b>
<b>Signed by the Chair of Governors</b>	<b>N Cooper</b>

## **THE WORDSLEY SCHOOL SCHOOL POLICY FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC)**

The Wordsley School aims to make a positive difference by promoting a whole school culture where the personalised learning needs of every looked after child matter and their personal, emotional and academic needs are prioritised. We aim to overcome their barriers to learning, helping each child to realise their potential. We will do this through a dedicated system of support for each LAC.

**Designated Teacher for LAC:** Pupil Premium Lead

**Governor with responsibility for LAC:** Link Governor for LAC

The Governing Body is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes. This policy includes requirements set out in “Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004” (November 2005) and associated guidance on the education of LAC.

Looked After Children (LAC) are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational underachievement when compared to their peers. For example, they may experience:

- A high level of disruption and change in school placements
- Lack of involvement in extra-curricular activities.
- Inconsistent or no attention paid to homework.

This may result in:

- Poor exam success rates in comparison with the general population.
- Underachievement in further and higher education.

These issues may also affect adopted young people.

The aims of the school are to:

- Ensure that the requirements for LAC (Looked after Children or Child) are taken into account in all policies and procedures.
- Ensure that all LAC have access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual’s needs and ability.
- Ensure that LAC take as full a part as possible in all school activities.
- Ensure that carers and social workers of LAC are kept fully informed of their child’s progress and attainment.
- Ensure that LAC are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision.

## **Who are Looked After Children**

Under the Children Act 1989, ([Children Act 1989](#)) a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They fall into four main groups:

- Children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- Children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- Children who are the subject of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
- Children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21)

The term “in care” refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 – they may live with foster carers, in a Children’s home, in a residential school, with relatives or with parents under supervision. Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are “accommodated” by the local authority under section 20 of the Children Act – they may live in foster care, in a Children’s home or in a residential school. All these groups are said to be “Looked After Children” - LAC. They may be looked after by our local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

## **Personal Education Plan (PEPs)**

Personal Education Plans for LACs are created or amended during statutory planning meetings, which should occur within 20 school days of a child becoming looked after and be reviewed at least annually. PEPs are significant vehicles for celebrating the achievements of young people and effecting change. The PEP states what needs to happen for looked after children to enable them to make expected progress and fulfil their potential. Education targets and strategies set through the PEP should be shared with relevant teaching staff. This is especially important if issues have arisen regarding classwork, homework or behaviour in certain lessons.

The young person should be involved in the PEP. Where a young person does not wish to attend, the meeting should nevertheless take place, and they should be encouraged to comment on their education and progress through the relevant section of the PEP.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **The Governing Body will:**

- Ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritises LAC according to the Department for Education (DfE) Admissions Code of Practice
- Ensure all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of LAC pupils
- Be aware of whether the school has any LAC pupils and how many
- Support the Headteacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of LAC are met
- Ensure there is a Designated Teacher for LAC
- Liaise with the Headteacher, Designated Teacher and all other staff to ensure the needs of LAC are met
- Nominate a governor with responsibility for LAC who will link with the Designated Teacher, receive regular progress reports and provide feedback to the governing body
- Review the effective implementation of this policy

Ensure that the school's policies and procedures give LAC equal access in respect of:

- Admission to school
- National Curriculum and examinations, both academic and vocational
- One-to-one tuition and extra-curricular activities
- Work experience and careers guidance

### **The Senior Leadership Team will:**

- Identify a Designated Teacher for LAC
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusions of LAC and take action where progress, behaviour or attendance is a cause for concern
- Report on the progress, attendance and behaviour of LAC

- Ensure that staff in school have relevant training and are aware of the needs of LAC and how to eradicate any barriers to learning
- Consider LAC in the development of any whole school strategy, as appropriate
- Ensure that resources targeted at LAC are used directly to benefit the child
- Ensure LAC have access to all opportunities/activities and that any barriers they face are overcome
- Adapt behaviour management strategies with regard to the individual LAC and their background

**The Designated Teacher will:**

- Be an advocate for LAC within school, promoting a culture in which LAC believe they can succeed, and aspire to further training, education and higher education, and/or employment
- Know who the LAC are, including those in the care of other authorities, and ensure the availability of all relevant details from school record-keeping systems as required
- Attend relevant training and updates about LAC
- Act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to LAC, seeking advice from the Looked After Children Education Services (LACES) team when appropriate
- Ensure that LAC receive a positive welcome on entering school, especially mid year and, if necessary, offer additional support and a pre-entry visit to help the new pupil settle
- Ensure confidentiality on individual children, sharing confidential and personal information on a need to know basis, bearing in mind the wishes of the individual pupil
- Act as the key adviser for staff and governors on issues relevant to LAC
- Ensure that care and school liaison is effective including invitations to meetings and other school events
- Actively encourage and promote one-to-one tuition and extra-curricular activities for LAC
- Ensure that on admission or transfer, all relevant information is requested at the outset
- Ensure a speedy transfer of information, records and controlled assessments, where appropriate, when a LAC transfers to another educational placement

- Contribute information to LAC reviews when required
- Agree with the social worker the appropriate people to invite to parents' evenings etc
- Attend governor meetings as appropriate – such as the admission, disciplinary and exclusion of LAC
- Arrange a mentor or befriender (adult and/or pupil) to whom the young person can talk, particularly when the pupil is new to school
- Ensure that any Special Educational Needs are addressed in conjunction with the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and in accordance with the Code of Practice for Special Educational needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- Support Carers in helping their LAC at home
- Meet with LAC on a half termly basis to monitor and review progress and assess one-to-one tuition needs
- Liaise with one-to-one tutors regarding the completion of a termly Tuition Plan and Progress Review
- Provide a termly report to Governors on the progress of LAC
- Identify how the Pastoral Team can support LAC, through additional Continuing Professional Development (CPD) on trauma, loss and separation

**School staff will:**

- Follow school procedures
- Keep the Designated Teacher informed about the progress of LAC
- Have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of LAC
- Positively promote the raising of a LAC's self esteem
- Ensure any LAC is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained
- Be familiar with the school's policy and guidance on LAC and respond appropriately to requests for information to support PEPs and review meetings
- Liaise with the Designated Teachers where a LAC is experiencing difficulties
- Give only official exclusions and only use exclusions in line with the school's exclusion policy, and relevant national guidance, being mindful to the difficulties this may create in the care placement
- Contribute to regular liaison with social care colleagues and other appropriate professionals and keep carers fully informed at all times

- Keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to other professionals/parents/carers/pupil as appropriate
- Make extra copies of reports available when required
- Work to prevent bullying in line with the school's anti-bullying policy

#### **Head of Year (HOY) will:**

- Work with the designated teacher to ensure a smooth transition into school for LAC from their previous setting
- Communicate regularly with the Designated Teacher with regard to the LAC and any concerns / reasons for celebration, ensuring the needs of LAC are met
- Feedback to staff any actions required following the PEP meeting

#### **Transition – Primary to Secondary School**

To ensure a supportive induction for LAC admitted to our school, children and their carers will be invited into school to meet with the Designated Teacher. They will have the opportunity for a tour around school, led by the Designated Teacher. The Designated Teacher will work closely with Head of Year (HOY) to ensure the LAC settle well and that there are no issues.

#### **Partnership with parents/carers and care workers**

At school we firmly believe in developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable LAC to achieve their potential. Review meetings are an opportunity to further this partnership working.

#### **Attendance**

It is vital that LAC have good attendance in order to improve their educational outcomes. School closely monitors the attendance of all LAC on roll. Where attendance of a LAC is a cause for concern, the Pupil Welfare Manager for Attendance will work closely with the Designated Teacher, carer and social worker to resolve barriers to attendance.

#### **Monitoring the progress of LAC**

The social worker for the LAC should initiate a Personal Education Plan – PEP – within 20 days of the LAC joining the school, or of entering care, and ensure that the young person is actively involved. It is vital that the school assesses each LAC's attainment on entry to ensure continuity of learning.

The school will monitor and track the achievement and attainment of all pupils at regular intervals. LAC will require their PEP to be reviewed, according to their needs, as initiated by the social worker when appropriate, and the young person's views should be sought and noted on the PEP.

Monthly monitoring will collect data on the progress of LAC, their attendance, attitude towards learning and homework.

### **One-to-one Tuition**

All LAC are prioritised for one to one tuition where they are not making expected progress. Tuition is available to support Maths, English and Science. One-to-one tuition may also deal with building social skills for particular pupils.

### **Part-time and Alternative Provision**

Where a student cannot cope with full time education, they should be provided with as many hours of provision as they are capable of attending. The school will consider how the remaining hours of education per week will be delivered, so that learning is uninterrupted wherever possible. Where there is an identified need for alternative provision, this should occur within 2 weeks. The Pupil Welfare Manager will form a close link with providers to ensure the school plays an active part in monitoring the progress of any LAC placed on alternative provision.

### **Pupil Premium**

The school is committed to ensuring effective use of this funding to support one-to-one tuition, extra-curricular activities (including financial support for school trips, authority dependant), revision guides for KS4 pupils and individualised needs (as assessed through the PEP). Accurate records of pupil premium expenditure are maintained by the Finance Manager.

### **Exclusions**

As far as possible, school will avoid excluding a LAC. If the LAC is at risk of permanent exclusion, the Designated Teacher will work with the Virtual School (VS), carers and social worker to put into place further support to enable the LAC to remain in school.