



School Policy for the Education of Children that are Looked After

Nationally, Children that are Looked After (CLA) significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that Children that are Looked After are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic wellbeing.

Helping our Children that are Looked After succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority the Walnuts school. This policy takes account of:

- The Local Authority's (LA) duty under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 to promote the educational achievement of Children that are Looked After (CLA).
- The Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006.
- The Children and Young Person Act 2008.
- Relevant DfES guidance to Governing Bodies (*Supporting Looked After Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors*).

The Walnuts School approach to supporting the educational achievement of CLA 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, The Walnuts School is committed to helping every Child that is Looked After to achieve the highest standards they can, including supporting aspirations to achieve in post-school pathways, including Further Education. This can be measured by improvement in their achievements and attendance.

The Governing Body of the Walnuts School is committed to providing quality education for all pupils and will:

- Ensure a Designated Teacher for CLA is identified and enabled to carry out the responsibilities set out below
- Ensure a Personal Education Plan is put in place, implemented and regularly reviewed for every CLA, in line with the LA's guidance on Personal Education Plans.
- Identify a governor as Designated Governor for CLA.

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

- The School Code of Conduct.
- Behaviour Policy.
- Home School Agreement.
- Anti-bullying Policy.
- Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Policy on Racial Harassment.
- Child Protection Policy.
- Special Educational Needs Policy.

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

CHILDREN THAT ARE LOOKED AFTER SCHOOL POLICY ATTACHMENTS

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HEADTEACHER

- Identify a Designated Teacher for CLA, whose role is set out below. It is essential that another appropriate person is 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 CLA and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of CLA. OFSTED now select a number of CLA, tracking their results and the support they have received.
- 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 CLA.
- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of CLA.
- Ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of CLA.
- Allocate resources as appropriate to meet the needs of CLA.
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.

Procedures: the Governing Body will:

- Monitor the academic progress of CLA, through an annual report (see below).
- Ensure that CLA are given top priority when applying for places in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria.
- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Support the Headteacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of CLA 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 educational achievement 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 CLA, 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 CLA. It is strongly recommended that this person should be a member of the Senior Management Team. Training for Designated Teachers has been and will continue to be available through the Milton Keynes Virtual School Team. Governors should also be aware that OFSTED will focus on CLA, 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 is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people, at least two weeks before PEP reviews.
- Ensure that each CLA has an identified member of staff or independent advocate that they can talk to. This staff member need not be the Designated Teacher, but should be based on the child's own wishes. *Members of staff who take on this role may need to be supported by someone from the school's pastoral staff. They should also be alert to any child protection issues, any disclosures that pupils may make, and know what action to take. They should link closely therefore with the school's Designated Lead for Safeguarding.*
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately
- Co-ordinate any support for the CLA that is necessary within school.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
- 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 CLA.
- 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 60% of CLA 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 and numbers is returned to the Virtual School Team as required.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF

All our staff will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of CLA, as for all pupils.
- Maintain CLA 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 CLA to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all CLA.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of CLA.
- Be aware that 60% of CLA say they are bullied so work to prevent bullying in line with the School's policy.

This policy is to be agreed and adopted at a Pupils, Parents and Community Committee on 22 November 2017 and ratified by the Full Governing Body at its meeting on 7 February 2018.

The policy will be formally reviewed annually.

The Designated Teacher will ensure that all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

Advice and support is available from Milton Keynes Virtual School Team (email virtualschool@milton-keynes.gov.uk.) 01908 691691