

Ellowes Hall Sports College



Looked After Children Policy (LAC) 2022

Approved by the Governors:

Policy Co-ordinating Officer: Designated Teacher

To be reviewed by the Governors: July 2023

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LAC Policy

Policy for the Education of Looked After Children

Ellowes Hall Sports College is committed to providing a high-quality education for all students including LAC or Children in Care (CIC) as renamed by some Local Authorities. We recognise that more vulnerable students, including LAC may need access to additional support, mentoring and advocacy to enable equality of access, opportunity and success. We are committed to providing an inclusive ethos in an atmosphere of mutual respect, where all students' needs are identified, understood and responded to sensitively and effectively. Looked After Children 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 or care placements
- Lack of involvement in extra-curricular activities.
- Inconsistent or no attention paid to homework.
- Difficulties in sustaining relationships with others

This may result in lower attainment than their peers and underachievement in further education. As a result, LAC may experience difficulty in obtaining fulfilling career paths if left unsupported.

Who are Looked After Children

Under the 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, including those 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. These children 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 LAC are statutory planning meetings which should occur within 20 school days of a child becoming looked after and be reviewed each term. PEPs are significant vehicles for celebrating the achievements of young people and effecting change. PEPs are recorded electronically, so that they can be accessed by all relevant stakeholders online. This is a secure process which only the Designated Teacher, delegated Social worker and the Looked After Children Education Services, Virtual School can access. 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 produced 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, their voice is important and is shared at the PEP. Where a young person does not wish to attend, the meeting should still take place, and they should be encouraged to comment on their education and progress through the relevant section of the PEP.

Pupil Premium Plus

Additional funding for LAC is granted to schools to help target barriers to learning and close the attainment gap. This grant is managed by the Virtual School and used to improve outcomes and “narrow the gap” as identified in the Personal Education Plan (PEP) in consultation with the Designated Teacher for the school. How the funding is spent will be discussed during the child’s Personal Education Planning meeting but must be used efficiently and effectively. 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), revision guides for KS4 pupils and individualised needs (as assessed through the PEP).

LAC Designated Teacher

Mr Marsh, DSL, is the Designated teacher for Looked After Children; his role in this capacity is as follows:

- Ensures an update to date list of LAC students within the school is kept.
- Ensures that staff are aware of relevant information to assist the student’s integration
- Ensures that all LAC who have an identified delay/gap in their learning due to significant periods of absence from school have their needs met at the earliest opportunity.
- Ensures that any Special Educational Needs are addressed in accordance with the Code of Practice for SEND.
- Ensures that each term a Personal Educational Plan (PEP) or e-PEP is produced in conjunction with the social worker, carer, student and appropriate stakeholders.
- Allocates the ‘Pupil Premium’ per term, ensure the student is given every opportunity and support with this funding. Record details on the PEP/e-PEP.
- Keeps PEPs/e-PEPs and other records up to date, particularly in time to inform review meetings (maybe 3 or 6 monthly intervals or as need arises).
- Co-ordinates support and information sharing for the student within school and liaise other professionals, including the Educational Support Service and carers as necessary.

- Identifies how the Pastoral Team can support LAC, through additional CPD on trauma, loss and separation.
- Maintains an overview of changing needs and progress of LAC.
- Takes on the role of advocacy for LAC.
- Acts as the key adviser for staff and governors on issues relevant to LAC.
- Actively encourage and promote one-to-one tuition and extra-curricular activities for LAC.
- Liaises with relevant staff to review the progress of LAC through intervention or withdrawal sessions Inform/meet with Educational Support Service and other relevant agencies where there are concerns regarding progress, attendance, exclusions or other difficulties.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual students and only share personal information on a need to know basis.
- When a LAC is involved in a planned move to another school, ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, relevant agencies and receiving school, including updating the PEP/e-PEP.
- Encourage LAC to attend and express their views at the LAC and PEP reviews.
- Attends designated LAC Coordinators Network and Training Sessions.
- Contributes to the school planning for LAC through the School Improvement Plan.
- Ensures that contact is made to relevant parties regarding low attendance.
- Report to Governors, termly, with updates on progress, attendance and behaviour.

Roles and Responsibilities of All Staff

- Ensure that any student in public care is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained.
- Be familiar with the Guidance on LAC and respond appropriately to requests for written or verbal information, including information on educational attainment and general well-being to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings and attend LAC reviews and Core Group Meeting reviews as appropriate.
- Respond positively to a LAC's request to be the named person that they can talk to when they feel it is necessary.
- Be sensitive to a LAC's background and the issues surrounding being "Looked After" when addressing certain curriculum areas/research topics e.g. family trees, Mother's Day, inviting parents/carers to Parents Evening and similar areas.
- Provide a supportive, emotionally intelligent climate to enable a LAC to achieve stability within the school setting.
- As with all students, have high aspirations and expectations for the educational and personal achievements of Looked After Children.
- Work to prevent bullying in line with the school's anti-bullying policy.
- Ensure LAC participate in school's Gifted and Talented programme where appropriate.

Roles and Responsibility of the Governing Body

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. The Designated Governor will:

- Ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritise LAC according to the DfE Admissions Code of Practice.
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for LAC
- Ensure that there is a named Designated teacher for LAC with sufficient time to discharge this role.
- Support the Headteacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of LAC are met Be aware of how many children are designated as Looked After, their ages and any additional needs they might have.
- Continue the policy of not excluding any student (especially a LAC) until all support and advisory channels have been exhausted.
- Ensure that all LAC take part in trips, activities and over-night visits alongside their peers, making additional provision where necessary to ensure their participation.
- Nominate a governor who links with the designated teacher, receives regular reports which provides feedback to the governing body.

Previously Looked After Children (Post LAC)

Previously Looked After Children are those who:

- Are no longer looked after by a local authority in England and Wales because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship order (SGO) or child arrangement order.
- Were adopted from ‘state care’ outside England and Wales.

Children where the care order has been revoked and who have returned home to live with parents post LAC are not classed as Post LAC. Only children who were looked after and have been either adopted or placed under Special Guardianship, Residence or Child Arrangements Orders are defined as post LAC.

Children who are electively home educated, or educated in private schools (when the local authority does not pay the fees), or are post-16 students are currently not eligible for post LAC Pupil Premium.

Previously Looked After Children should be able to discuss difficult issues with a sympathetic and empathetic adult; discuss their progress and be involved in setting their own targets, have their own views taken seriously and supported to take responsibility for their own learning; encouraged to participate in school activities and ultimately believe they can succeed and reach their aspirations.

Statutory Guidance:

Promoting the education of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children (2018) and The Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children (2018) outline requirements and support available via Virtual Schools and Pos-LAC Pupil Premium.

The statutory guidance recognises a Previously Looked After Child as one who has left Care through one of the following routes:

- Subject to an Adoption Order
- Special Guardianship Order
- Child Arrangement Order (specific to residency-living with)

Previously Looked After Children (Post LAC) have additional needs that impact upon their education including emotional impact of experiences, disrupted learning, missed schooling and Special Education Needs; attainment data shows that these learners do not perform as well as their peers.

Maintained schools and academies should designate a member of staff to have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of Post LAC, ensure the designated person undertakes appropriate training and raise understanding across the whole school staff.

Whilst lead responsibility for raising attainment of Post LAC rests with the DT, not all aspects of the DT role need to be carried out by a single individual or by a qualified teacher; pastoral staff can assist in elements of this role, provided the lead teacher oversees and holds suitable qualifications (TRN).

Education settings will need to give consideration to the DT's professional experience to provide leadership, provide training opportunities and time away from timetable commitments.

Governing bodies hold the school to account on how it supports P-LAC. Appropriate monitoring arrangements will need to be established and a flexible approach regarding reporting will need to be developed.

The DT will be available to meet parents/carers during all consultation evenings within the school calendar. All correspondence regarding individual needs and interventions are communicated home to parents/carers to ensure they are fully informed and updated with their child's learning. If necessary the DT will invite parents/carers into school to discuss any concerns, extra support, and to celebrate success.

Other Important Information

Dudley School Admissions ask whether a child is LAC or post LAC and both groups are given priority for school places. Dudley Virtual School have no responsibility over how Post LAC Pupil Premium is spent by schools and settings. Parents and guardians are welcome to contact Dudley Virtual School if they wish to seek advice or further information on this.

Monitoring and Reviewing of the LAC Policy

The LAC Policy is reviewed annually and updated as necessary.

Links with other Policies

It is advised that all policies should be read in conjunction with one another and are accessible on the school's website. Most prevalent to this document include: the Safeguarding Policy (2022), the Attendance Policy (2022), and the SEND Policy (2022).

Statutory Information

This policy complies with the statutory requirements outlined in the below listed documentation:

Promoting the Education of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children (2018):

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683556/Promoting_the_education_of_looked-after_children_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf

The Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683561/The_designated_teacher_for_looked-after_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf

Pupil Premium Guidance (Updated September 2021):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium/pupil-premium>

Appendix One (Key Contacts within School)

- Mrs K. Rogers - Head Teacher: krogers@ellowes.dudley.sch.uk
- Mr J. Marsh – DSL and Designated Teacher: jmarsh@ellowes.dudley.sch.uk
- Miss C. Flavell - SENCo: cflavell@ellowes.dudley.sch.uk

SEND Support Team:

Pastoral Heads of Year:

Name	Role	Area of Responsibility
Mrs Garbett	Deputy Head of Year	Year 7
Miss Sullivan	Deputy Head of Year	Year 8
Miss Adams	Deputy Head of Year	Year 9
Mrs Christie	Deputy Head of Year	Year 10
Mr James	Deputy Head of Year	Year 11

Academic Heads of Year:

Name	Role	Area of Responsibility
Mrs Stobbart	Teaching Head of Year	Year 7
Mr Green	Teaching Head of Year	Year 8
Mr Bissell	Teaching Head of Year	Year 9
Mrs Garbett	Teaching Head of Year	Year 10
Mr Jukes	Teaching Head of Year	Year 11