



Looked After Children Policy

Date created:	12 September 2008
Date approved:	27 th Oct 2009
Signed: (Chair of Governors)	
(Headteacher)	
Date for review:	October 2011
Next Review	October 2012
Reviewed	16/10/2014
Date for review:	October 2016



Coppice School

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*At Coppice
School we all...*

Communicate
to help us to
shape our
future

Open doors
to exciting
opportunities

Practise the
skills important
for life

Promote
friendships and
care for each
other

Include
everybody

Celebrate our
individuality
and
independence

Enjoy and excel

INTRODUCTION

There are two main reasons for children being in local authority care:

1. Children who are subject to a care order made by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 (about 65% of all looked-after children) - for the courts to grant a care order they have to be satisfied that a child is suffering or would suffer 'significant harm' without one
2. Children who are accommodated by the local authority on a voluntary basis under section 20 of the Children Act 1989 (about a third of all looked-after children)

Looked-after children deserve the same life chances as any other child - ie to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being. That is why local authorities have a duty under section 52 of the Children Act 2004 to promote the educational achievement of the children in their care.

The governing body of Coppice School is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. This governing body recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of Looked After Children, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in DfEE Circular 0269/2000 and DfEE/DOH Guidance 2000 and the Children Act (2004). The Children Act places a duty to safeguard looked after children, to promote their educational achievements and to ensure that they are able to "achieve to and reach their full potential". The Guidance recognises the collective responsibility of local authorities and schools to achieve good parenting and sets out six principles:

- prioritising education;
- having high expectations;
- inclusion - changing and challenging attitudes;
- achieving continuity and stability;
- early intervention - priority action; and
- listening to children.

The Guidance introduced two key measures:

- To ensure designated Teachers are nominated in every school.

- To ensure Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are in place for all Looked After Children.

This governing body is committed to ensuring that Designated Teachers and staff are enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

The Designated Teacher in Coppice School is Alison Coates she should:

- be an advocate for Looked After Children;
- ensure a smooth and welcoming induction for the child and carer/s (and parent/s where possible)
- ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed, this should be prepared with the child and the carer/s (and parent/s if possible), in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies. Where appropriate, the PEP should take account of any Individual Educational Plan (IEP), Pastoral Support Plan (PSP), Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP), career plan or any other relevant plans. The PEP should inform and be reviewed
- ensure that each Looked After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to
- ensure entry to examinations for all Looked After Children
- co-ordinate support for the child in the school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary;
- ensure staff and governors receive relevant information and training
- ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis;
- provide written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible;
- encourage Looked After Children to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning;
- seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF

- as with all children, have high aspirations and celebrate the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children;
- ensure entry to examinations for Looked After Children;
- be familiar with the Guidance on Looked After Children and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings;
- liaise with the Designated Teacher where a Looked After Child is experiencing difficulty;

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNING BODY

The governing body of this school will:

- ensure that admission criteria (Aided and Foundation) prioritise LAC, according to the Code of Practice on Admissions
- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Looked After Children;
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Looked After Children;
- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body
- for child protection and confidentiality reasons, ensure that information will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity, and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.
- review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years.
- ensure that the school's other policies and procedures give looked after children equal access in respect of:
 - ▶ Admission to school
 - ▶ The National Curriculum and public examinations
 - ▶ Additional educational support where this is needed. Extra curricular activities
 - ▶ Work experience and careers guidance.

TRAINING

The Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and Professional Development Co-ordinator will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in the guidance from the DCFS and DoH (as above).