



GUIDANCE FOR THE EDUCATION OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC)

Safeguarding is defined as protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of health and/or development, ensuring that children grow up with safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to grow and flourish.

Policy Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the academy. The Principal will take a key role in monitoring and evaluating the policy. The policy along with other academy policies will be available on the academy website. The Academy Council will review the policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

Version:	1.0
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Author:	Principal
Ratified by:	To be considered by Academy Council 22/11/2023
Date ratified:	
Review date:	

Revision History:

Version:	Date:	Author:	Summary of Changes:
1.0	May 2021	RHI	New Policy
2.0	October 2023	RHI	Amended with new personnel

Introduction:

Nationally, children who are Looked After 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 wellbeing. Helping Looked After Children succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority for Brook Mead Academy.

Objectives:

The objective of this policy is to promote the educational achievement and welfare of Looked After Children on the roll of Brook Mead Academy. This policy incorporates requirements set out within:

1. The Council's duty under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 (Nov 2005) to promote the educational achievement of Children who are looked after.
2. The Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher - Statutory Guidance for School Governors (2009).
3. The Education (Admission of Children Looked After) (England) Regulations 2006.
4. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016, updated September 2018.
5. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015.
6. Leicester Safeguarding Children's Board Procedures.

Promoting the education of looked after children (LAC)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335964/Promoting_the_educational_achievement_of_looked_after_children_Final_23-....pdf

The Name of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children in our school is:

Grace Sharpe, SENDCO

The name of the Academy Councillor, to support the named teacher for Looked After Children in our school is:

Anna Grant Thomas

This guidance will be renewed annually by Brook Mead Academy to ensure we are providing the best possible outcomes for the Looked After Children in our school.

1. https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/pdfs/ukpga_20040031_en.pdf
2. [Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children-2)
3. [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children-2)

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 may fall into one of four main groups:

- Children may be accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20).
- They may be the subject of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38).
- Children can be the subject of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46).
- They may also be 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.

Looked after children and previously looked after children.

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect.

Academy Councils should ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe. In particular, they should ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked

after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order) and the child's contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They should also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The designated teacher for LAC and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group. A child who is looked after by a local authority (referred to as a looked-after-child) as defined in section 22 Children Act 1989, means a child who is subject to a care order (interim or full care order) or who is voluntarily accommodated by the local authority. In maintained schools and academies, the designated safeguarding lead should work closely with the designated teacher. All Looked After Children will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) drawn up between the school, the child, and the child's social worker, which will identify the child's individual needs and the support they require.

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At Brook Mead Academy we are committed to enhancing the achievement and welfare of Looked After Children in the following ways:

- Having high expectations for the pupil and ensuring equal access to a balanced and broadly based curriculum.
- Recording, monitoring, and improving the academic achievement of pupils in addition to their health and wellbeing.
- Achieving stability and continuity.
- Promoting attendance.
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes.
- Promoting good communication between all those involved in the pupil's life and listening to the pupil.
- Maintaining and respecting the pupil's confidentiality wherever possible.
- Ensuring staff awareness of, and sensitivity to, the difficulties and educational disadvantages of Looked After Children.
- Ensuring an appropriately trained Designated Teacher is appointed, who will be responsible for all Looked After Children.

The role of the Academy Council is to:

- Ensure that the school provides a good framework of support for Looked After Children attending the school.
- Follow the relevant statutory guidance.
- Appoint a suitably qualified teacher with the necessary experience and status as the designated teacher for Looked After Children as per Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Ensure the designated teacher receives the full support needed to carry out their role effectively, including training and development opportunities so that they are able to increase their knowledge and understanding.
- Ensure adequate time and resources are made available for the designated teacher to carry out their duties.
- Ensure the designated teacher has opportunities to disseminate knowledge and information to other staff members, so that the school environment is one that supports and continually monitors the effectiveness of school policies and the role of the designated teacher on outcomes for Looked After Children pupils via an annual report provided by the designated teacher.
- Act on any concerns raised by the designated teacher or arising from any other source with regard to promoting the education of Looked After Children.

The role of the Designated Teacher is to:

- Promote a culture within the school whereby staff have a good understanding of the specific educational needs of Looked After Children and the barriers they face.
- Ensure that Looked After Children are not disadvantaged under school policies by contributing to the development

and review of school policies that actively support the education of Looked After Children.

- Ensure Looked After Children have a dedicated mentor within the school who can offer them support.
- Foster a culture of high expectations for Looked After Children in staff and help raise the aspirations of Looked After Children.
- Be responsible for the oversight of the development and monitoring of Personal Education Plans within the school and setting targets for Looked After Children.
- Liaise with social workers and Virtual Schools regarding individual pupils regarding their Personal Education Plan and any associated issues with their learning.
- Develop a good understanding of care planning and how the Personal Education Plan fits into the wider picture of the pupil's care.
- Promote best practice in helping Looked After Children learn and achieve, and helping staff to assess pupil's needs and consider appropriate teaching strategies.
- Disseminate information to staff on how to provide effective support to individual Looked After Children in order to maximise their opportunities.
- Identify additional learning opportunities and resources for Looked After Children.
- Help Looked After Children become involved in the Personal Education Plan planning process and ensure the 'voice of the child' and their views are taken into account.
- Liaise with, and report annually to, the academy council on outcomes for Looked After Children.
- Liaise with carers to support home learning.
- Oversee transitions of Looked After Children to and from the school and transfer of information to the advocate for Looked After Children, and pursue all resources and educational opportunities on their behalf.

The role of all staff:

- 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 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.
- Work to prevent bullying in line with the school's policy.

The role of the foster carer is to:

- Support the pupil's education and encourage them to achieve.
- Liaise with the pupil's social worker to agree tasks and areas of responsibility relating to the pupil's education.
- Contribute to the development and review of the pupil's Personal Education Plan.
- Be the main point of contact for the school on a day to day basis and sign the home school agreement.
- Support the pupil to attend school regularly and engage in school activities and ensure adequate support at home for the pupil to carry out homework.
- Carry out any allocated tasks relating to the pupil's education and fulfilment of the corporate parenting role as set out in the pupil's placement plan.
- Attend parent's evenings and school performances that the pupil is involved in.
- Receive training and support that enables them to engage effectively with the education system and advocate for the pupil.
- Take an active interest in the pupil's education and provide a home environment that actively encourages learning.
- Ensure the pupil has access to books and materials to support their education.
- Ensure homework and revision is completed.
- Promote regular school attendance and good behaviour.
- Liaise with the school to deal with any arising issues.

Brook Mead Academy understands its responsibilities in supporting and encouraging the educational development and achievement of Looked After Children. In addition to allocating a named Staff Member and academy councillor for Looked After Children, we work closely with the Virtual Schools Team to ensure we are fulfilling requirements as set out by the Local Authority.

Virtual School Team:

The role of the Virtual school team involves working with a wide range of professionals to improve the educational outcomes, and therefore the life chances, of all Looked After Children, young people and care leavers for whom Leicester City Council is the corporate parent.

Aims of the Virtual School Team:

- Promote the emotional well-being and educational achievement of all the children and young people in the care of Leicester City Council.
- Encourage a deeper understanding of the issues facing children and young people who have experienced separation and loss and how this impacts upon attainment and achievement.
- Improve and maintain excellent school attendance.
- Work with schools to avoid exclusions.
- Work with schools, carers and the young people to raise attainment and accelerate progress.
- Encourage young people to participate in a range of activities in and out of school relevant to their interests and abilities.
- Promote effective multi-agency working that benefits all looked after children and young people. Partners include:
 - Carers
 - Social workers
 - Schools
 - Independent Reviewing Officers
 - Residential children's homes
 - Youth Offending Service
 - Special Education Service
 - Education Welfare Service
 - Educational Psychology Service
 - Raising Achievement Team
 - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
 - Admission and Exclusion team
 - The Heritage Panel
 - Leicester City Football Club

Personal Education Plans (PEPs):

A Personal Education Plan is a mechanism for promoting and prioritising the education of young people in public care and is a statutory requirement. Brook Mead Academy ensures that there is a Personal Education Plan for every Looked After Children in our school, and we ensure that Personal Education Plans are revisited and reviewed 3 times each year - once in each school term. The planning process for Personal Education Plan meetings will be carried out in collaboration between our school, the social worker, the carer, the pupil and the Virtual School Team. The designated person for Looked After Children in our school will ensure regular meetings take place and that they are the single point of contact for all Looked After Children in our school.

Brook Mead Academy completes all Personal Education Plans on an online template using Local Authority Procedures and will seek advice from the Virtual Schools Team as necessary.