



Looked After and Previously Looked After Pupils Policy

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Lead: Angela Macvie

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Looked After and Previously Looked After Pupils Policy Details

Designated Teacher: Mrs Angela Macvie

Governor with Responsibility for Looked After Pupils: Lorraine Petersen

Ratified by Governing Body on:

Next review date: December 2020

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Under the Children's Act 1989, a child is looked after if he/she is in the care of, or is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by, a local authority. The term 'Looked after Pupils' refers to
 - Pupils accommodated by the Local Authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
 - Pupils who are subject to a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
 - Pupils who are subject to emergency orders for the protection of the child (section 44)
 - Pupils who are compulsorily accommodated, for example remanded to the Local Authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21)
- 1.2. The term 'in care' refers only to pupils who are subject to a care order by the courts under section 31 of the Children's Act 1989. Pupils who are cared for on a voluntary basis are 'accommodated' by the local authority under Section 20 of the Children's Act
- 1.3. Looked After Pupils at Chadsgrove may be in the care of Worcestershire Local Authority (Worcestershire Children First) or may be in the care of another authority but living within Worcestershire. These pupils could be living:
 - With foster carers
 - In a children's home
 - With relatives or friends
 - With one or both parents under the supervision of social care services
 - With prospective adoptive parents (but still retain Looked After legal status until the final adoption order is made by the courts)
- 1.4. Pupils who are provided with Short Breaks care, of any duration, under section 17 of the Children's Act, are not deemed to be Looked After
- 1.5. At Chadsgrove, some pupils are over the age of 18 but remain in the care of the Local Authority. These pupils may live with foster carers under alternative arrangements or in residential accommodation. They may also be subject to ongoing legal protection, for example a Court of Protection Order. These pupils continue to be considered as 'Looked After' pupils for the purposes of this policy.
- 1.6. Previously Looked After Pupils are those who have ceased to be looked after as a result of:
 - A Special Guardianship Order – This order appoints one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (Section 14A of the Children's Act 1989)
 - A Child Arrangements Order – This order settles the arrangements of the person the child is to live with (Section 8 of the Children's Act 1989, as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014). Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order
 - An Adoption Order (Section 46 of the Adoption and Children's act 2002 and Section 12 of the 1976 Adoption Act)
- 1.7. Chadsgrove recognises that the needs of Previously Looked After Pupils can often be just as significant as those of Looked After Pupils but that they may not be so easily recognised due to the pupil's circumstances not being known. Advice will be sought from the Local Authority if there are any concerns about a pupil who has been Previously Looked After.

2. Rationale

- 2.1. Many pupils and young people who are in care or who have been previously looked after have suffered abuse or neglect. Despite having as broad a range of abilities as their peers, this group of pupils are particularly vulnerable to underachievement. Their academic and social progress is likely to be affected by their experiences, and compounded by instability in their personal circumstances.
- 2.2. Helping Looked After Pupils succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority at our school. Chadsgrove recognises that Looked After and Previously Looked After Pupils can experience specific and significant disadvantage within a school setting, and is committed to ensuring that they reach their potential in all areas. School staff believe that the educational experience of all pupils should be positive and powerful and aims to provide a learning environment in which every child can be successful.
- 2.3. Chadsgrove School is aware that Looked After and Previously Looked After Pupils may have specific difficulties in attendance, getting parental consent for activities, obtaining funding for extra activities, obtaining correct equipment, as well as stigma about their circumstances.
- 2.4. Chadsgrove recognises that Looked After and Previously Looked After Pupils may have:
 - Very specific needs and may be coping with trauma, abuse or rejection, and are likely to have experienced personal distress and uncertainty
 - Suffered disrupted learning and may have missed extended periods of school. The gaps in their learning, and in many cases the emotional impact of their experiences, are likely to have become significant barriers to their progress
 - Suffered significant loss and trauma which is likely to have considerable impact on their ability to access the curriculum
- 2.5. Looked After Pupils may (or may not) have some or all the following issues:
 - Low self esteem
 - Poor education standards due to time out of school
 - Delayed social/emotional/ cognitive development
 - Be bullied or bully others
 - Be prone to mental health issues
 - Be isolated with few friends
 - Behaviour issues
 - Poor attachments to others
 - A need to be very private

This makes them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life-chances.
- 2.6. It is recognised that, for this group of pupils, some events can retrigger traumatic experiences (e.g. a court hearing, contact with family or friends, or an aspect of the curriculum that cannot be anticipated). This can affect behaviour and may affect progress, even for pupils who had previously been settled and 'on track'. As such, staff working with Looked After and Previously Looked After Pupils will need to use additional strategies and provide effective support in order to help them overcome any difficulties that they may have. Essential to this support is the provision of emotional guidance.

3. Relevant Legislation and Guidance

- 3.1. This policy refers to, and complies with, the following legislation and guidance:
 - The Children's Act 1989
 - The Children and Young Persons' Act 2008

4. Aims of Provision for Looked After and Previously looked After Pupils

- 4.1. Chadsgrove aims to:
 - Provide a safe and secure environment where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all pupils

- Support Looked After and Previously Looked After Pupils and give them access to every opportunity to continually achieve and enjoy their learning
- Recognise and support the specific challenges faced by this group of pupils, whilst continuing to foster a culture of high expectations with regard to learning, behaviour and progress
- Ensure all Looked After and Previously Looked After Pupils feel secure and confident in their membership and inclusion of the school community as it is recognised that this is very important for their social and emotional development

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

- 5.1. Section 20 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 places a duty on the Governing Body of maintained schools to designate a member of staff to have responsibility to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Pupils who are registered pupils at the school. The Governing Body must also ensure that the designated teacher undertakes appropriate training.
- 5.2. As such, the Governing Body at Chads Grove School will:
 - Ensure that there is a qualified and experienced teacher named as the Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Pupils, and that he/she is enabled to carry out their responsibilities
 - In partnership with the Head Teacher, ensure that the Designated Teacher has access to appropriate training, sufficient time to carry out duties and receives adequate support
 - Support the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and other members of staff in ensuring the needs of Looked After and Previously Looked After Pupils are met
 - Support the Local Authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Pupils
 - Nominate a named school governor for Looked After and Previously Looked After Pupils
 - Ensure that school policies and procedures give Looked After and Previously Looked After Pupils equal access and/or positively discriminate this group by prioritising their needs
 - Receive, as a minimum, an annual report from the Designated Teacher that includes:
 - ❖ The number of Looked After Pupils in the school and their originating Local Authorities
 - ❖ A clear overview of the educational needs and levels of progress of Looked After Pupils in the school including whether any are gifted or talented – At Chads Grove we refer to pupils as having unique talents and abilities (CUTA)
 - ❖ Attendance and exclusion information for Looked After Pupils
 - ❖ Any Special Educational Needs of the pupils
 - ❖ Destinations of Looked After Pupils who leave the school
 - ❖ How the teaching and learning needs of Looked After Pupils are reflected in school development plans
 - ❖ Whether the school is making full use of all available resources, including Pupil Premium Funding, in order to maximise opportunity for Looked After and Previously Looked After Pupils
- 5.3. As part of arrangements for monitoring the effectiveness of the role, the report should enable the Governing Body to make overall judgments about the Designated Teacher role in the context of wider school planning.

- 5.4. The report should also be acted upon by the Governing Body so as to support the Designated Teacher and maximise the impact of the role

The Designated Teacher

- 5.5. The Designated Teacher will:

- Help school staff to understand the things which affect how Looked After and Previously Looked After Pupils learn, promote a culture of high expectations and be a source of advice for staff about differentiated teaching strategies
- Maintain an up to date record of Looked After Pupils (as part of the Vulnerable Pupils register) and inform colleagues on a need to know basis
- Attend relevant training so that they are aware of statutory responsibilities and procedures for Looked After Pupils as well as understand the impact of trauma, loss and separation and how this can impact upon learning
- Co-ordinate/deliver training to staff so that they are aware of the complex issues and educational disadvantage affecting many Looked After and Previously Looked After Pupils as well how they could support pupils to overcome these
- Report to the Governing Body annually on the performance of the Looked After and Previously Looked After Pupils who are on the roll of the school
- Be the first point of contact for other professionals working with Looked After Pupils, and ensure effective communication between agencies, including the speedy transfer of information prior to admission or upon leaving
- Monitor the educational progress of all Looked After Pupils in order to inform the school's development plan and ensure that they have targets which are both realistic and challenging
- Ensure all relevant parties receive early notification of school based meetings, parent's evenings and other events and that all communication remains regular and positive
- Identify, with teachers, the pupil's strengths, gaps in learning or any barriers to learning in order to inform the pupils Personal Education Plan (PEP) and facilitate the completion of the student section of the PEP
- Contribute to the Personal Education Plan meeting with the social worker, carers and monitoring agencies such as the Virtual School and seek advice from these agencies if additional support is required
- Ensure that someone is available to attend any Looked After Child Reviews and/or prepare a written report for such reviews
- Supervise the admission of new Looked After Pupils and ensure appropriate induction and transition support into school

All Staff

- 5.6. All school staff will:

- Promote a culture in which Looked After and Previously Looked After Pupils believe they can succeed and have high aspirations for both their educational and personal achievements
- Ensure any Looked After Pupil is sensitively supported and that confidentiality is maintained

- Respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of Personal Education Plans and other documentation as needed
- Attend Looked After Child Reviews, if required to do so, as a professional with direct understanding of the pupil's educational needs
- Seek advice from the Designated Teacher, as needed, in order to support a pupil's learning or emotional needs
- Support the local authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Pupils

6. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- 6.1. The Designated Teacher will decide, with relevant Local Authority staff, the extent to which information will be shared, and with which staff, on a case by case basis. Some cases may require selected staff to understand how specific previous experiences are impacting on current behaviour.
- 6.2. Where information is shared with selected staff, the pupil will be made aware of this, if it is appropriate to do so bearing in mind their age and level of understanding. For a child who is newly looked after, it may be important to establish, where possible, his/her view of their changed circumstances, and to monitor how this impacts on their behaviour, attendance and performance.
- 6.3. Looked After Pupils may need adult support to prepare for when they are asked about home by other students or staff. Staff will aim to plan for this by discussing it with the child, where it is developmentally appropriate to do so, on their entry to school.

7. Looked After Pupils Placed by Other Authorities

- 7.1. Chadsgrove recognises that Looked After Pupils placed outside of their originating authority, and especially those who are a long way from home, are especially vulnerable. It is the responsibility of the originating authority to ensure that the identified educational needs of any child placed in another authority area will be effectively met at Chadsgrove before it is agreed.

8. Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

- 8.1. Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children are likely to have English as an additional language and associated learning needs. They may have experienced trauma both in their home country and/or on route to the UK and, as such, Chadsgrove will seek support both from the Local Authority or other relevant professionals should such a pupil be admitted to school. School staff will also work closely with any care placement in order to ensure that the pupil's cultural, social, emotional and personal development needs are met.

9. Private Fostering

- 9.1. The Children Act 1989 states that if a child under the age of 16 (or 18 if they have a disability) goes to live with someone who is not a close relative for 28 days or more then this is a private fostering arrangement.
- 9.2. If it is thought that a child is being privately fostered then the Designated Teacher will inform the Children's Services Access Centre/Family Front Door of this fact.
- 9.3. Pupils who are privately fostered are likely to be experiencing upheaval and instability in their home lives. They are likely to need additional pastoral and learning support and may also need closer monitoring and tracking of their progress. The Designated Teacher will ensure that this takes place.

10. Admission

- 10.1. Changing school as a result of moving care placement could result in a subsequent gap in education and, as such, it is essential that any Looked After Pupils are admitted to Chadsgrove with minimal delay.
- 10.2. Generally, admission to Chadsgrove will be through liaison with the EHC Plan casework officer within SEN Services and the social worker in order to ensure that a placement at the school will meet the pupil's identified Special Educational Needs.
- 10.3. Some Looked After Pupils may have extended journeys to school, particularly if they live long distances away as a result of changes in their care placement. This will be sensitively managed by school staff, on a case by case basis, and taken into account when dealing with any attendance issues.

11. Attendance

- 11.1. It is vital that Looked After Pupils have good attendance in order to improve their educational outcomes and Chadsgrove closely monitors the attendance of all Looked After Pupils on roll. Where attendance is a cause for concern the attendance officer will share this with the designated teacher. The Designated Teacher will then raise the issue with the pupil's social worker and seek to convene a meeting as soon as possible, with all relevant parties, in order to quickly address any issues and ensure attendance improves.
- 11.2. All Local Authorities who currently place Looked After Pupils at Chadsgrove also monitor the attendance of the pupils for whom they have responsibility through daily telephone calls to the school office.

12. Exclusions

- 12.1. Chadsgrove recognises the fact that Looked After Pupils, as a group, are particularly at risk of exclusion. Should the situation arise, Chadsgrove will try every practicable means to maintain a Looked After Pupil in school and will seek advice/support from the child's social worker and the Virtual School as soon as possible in order to ensure that this remains the case.

13. Part Time and Alternative Provision

- 13.1. Where a Looked After or Previously Looked After Pupil cannot cope with full time education, for whatever reason, they will be provided with as many hours of provision as they are capable of attending. The school will also consider how the remaining hours of education per week will be delivered, so that learning is uninterrupted, wherever possible. The Designated Teacher will have oversight of all the education provided, where it is delivered elsewhere, and this will be regularly reviewed with a view to ensuring that the pupil returns to full time education at Chadsgrove as soon as possible.
- 13.2. Any changes to the timetable of a Looked After Pupil will always be agreed with the pupil's social worker and carer through a pastoral support plan or personal education plan.

14. The Personal Education Plan (PEP)

- 14.1. Personal Education Plans for Looked After Pupils are the result of statutory planning meetings between the social worker, Virtual School and the Designated Teacher. These meetings generally occur termly and can be telephone meetings or face to face meetings. At least one face to face meeting takes place each year.
- 14.2. All Looked After pupils at Chadsgrove have electronic PEPs that are maintained either by Welfare Call (Worcestershire pupils) or EPepOnline (Dudley, Birmingham and Croydon pupils).
- 14.3. All Looked After Pupils must have a PEP as part of their overall care plan. The PEP will be used to help ensure that the pupil gets the support and provision he/she needs in order to succeed.

- 14.4. Prior to a PEP, the Designated Teacher will discuss the pupil's progress with class staff, identify any concerns, consider how Pupil Premium funding has supported the pupil to reach his / her targets and identify any future targets. Following the PEP, class staff will be updated with any relevant information and advised of any targets that have been set
- 14.5. Where appropriate, the pupil will be involved in the PEP, either by attending and/or submitting their views prior to the meeting

15. Allocation of Resources

- 15.1. The Governing Body will ensure that the school allocates resources to support appropriate provision for Looked After and Previously Looked After Pupils, meeting the objectives set out in this policy. The school will work in partnership with Worcestershire Children First and the Virtual School in order to ensure that Looked After Pupils receive the full range of support to which they are entitled to enable them to make progress and achieve.

16. Record Keeping

- 16.1. All information with regard to Looked After Pupils is held within ScholarPack and on CPOMS.
- 16.2. ScholarPack contains basic contact details and can be accessed by all school staff with access credentials. CPOMS contains records of any safeguarding concerns and Looked After Child reviews etc. and access to this is restricted to those who have specific responsibility for the child (generally the class teacher, designated teacher and the senior leadership team).
- 16.3. Looked After and Previously Looked After Pupils are identified as a vulnerable group when tracking, monitoring and reporting on attainment and progress

17. Links with external agencies/organisations

- 17.1. We recognise the important contribution that external support services make in supporting LAC. At Chadsgrove, colleagues from the following support services may be involved with individual Looked After Pupils:
 - Social care worker / Children with Disabilities Team
 - Virtual School for Looked After Pupils in Worcestershire
 - Other Virtual Schools for looked after Pupils from other Local Authorities
 - SEN services
 - Orchard Team
 - Speech and Language Therapists
 - Physio and occupational Therapists
 - Play/Drama Therapist
 - School nurses
 - CAMHS

18. Monitoring and review

- 18.1. The Head Teacher and Designated Teacher monitor the implementation of this policy, including ensuring that it is updated to reflect the needs and circumstances of the school.
- 18.2. This policy will be reviewed every year.
- 18.3. The Governing Body is responsible for approving this policy.

19. Related policies

- 19.1. This policy should be read alongside the school's policies on:
 - Safeguarding Children (Policy Number 73)