

Looked After Children Policy

The Governing Body has adopted
The Meridian School Looked After Children Policy.

Date adopted by Governing Body: February 2016

Chair of Governors:



Date of Review:

February 2018

The Objective:

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of students in care.

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

Zoe Smith

The Role of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children

- To ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by students and young people 'in care' and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them;
- To inform members of staff of the general educational needs of students who are in care, and to promote the involvement of these students in school homework clubs, extra-curricular activities, home reading schemes, school councils, etc;
- To act as an advocate for students in care;
- To develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers and colleagues in Childrens' Services;
- To hold a supervisory brief for all students in care, e.g. to ensure all relevant education and care information is available to school staff and carer(s), and that this information is kept up to date;
- To monitor the educational progress of all students who are looked-after in order to inform the school's development plan;
- To intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy;
- To ensure that the educational targets within the Personal Education Plan are implemented fully and that all relevant staff are aware of them.
- To ensure best value when spending the additional budget share made available specifically for students looked after to support achievement.
- To advise on the rationale for the allocation of the Personal Education Allowance during the Personal Education Planning meeting.
- To be responsible for the appropriate allocation of the Pupil Premium for looked after children and to be accountable for how it is spent.
- To report to the Governing Body at least on an annual basis
- To have completed the iLearn on-line learning tool specifically for Designated teachers and to attend other training as appropriate
- To support the Quality Assurance Process for schools on working with looked after children.

Work with Individual Looked After Children

- To work with individual students, possibly alongside a carer, to arrive at a statement about their care arrangements and circumstances that they would be happy to share with staff and/or students;
- To enable the student to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their Care Plan;
- To implement the Hertfordshire Personal Education Plan for each student and review it as required in the notes of guidance as this will contribute to the educational component of their care plan;
- To ensure that a Home-School Agreement is drawn up with the primary carer and signed by the Social Worker;
- To supervise the smooth induction of a new looked after student into the school.
- To develop in-school strategies to promote and accelerate the achievement of looked after children and close the gap between them and their peers.
- To fully support additional learning opportunities that may be available from the Virtual School and partner agencies

Liaison:

- To liaise with the member of staff responsible for monitoring students on the Child Protection Register;
- To help communication with Childrens' Services staff so that the Personal Education Plan can inform the student's Care Plan;
- To attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or to contribute in other ways to care planning meetings and statutory reviews;
- To be named contact for colleagues in Childrens' Services;
- To ensure the speedy transfer of information between agencies and individuals, and report on the progress of all children in care on the school role to the Corporate Parenting Officer as requested.

Training:

- To develop knowledge of Childrens' Services procedures by attending training events organised by the Local Authority and in particular the Virtual School;
- To cascade training to school staff as appropriate.
- To attend the annual Designated Teachers conference and participate in area cluster groups for additional training and to share good practice
- To complete the iLearn on-line learning module

Governor

The name of a Governor with special responsibility for Looked After Children in the school:

Paul Bolton

The role of that governor

The named governor will report to the Governing Body on an annual basis using the report from the Designated Teacher as source information:

- The number of looked-after students in the school;
- A comparison of test scores as a discrete group, compared with those of other students;
- The attendance of students as a discrete group, compared to other students;
- The level of fixed term/permanent exclusions; and
- Student destinations

The named governor should be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that looked-after students have equal access to:

- The National Curriculum;
- Public examinations;
- Additional interventions to support educational progress e.g. Making Good Progress;
- Careers and Youth Connexions guidance;
- Additional education support;
- Extra curricular activities; and
- Work experience

The named Governor will be expected to have completed the iLearn on-line learning module on the Education of Looked After Children (Governors edition). This training may be accessed via the Virtual School page on the Grid, or www.learningpool.com/hertfordshire.

School Responsibility

It is important that all teaching staff who are in contact with the student are aware that he/she is being looked after by the Local Authority. The responsibility for the transfer of this information should be that of the Head Teacher and/or the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children.

It is appropriate for a classroom support assistant to have knowledge that the student is in care only when directly involved in the teaching of the young person.

In the absence of the usual class teacher, some information regarding the student's circumstances should be shared with the teacher covering the class. The extent of this sharing should be determined by the Headteacher or the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children.

Admission Arrangements

On admission, records will be requested from the student's previous school and a meeting will be held with carer/parent/Social Worker as appropriate – but always involving someone with parental responsibility. This will provide information to inform the Personal Education Plan. An appropriate school induction will take place.

Involve the Young Person

It is important that a student is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. How this is shared with them clearly depends on their age and understanding. The explanation should emphasise that the school, the Social Worker, and their carer(s) are working together to promote their education.

It is important that the student is supported to complete the Student Voice section of the Personal Education Plan by the Designated Teacher to inform the PEP and Care Plan review meetings

It is important to establish the student's view of their changed circumstances and what they want others to know. It is also important to ensure that a Social Worker/teacher/carer prepares the student for situations when they may be asked about home, e.g. by other students in the playground.

Communication with Other Agencies

Schools should ensure that a copy of all reports (e.g. End of year reports) should be forwarded to the student's Social Worker in addition to the foster carer or Residential Social Worker and if appropriate parent/s and the Virtual School.

Schools and education and social work colleagues within Childrens' Services should endeavour to co-ordinate their review meetings, e.g. to

have an Annual or a Statement Review and a Personal Education Plan meeting or review.

It is important to exchange information between formal reviews if there are significant changes in the student's circumstances, e.g. if school is considering an exclusion, there is a change of care placement or there are significant attendance issues.

Assessment, Monitoring and Review Procedures

Each student looked after will have a Care Plan that will include a Personal Education Plan (PEP) that is developed jointly by the Social worker and Designated Teacher. This will identify specific areas of concern and include achievable targets. Areas for consideration will include:

- Attendance;
- Achievement Record (academic or otherwise);
- Behaviour;
- Extended learning opportunities;
- Involvement in Out of School Hours Activities;
- Special needs (if any);
- Development needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge or subject areas and experiences); and
- Long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations).

The PEP will be updated and reviewed at least annually or at the point of any major change and contribute to the Statutory Reviewing process carried out by the Independent Reviewing Officer. The Designated Teacher is accountable for the implementation of the educational targets within the Plan.

The named governor will report annually to the Governing Body on the progress of all looked after children against the key indicators outlined above.