



LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

In Brief

On a national level Looked After Children significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Bournemouth School recognises that it has a key role to play in improving the life chances of students on roll who are in care. As well as academic success this would include promoting healthy, safe lifestyles and encouraging positive relationships with others. Looked after children can see school as a place of consistency and continuity for them, providing routine in what can be otherwise very turbulent lives.

Aims

Bournemouth School aims to:

- provide a safe and secure environment, which values education and believes in the abilities and potential of ALL children, at the same time promoting social inclusion through the highest possible standards of teaching and learning;
- support our Looked After Children and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their full potential and enjoy learning;
- fulfil our schools' role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our Looked After Children, by asking the question, '*Would this be good enough for my child?*'

1. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To implement the policy the school will:

- 1.2 Nominate a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children who will act as their advocate and coordinate support for them; the designated teachers are:

Mrs C Wood
Mrs S Spears
Dr D Lewis
Mrs R Issott
Mr D Robjohns

- 1.3 Nominate a school governor to ensure that the needs of Looked After Children in the school are taken into account at a school management level and to support the Designated Teacher.

- 1.4 Support the Designated Teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend training on Looked After Children.

2. DESIGNATED TEACHER

2.1 Their role within the school systems is:

- a) to ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have an understanding of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by Looked After Children and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them;
- b) to inform members of staff of the general educational needs of Looked After Children, and to promote the involvement of these children in school homework clubs, extra-curricular activities, home reading schemes, school councils etc.
- c) to act as an advocate for Looked After Children;

- d) to ensure the electronic Personal Educational Plan (ePEP) in place is compatible with the child's Care Plan and where applicable includes any other school plan, e.g. Statement of Special Educational Need and associated plans, Transition Plan, Pastoral Support Plans;
- e) to develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers and the Virtual School;
- f) to ensure all relevant education and care information is available to the school staff and carer(s), and this information is kept up to date;
- g) to monitor the educational progress of Looked After Children in order to inform the school's development plan;
- h) to intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy.

2.2 Their work with individual Looked After Children is to:

- a) enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their care plan;
- b) help ensure that each student has an electronic Personal Education Plan (the ePEP should be initiated by the young person's social worker);
- c) ensure that a home-school agreement is drawn up with the primary carer and signed by the social worker.

2.3 Liaison:

- a) to liaise with the member of staff responsible for monitoring children on the Child Protection Register;
- b) to help coordinate education and Looked After Children review meetings, so that the electronic Personal Education Plan can inform the child's Care Plan;
- c) to attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or contribute in other ways to Looked After Children care planning meetings;
- d) to be the named contact for colleagues in the Virtual School;
- e) to ensure the speedy transfer of information between agencies and individuals;
- f) to ensure that they keep the school up to date with current legislation and its implication for the school in respect of Looked After Children.

2.4 Training:

- a) to develop knowledge of the Virtual School procedures by attending training events organised by the Local Authority; and
- b) to cascade training to school staff as appropriate.

3. GOVERNOR WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

3.1 The named governor will report to the Governing Body on an annual basis:

- a) a comparison of test scores as a discrete group, compared with those of another student;
- b) the attendance of students as a discrete group, compared with other students;
- c) the level of fixed term/permanent exclusions; and
- d) student destinations.

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

- a) the curriculum
- b) public examinations;
- c) careers guidance;
- d) additional educational support;
- e) extra-curricular activities; and
- f) work experience.

4. RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN IN SCHOOL

- 4.1 It is important that all teaching staff who are in contact with the child or young person 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 Headmaster and/or the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children.
- 4.2 It is appropriate for Teaching Assistants to have knowledge that the young person is being looked-after only when directly involved in the teaching of the young person.
- 4.3 In the absence of the usual class teacher, some information regarding the child's circumstances should be shared with the teacher covering the class. The extent of this sharing should be determined by the Headmaster or the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children.

5. ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

- 5.1 On admission a date will be agreed upon for a new electronic Personal Education Plan to be written, involving child's Education Officer, Social Worker, the child (if appropriate) and their carers. An appropriate school induction will take place.

6. INVOLVING THE YOUNG PERSON

It is important that a young person 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 Virtual School, the Social Worker, and their carer(s) are working together to promote their education.

7. COMMUNICATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES

- 7.1 The school should ensure that a copy of all reports (e.g. end of year reports) should be forwarded to the young person's Social Worker in addition to the foster carer or Residential Social Worker. This will be done through the ePEP.
- 7.2 The Virtual School should endeavour to coordinate review meetings e.g. to have an Annual Review of Statement combined with a Statutory Care Review.
- 7.3 The Virtual School will need to exchange information between formal reviews if there are significant changes in the young person's circumstances, e.g. if school is considering an exclusion, there is a change of care placement or there are significant attendance issues.

8. ASSESSMENT, MONITORING AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

- 8.1 Each looked-after student will have a Care Plan that will include an electronic Personal Education Plan (ePEP) that the Education Officer takes a lead in developing. This will identify specific areas of concern and include achievable targets. Areas for consideration will include:
- attendance;
 - achievement record (academic or otherwise);
 - behaviour;
 - homework;
 - involvement in Extra Curricular Activities;
 - special educational 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).
- 8.2 The ePEP will be updated termly, as part of the Statutory Reviewing process carried out by the Virtual School.
- 8.3 The named governor will report annually to the Governing Body on the progress of all Looked After Children against the key indicators outlined above.

9.0 OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES

- Pupil Premium Policy
- Behaviour, Exclusions and Drugs Policy
- Admissions Policy

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.