THE

COMPASS

PARTNERSHIP OF SCHOOLS

Willow Dene Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

The Compass Partnership recognises the vulnerability of our Looked After Children. Nationally, Looked After Children 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 well being, in line with Every Child Matters.

Helping Looked After Children succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority for our trust This policy takes account of:

- the Council's duty under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 is to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children (LAC)
- the Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006
- relevant DfES guidance to Governing Bodies (*Supporting Looked After Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors*)

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Our approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children is based on the following principles:

- prioritising education
- promoting attendance
- targeting support
- having high expectations
- promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes
- achieving stability and continuity
- early intervention and priority action
- listening to children
- promoting health and wellbeing
- reducing exclusions and promoting stability
- working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals
- ensuring information pathways for carers are clear
- supporting the resourcing of appropriate equipment and providing necessary training

Implications

As for all our pupils, we are committed to helping every Looked After Child to achieve the highest standards they can. This can in part be measured by improvement in their achievements and attendance.

The Trustees are committed to providing quality education for all pupils and will:

- ensure a Teacher is designated for each individual Looked After Child and is enabled to carry out the responsibilities set out below in conjunction with the Headteacher

- ensure a Personal Learning Plan is put in place, implemented and regularly reviewed for every Looked After Child, in line with Local authority's guidance on Personal Learning Plans
- identify a member of the local governing body as Designated Governor for Looked After Children

This policy links with a number of other school policies and it is important that Trustees have regard to the needs of Looked After Children when reviewing them:

- oversubscription criteria
- Behaviour and Relationships
- Home-School Agreement
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Equalities Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy

Our schools will champion the needs of Looked After Children, raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them, in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible.

Responsibilities

The Headteacher/ Head of School Responsibility:

- identify a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children, whose role is set out below. It is essential that another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take sick leave
- ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusions of Looked After Children and take action where progress, conduct or attendance are below expectations
- report on the progress, attendance and conduct of Looked After Children. OFSTED now select a number of Looked After Children, tracking their results and the support they have received
- ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance
- ensure that all members of staff are aware that supporting Looked After Children is a key priority

Trustees Responsibility:

- identify a nominated governor for Looked After Children in each school
- ensure that all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Looked After Children

- ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Looked After Children allocate resources to meet the needs of Looked After Children
- ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs

Procedures

Trustees will:

- monitor the progress of Looked After Children, through an annual report
- ensure that Looked After Children are given top priority when applying for places in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria
- work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school, by ensuring the school implements policies and procedures to ensure Looked After Children achieve and enjoy their time at the school. The governing body will recognise the additional problems caused by exclusion and will use permanent exclusion only as a last resort
- ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below
- support the Headteacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of Looked After Children are recognised and met
- receive a report once a year setting out:
    - the number of looked after pupils on the school's roll (if any)
    - their attendance, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils
    - progress, compared to other pupils
    - the number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any)
    - the destinations of pupils who leave the school; the information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned

The Designated Teacher

Government Guidance says that the Designated Teacher should be "someone with sufficient authority to make things happen… [who] should be an advocate for Looked After Children, assessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them."

Trustees should be aware that all schools are already required to have a designated teacher for LAC. It is strongly recommended that this person should be a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Governors should also be aware that OFSTED will focus on Looked After Children, monitoring how the School has promoted their inclusion and attainment and the effectiveness of joint working with other services involved with them.

The Designated Teacher will:

- Build relationships with health, education and social care partners and any other agencies so that they understand the support given to Looked After Children
- ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan to plan for that transition in consultation with the child's social worker
- ensure that a Personal Learning Plan is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people, at least two weeks before the Care Plan reviews
- ensure that each Looked After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher, but should be based on the child's own wishes. *Members of staff who take on this role may need to be*

supported by someone from the school's pastoral staff. They should also be alert to any child protection issues, any disclosures that pupils may make, and know what action to take. They should link closely therefore with the school's Designated Teacher for Child Protection

- track progress and target support appropriately
- monitor attendance and involve other agencies if necessary
- co-ordinate any support for the Looked After Children that is necessary within school
- ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a 'need-to know' basis
- ensure, as far as possible, attendance at planning and review meetings
- act as an advisor to staff and governors, raising their awareness of the needs of Looked After Children
- set up timely meetings with relevant parties where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion
- ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and – if the pupil changes school – to a new school
- be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education
- track academic progress and target support appropriately;
- promote inclusion in all areas of school life
- be aware that 60% of Looked After Children say they are bullied, so will actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy

All members of staff will:

- 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 positively to a pupil's request to be the named member of staff whom they can talk to when they feel it is necessary
- 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
- be aware that 60% of Looked After Children say they are bullied so work to prevent bullying in line with school policy

Policy adopted	**Summer Term 2024**
Aligned for:	**Willow Dene School**
Name of Designated Teacher:	**Emma Bennett**
Other related policies:	**Child Protection and Safeguarding**
Next Review:	**Summer Term 2027**