

Loudwater Combined School Looked after children (LAC) policy

Loudwater Combined School is committed to providing quality education for all its students based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes.

We aim to:

- ensure that policies and procedures are followed for LAC as for all children
- ensure that all LAC have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, make progress and achieve exceptional outcomes.
- provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual's needs and ability
- ensure that LAC students take as full a part as possible in all School activities
- ensure that carers and social workers of LAC students are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment
- ensure that LAC students are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision.
- To promote the educational achievement and welfare of children in care.

It is important not to confuse a young person's legal status with their living arrangements. For example, a child on a Care Order can be living with:

- Foster carers
- In a children's home
- In a residential school
- With relatives, or
- Even with parents – under supervision of the LA

Similarly, an 'accommodated' child can be living in:

- foster care
- a children's home, or
- a residential school

The Role of the Designated Teacher for LAC

- To ensure that the educational achievement of each looked after child on roll is monitored, tracked and promoted and where relevant, accelerated.
- To advise on most effective use of the Pupil Premium during the Personal Education Planning meeting.
- To ensure that the Pupil Premium funding and additional budget share funding where relevant is used to support the learning objectives for the child and to be accountable for how it is spent with outcomes evidenced.
- To ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by children 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 children who are in care, and to promote the involvement of these children in home learning club, extra-curricular activities, home reading schemes, school council, etc.
- To act as an advocate for children and young people in care
- To develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers and colleagues in Children's Services, (CS) and birth parents where appropriate.
- To hold a supervisory brief for all children in care, e.g. to ensure all relevant education and care information is available to school staff where relevant and carer(s), and that this information is kept up to date, used on a need to know basis to help the child overcome barriers to learning and progress.
- To track and support the educational progress of all looked after children to inform the school's development plan.
- To intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement by use of the Pupil Premium funding to accelerate progress.

- To intervene if there is evidence of absence from school.
- To ensure that the educational targets within the Personal Education Plan are implemented fully, reviewed regularly and that all relevant school staff are aware of them.
- To report to the Governing Body at least on an annual basis on the outcomes for looked after children.
- To complete appropriate professional training to support the role.

Work with Individual Looked After Children

- To discuss with individual children, 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 pupils.
- To enable the child to contribute to the educational aspects of their Personal Education Plan.
- To supervise the smooth induction of a new looked after child into the school.
- To develop in-school strategies to track, 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 children on the Child Protection Register.
- To support communication with staff so that the Personal Education Plan can inform the child'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.

Training:

- To cascade training to school staff as appropriate.
- To attend relevant conferences and training and participate in area cluster groups for additional training and to share good practice.
- To develop knowledge of procedures by attending training events organised by the Children's Services, (CS), the Virtual School or local Designated Teachers cluster groups.
- To keep informed of any updated guidance from DfE or other research or policy.

The Name of the Designated Governor for LAC: Mr Paul Randall

The role of the Governor for LAC

To report to the Governing Body on an annual basis on:

- The number of looked after children in the school.
- A comparison of achievement as a discrete group, compared with those of other children, except when this may make the LAC identifiable.
- The attendance of LAC as a discrete group, compared to other children.
- The level of fixed term/permanent exclusions.

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

- The National Curriculum
- Public examinations
- Additional interventions to support educational progress
- Additional education support
- Extra-curricular activities

School Responsibility

It is important that all teaching staff who are in contact with the child are aware that s/he is being looked after by the LA. The responsibility for the transfer of this information is by the Head teacher.

Admission Arrangements

On admission, records will be requested from the child'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.

Involving the Child

It is important that a child is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. How this is shared with them 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 young person completes 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 child'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 child for situations when they may be asked about home.

Communication with Other Agencies

Schools should ensure that a copy of all reports should be forwarded to the child's Social Worker in addition to the foster carer and if appropriate parent/s. Schools, education and social work colleagues should endeavour to co-ordinate their review meetings.

It is important 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.

Assessment, Monitoring and Review Procedures

Each child in care will have a Care Plan that will include a 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)
- Developmental needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge or subject areas and experiences)
- Long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations).

The PEP will be updated and reviewed 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.

Date: November 2024

Review Date: November 2025

Governor Lead: Mr Paul Randal

Designated Teacher for LAC: Mrs Eve Heard