



Holmer Green Senior School

Children Looked After and Previously Looked After Children Policy

April 2024

Definition

For the purposes of this policy a child 'looked after by a local authority' is one who is looked after within the meaning of section 22 of the Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

A 'previously looked after child' is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales.

A child is in 'state care' outside of England and Wales if s/he is in care of or accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.

Holmer Green Senior School recognises that 'Children looked after' and 'Previously Children looked after' may have very specific needs and may be coping with trauma, abuse or rejection, and are likely to experience personal distress and uncertainty.

Principles

Holmer Green Senior School is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes.

The school recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of Children looked after and Previously Looked After, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in DfEE Circular 0269/2000 and DfEE/DOH Guidance 2000 and the Children Act (1989). The Children Act places a duty to safeguard children looked after, to promote their educational achievements and to ensure that they are able to "achieve to and reach their full potential".

Expectations

The Guidance recognises the collective responsibility of local authorities and schools to achieve good parenting and sets out six principles:

- Prioritising education;
- Having high expectations;
- Inclusion – changing and challenging attitudes;
- Achieving continuity and stability;
- Early intervention – priority action; and
- Listening to children.

The Guidance introduced two key measures:

- To ensure designated Teachers are nominated in every school
- To ensure Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are in place for all Looked After Children.

The school is committed to ensuring that Designated Teachers and staff are enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER/LAC MENTOR

The Designated Safeguarding lead, or a nominated senior leader, will take on the responsibility of PEP review and support for LAC/PLAC students. There will be one Designated Teacher to oversee the budget for LAC/PLAC students.

Together the pastoral and safeguarding teams will:

- Be an advocate for Children looked after and Previously Children looked after;
- Ensure a smooth and welcoming induction for the child and carer/s (and parent/s where possible). Note any specific requirements, including care status;
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed (within 20 days of entering care or joining a new school). This should be prepared with the child and the carer/s (and parent/s if possible), in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies. Where appropriate, the PEP should take account of any; Individual Educational Plan (IEP), Pastoral Support Plan (PSP), Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP), Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP), career plan and/or any other relevant plans.
- Ensure that each Looked After and Previously Looked After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to;
- Ensure entry to examinations for all Looked After and Previously Looked After Children;
- Co-ordinate support for the child in the school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary;
- Ensure staff and governors receive relevant information and training;
- Ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis;
- Provide written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible;
- Encourage Looked After and Previously Children looked after to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning;
- Ensure that attendance is monitored
- Seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded.

PEP Review

- These are an important part of addressing any barriers to learning that a LAC/PLAC student may be facing.
- Pastoral staff will attend the PEP review.
- A PEP review should result in application for further support where necessary and must be child centered.

Application for Funding for LAC/PLAC students

- Money for /PLAC students is ring-fenced, however money can be used creatively to offer wider educational opportunities for students and also benefit students who are not LAC.
- All release of funds will relate to a benefit in the learning outcomes of LAC/PLAC students
- Each request for funding must be made using the LAC/PLAC funding application form
- A running total against each child will be recorded by the finance department, this is reviewed at least bi-annually to ensure funding is being equally distributed.

Suggested areas for funding

- Up-to-date ICT equipment and software
- Tuition
- Educational visits
- Equipment such as revision guides
- Extra-curricular activities
- External pastoral support

Roles And Responsibilities of All Staff

- As with all children, have high aspirations and celebrate the educational and personal achievement of Looked After and Previously Children looked after;
- Ensure entry to examinations for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children;
- Be familiar with the Guidance on Looked After and Previously Children looked after and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings;
- Liaise with the pastoral team and Designated Teacher/(P)LAC mentor where a Looked After or Previously Looked After Child is experiencing difficulty;

Role And Responsibility of The Governing Body

The governing body of this school will:

- Ensure that admission criteria (Aided and Foundation) prioritise LAC/PLAC, according to the Code of Practice on Admissions
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Looked After and Previously Children looked after;
- Ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Children looked after; nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body
- For child protection and confidentiality reasons, ensure that information will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity, and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.
- Review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years.
- Ensure that the school's other policies and procedures give looked after children equal access in respect of:
 - Admission to school
 - The National Curriculum and public examinations
 - Additional educational support where this is needed
 - Extracurricular activities
 - Work experience and careers guidance

Training

The Headteacher, Designated Teacher and Professional Development Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in the guidance from the DfES and DOH (as above).

Approved by Governors: April 2024

Review date: April 2026