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**National and local guidance in relation to the Covid 19 pandemic may over rule aspects of this policy.**

## **Looked After Children (LAC) Policy**

**Designated Teacher – Mrs G Tillotson**

**Designated Governor – Mrs S Harvey**

**STATUS: Approved**

**REVIEW DATE: Autumn 2023**

*“The Academy believes that inclusive practice is central to developing quality teaching and learning. As such we endeavour to provide a supportive framework that responds to pupils’ needs and overcomes potential barriers for individuals and groups of pupils and to ensure that pupils of all abilities and needs are fully included in the life of the school. The ethos of this statement underpins all Oldbury Academy’s policies.”*

### **Looked After Children (LAC) Policy**

Oldbury Academy believes that as Corporate Parents we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of Looked After Children.

The term 'Looked After Children' (LAC) includes children who have previously been looked after according to the Admissions Code definition: other children in public care (Looked After Children) or who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a **residence order** or **special guardianship order**.

The Local Governing Body recognises that, nationally, there is educational underachievement of Looked After Children, when compared with their peers, and is committed to ensuring that LAC children receive the intervention needed to achieve their potential.

#### **Aim:**

To provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children.

To support our looked after children and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential and enjoy learning

To 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?**'

#### **In pursuit of this policy, we will:**

- Nominate a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them – **Mrs G Tillotson**
- 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 – **Mrs Sally Harvey**
- Support the Designated teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend training on Looked After Children.

#### **The Designated Teacher:**

The Designated Teacher (Looked After Pupils etc.) (England) Regulations 2009 (the Regulations) require that: The designated teacher has a leadership role in promoting the educational achievement of every looked after child on the school's roll. The role should make a positive difference by promoting a whole school culture where the personalised learning needs of every looked after child matters and their personal, emotional and academic needs are prioritised. In promoting the educational achievement of looked after pupils the designated teacher should:

- Maintain an up to date record of all Looked After Children who are on the school roll. This will include:
  - Status i.e. care order or accommodated.
  - Type of Placement i.e. Foster, respite, residential.
  - Name of Social Worker, area office, telephone number.
  - Daily contact and numbers e.g. name of parent or carer or key worker in children's home.
  - SEN Code of Practice – School Action/School Action Plus where appropriate
  - Child Protection information when appropriate.
  - Baseline information and all test results.
  - Attendance figures
  - Exclusions

- Ensure that there is a Personal Education Plan for each child/young person to include appropriate targets and above information. This must be compatible with the child's/young person's Care Plan and where applicable include any other school plan, e.g. Statement of Special Education Need, and associated plans, Transition Plan, Pastoral Support Programme.
- Ensure that Pupil Premium Plus funding is used in a way which will enhance achievement and aspirations.
- Ensure that a school representative attends any meeting on each child/young person and/or always prepares a written report which promotes the continuity and stability of their education.
- Liaise with the appropriate Local Authority for the Looked After Child on a regular basis with regard to the performance, attendance and attainment of the Looked After Child in question.
- Ensure that if/when the child transfers school all relevant information is forwarded to the receiving school as a matter of priority.
- Ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when Looked After Children are underachieving and have early interventions to improve this in line with existing school policy.
- Ensure that systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about Looked After Children where and when appropriate.
- Ensure that Looked After Children, along with all children, are listened to and have equal opportunity to pastoral support in school.
- Ensure that they keep the school up to date with current legislation and its implication for the school in respect of Looked After Children.
- Report to the Local Governing Body annually on the performance of the looked after children who are on the roll of the school.

### **Good practice for all staff:**

The designated teacher should have lead responsibility for helping school staff to understand the things which can affect how Looked after children learn and achieve. Everyone involved in helping Looked after children achieve should:

- have high expectations of Looked After Children's involvement in learning and educational progress;
- be aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation from birth families, the reasons for that separation and that some children may find it difficult to build relationships of trust with adults because of their experiences;
- understand the reasons which may be behind a looked after child's behaviour, and why they may need more support than other children but the teacher should not allow this to be an excuse for lowering expectations of what a child is capable of achieving;
- understand how important it is to see Looked After Children as individuals rather than as a homogeneous group and to not publicly treat them differently from their peers;
- appreciate the importance of showing sensitivity about who else knows about a child's looked after status;

- appreciate the central importance of the child's PEP in helping to create a shared understanding between teachers, carers, social workers and most importantly, depending on age and understanding, the child him or herself, of what everyone needs to do to help them to achieve their potential;
- have the level of understanding they need of the role of social workers, virtual school heads (or equivalent) in local authorities and how education – and the function of the PEP – fits into the wider care
- Support the local authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of looked after children

**The Local Governing Body:**

- ensure all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for LAC
- ensure there is a Designated Teacher for LAC.
- liaise with the Headteacher, Designated Teacher and all other staff to ensure the needs of LAC are met
- nominate a Governor with responsibility for LAC who links with the Designated Teacher
- receive regular reports from the Designated Teacher and at least one annual report
- ensure that the school's policies and procedures give LAC equal access in respect of: admission to school; National Curriculum and examinations, both academic and vocational; out of school learning and extra-curricular activities; work experience and careers guidance.
- annually review the effective implementation of the school policy for LAC
- ensure that the Designated Teacher is invited to attend any disciplinary/attendance meetings of LAC
- Support the local authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of looked after children