

PIONEER HOUSE HIGH SCHOOL



LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC)

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC) POLICY

KEY SCHOOL STAFF & ROLES		
Name	Role	Location and/or Contact Phone Number
Caroline Pauls	Designated Teacher	c.pauls@pioneerhouse.net 0161 241 8100
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NAMED GOVERNOR * for Safeguarding & Prevent including LAC	Contact Phone Number/Email
Caroline Ross	c.ross@wiseowltrust.com

Review Date	Changes made	By whom
23.11.20	New school policy to replace previous Trust policy	Headteacher/SLT
September 2021	Review	Headteacher /SLT

Ratification by Governing Body

Academic year	Date of ratification	Chair of Governors	Safeguarding governor
2020-21		Lili Marfani	Caroline Ross

Purpose

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of looked after children within Pioneer House.

Rationale

Looked after children (LAC) are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. The majority of looked after children have suffered abuse or neglect and it is nationally recognised that considerable educational underachievement exists when compared to their peers.

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is 'looked after' by a local authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority.

They fall into four main groups:

- children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
- children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21).

The term 'In Care' refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the Court under Section 31 of the Children Act 1989 - they may live with Foster Carers, in a Children's Home, in a Residential School, with relatives or with parents under supervision.

Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are 'accommodated' by the local authority under Section 20 of the Children Act – they may live in foster care, in a children's home or in a residential school.

All these groups are said to be 'Looked After Children' (LAC). They may be looked after by the Local Authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in Manchester.

Introduction

Pioneer House aims to promote the educational attainment, achievement and welfare of looked after children.

The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children is **Caroline Pauls**.

The governing body is committed to providing a quality education for all its students based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes. This policy includes requirements set out in "Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational

achievement of looked after children under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004” (Nov 2005) and associated guidance on the education of looked after children.

The aims of the Trust are to:

- Ensure that LAC pupils take as full a part as possible in all school activities
- Ensure that carers and social workers of LAC pupils are kept fully informed of the child’s progress and attainment
- Ensure that LAC pupils are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision.

Looked After Children may (or may not) have some or all the following issues:

- low self esteem
- poor education standards due to time out of school
- delayed social/emotional/ cognitive development
- be bullied or bully others.
- be prone to mental health issues
- be isolated with few friends
- have behaviour issues.
- poor attachments to others.
- have a need to be very private.

This makes them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life-chances. The Governing Body is committed to ensuring that these children are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following are in place, and are working effectively:

- a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children
- Personal Education Plans for all Looked After Children.
- all staff have a clear understanding of confidentiality and issues that affect looked after children.
- effective strategies that supports the education of this vulnerable group.

Inclusion

This policy recognises that all students are entitled to a balanced, broadly based curriculum. Our LAC Policy reinforces the need for teaching and learning that is fully inclusive. The Governing Body will ensure the school makes appropriate provision for all looked after students.

Allocation of Resources

The Governing Body will ensure that the school allocates resources to support appropriate provision for LAC, meeting the objectives set out in this policy. We will work in partnership with Manchester Virtual School for looked after children and other Virtual Schools for students who are from other Local Authorities, to ensure that looked after children receive the full range of support to which they are entitled to enable them to make progress and achieve.

Monitoring the progress of LAC

- The social worker for the LAC should initiate an online Personal Education Plan –

- EPEP – within 10 days of joining the school, or of entering care, and ensure that wherever possible the young person is actively involved. It is vital that the school assesses each
- LAC's attainment on entry to ensure continuity of learning. The school will monitor and track the achievement and attainment of all pupils at regular intervals. LAC will require EPEP to be reviewed each term, as initiated by the reviewing office or social worker, and the young person's views should be noted on the EPEP.

Record Keeping

- The Designated Teacher will know who all the LAC in school are and
- Manchester or surrounding authorities and will have access to their relevant contact details including parents, carers and social workers.

Staff Development

- We encourage staff to attend courses that help them to acquire the skills needed to support LAC. Part of the Designated Teacher's role is to develop awareness of issues associated with LAC.

Partnership with parents/carers and care workers

- We firmly believe in developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable LAC to achieve their potential.

Links with external agencies/organisations

We also recognise the important contribution that external support services make in supporting LAC. Colleagues from the following support services maybe involved with individual LAC:

- LAC teams
- Educational psychologists and others from Local Authority SEN services
- Medical officers
- School nurses
- CAMHS
- Education Welfare Officers
- Social care worker / Community care worker / Residential childcare worker
- Youth Offending Service

Roles and Responsibilities

The Designated Teacher will:

- Be an advocate for LAC within school
- Give regard to the impact of relevant decisions for LAC on both the LAC and the rest of the school community
- Know who are all the LAC in school, including those in the care of other authorities, and ensure the availability of all relevant details from school record-keeping systems are required
- Attend relevant training about LAC
- Act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to LAC

- Ensure that LAC receive a positive welcome on entering school
- Keep EPEPs and other records up to date and review EPEPs each term
- Convene an urgent multi-agency meeting if a LAC is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion
- Ensure confidentiality on individual children, sharing confidential and personal information on a need to know basis
- Act as the key adviser for staff and governors on issues relevant to LAC
- Ensure that care and school liaison is effective including invitations to meetings and other school events
- Actively encourage and promote out of hours learning and extra-curricular activities for LAC
- Ensure a speedy transfer of information, records and coursework, where appropriate

All school staff will:

- Follow school procedures
- Keep the Designated Teacher informed about a LAC's progress
- Have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of LAC
- Positively promote the raising of a LAC's self esteem
- Ensure any LAC is supported sensitively, and that confidentiality is maintained
- Be familiar with the school's policy and guidance on LAC and respond appropriately to requests for information to support EPEPs and review meetings
- Liaise with the Designated Teachers where a LAC is experiencing difficulties
- Keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to as appropriate

Good practice suggests that the Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritise LAC according to the DfES Admissions Code of Practice
- 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
- 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 the exclusion meetings of LAC

LAC Policy Review and Evaluation

The Designated Teacher for LAC will undertake a thorough review and evaluation of the impact of the looked after children policy and practice each year and report to the Governing Body.

Sources of Additional Advice and Information:

Jane Johnson, Headteacher of the Virtual School for Looked After Children

Email jane.johnson2@manchester.gov.uk, Tel: 07983991337

Promoting the education of looked after children. (DfE Statutory guidance for local authorities July 2014)

Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021.

Policy Information and Review

Policy review dates (frequency of review: Annual)

Date	Changes made	By whom
September 2019	Policy Reviewed	Headteacher/SLT
September 2020	Policy Reviewed	Headteacher/SLT
September 2021	Policy Reviewed	Headteacher/SLT