

Charlestown Community Primary School



Looked After Children (L.A.C) Policy

Reviewed : June 2016

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Charlestown Community Primary School SCHOOL POLICY FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC)

Charlestown Community Primary School aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in public care.

- **Designated Teacher for LAC Gemma Stewart (SENCo / Inclusion Manager)**
- **Governor with responsibility for LAC Bev Newbiggin (Safeguarding Governor)**
- The governing body and staff are committed to providing quality education for all of its pupils based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes and to ensuring that children achieve the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters agenda.
 - **Stay safe • Be healthy • Enjoy and achieve • Make a positive contribution • Achieve economic well being.**

The aims of the school 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.

Who are Looked After Children?

- LAC children may live with foster carers, in a Children's home, in a residential school, with relatives or with parents under supervision.
- They may be accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents, be the subjects of a care order or an interim care order, the subject of an emergency order for their protection or compulsorily accommodated within the criminal justice system.

Monitoring the progress of LAC

- The social worker for the LAC should initiate a Personal Education Plan – PEP - within 20 days of joining the school, or of entering care, and ensure that 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 their PEP to be reviewed, according to their needs, as initiated by the reviewing office or social worker, and the young person's views should be sought by the Designated Teacher and noted on the PEP.

Record Keeping

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

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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

- At Charlestown 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 may be 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 child care worker
 - Youth Offending Service

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Looked After Children who remain in care are there because they have suffered abuse or neglect. They are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational underachievement when compared to their peers. For example, they may experience:
 - high levels of disruption and change in school placements
 - Poor concentration and focus
 - Difficulty initiating and maintaining friendships
 - Lack of involvement in extra curricular activities
 - Inconsistent or no attention paid to homework.

This may result in:

- Poor progress and attainment in comparison with the general population
- Isolation within their peer group.

We hope to challenge this by

- giving priority to education
- listening to children
- providing stability and continuity
- promoting inclusion
- raising standards
- intervening early
- promoting a range of learning experiences
- celebrating success.

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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 as 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 PEPs and other records up to date and review PEPs at transfer and at six monthly intervals
- 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,
- ensure that any Special Educational Needs are addressed

Good practice suggests that 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 PEPs and review meetings.
- liaise with the Designated Teachers where a LAC is experiencing difficulties
- give only official exclusions and only use exclusions in line with the school's exclusion policy, and relevant national guidance, being mindful to the difficulties this may create in the care placement
- 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 prioritises 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

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- liaise with the head teacher, 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.