



'Expect Excellence'



Shoeburyness High School

a member of

Southend East Community Academy Trust

Looked After Children Policy

**'Building Strong Partnerships, Building Strong Community,
Building Strong Schools'**

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| Status: | Recommended |
| Updated: | July 2025 |
| Next Review date: | July 2027 |
| Reviewed and monitored by: | Designated Teacher – Looked After Children |
| Lead Member of Staff: | S Wilkinson |
| Signed by Chair of the Academy Committee: | <i>K Howard</i> |



1. RATIONALE & PURPOSE

Our aim is to promote the educational achievement and welfare of children and young people in public care. We aim to narrow the 'gap' between the achievements of Looked After Children (LAC,) Previously Looked After Children, (PLAC) and of those not in public care.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

- This policy is implemented and revised by the Looked After Children Designated Teacher
- This policy supports the work of the Home School Liaison Officer and Heads of Years in the leadership and management of Personal Education Plans (PEPs)
- This policy advises staff, parents, visitors and pupils about the support offered to LAC & PLAC at Shoeburyness High School

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

On admission the young person's records are requested as a matter of urgency and a Personal Education Plan meeting should be arranged to take place within twenty days. This meeting should be attended by the carer/ parent and social worker and the young person themselves as far as is appropriate. The social worker will complete the PEP paperwork and will forward to relevant parties following the meeting.

The school will plan an induction programme for looked after children. In some cases looked after children experience a number of transitions between placements but also between schools which can make it challenging to achieve their full potential. We need to assist in managing this process by ensuring the accurate and speedy transfer of records and plans. This will be managed by the relevant Heads of Year in liaison with the Local Authority. Monitoring and reviewing from the Home School Liaison Officer and Heads of Year will be frequent and ongoing.

The initial PEP does not need the Social Worker's involvement, although it is good practise for them to attend. If they cannot attend, the Heads of Year should lead the initial PEP within the statutory 20 day timeframe.

A Previously Looked After child, those under Special Guardianship order, Kinship order or a Child Arrangement Order will not have a PEP but is entitled to the same scrutiny and support that a Looked After child is.

INVOLVING THE YOUNG PERSON

It is important that the young person should be aware that information is being shared about their personal circumstances. How this is shared with them depends on their age and understanding, but they should be reassured that everyone is working together to support their education.

It is important to establish the child's view of changes in their circumstances and that they are prepared for situations where they may be asked about home.

The young person is consulted on all aspects of their PEP, according to their age and understanding and should receive their own copy of all or parts of it according to their age. This will be done by the social worker.

PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER AGENCIES

We ensure that a copy of all school reports is sent to the young person's social worker in addition to the foster carer. It is also necessary for the social worker to give consent for school visits if there are full or interim care orders and they share joint parental responsibility with the parent.

The LA's Education Advisor for Looked After Children is invited to Personal Education Plan meetings where appropriate and should be sent a copy of all PEPs.

The Virtual School for Looked After Children and the LA Attendance Team (Education Welfare Officer) are informed of any attendance issues at the earliest opportunity and as a matter of concern if there are more than ten days absence. They are also advised of any significant behavioural difficulties and any other change in the young person's circumstances e.g. a move of carer or school.

ASSESSMENT, MONITORING AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

Each looked after child has a Care Plan which includes a Personal Education Plan. The initial PEP must be put in place within twenty days of the young person coming into care and is then reviewed after three months and subsequently every six months. It should be available at each Children's Case Review as it forms part of that review. **It is the responsibility of the social worker, in partnership with the school, carer & Virtual School, to ensure every young person in public care has an up to date PEP.**

The PEP includes important information on:

- Personal information
- Contact details
- Attendance
- Achievement
- Behaviour
- Involvement in extra curricular activities
- Special needs, if applicable
- Long term plans and aspirations
- Short term targets and action for improvements

Southend City Council has produced a PEP proforma, which is personalised for each young person. This should underpin the information inputted onto the welfare call e-PEP used by Essex and Southend on Sea LA and other authorities various PEP proformas.

PEP meetings will always be attended by the looked after student's Head of Year and, where appropriate, the designated teacher may also attend.

4. CONSULTATION GROUP

- Virtual Headteacher (Southend on Sea Local Authority)
- LA LAC Advisory teacher (Southend on Sea Local Authority)

5. LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES & DOCUMENTS

- Teaching and Learning

- Equal Opportunities
- Anti Bullying
- Child Protection

6. MONITORING & EVALUATION ARRANGEMENTS

- This policy is reviewed bi-annually

7. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

It is important that all teaching staff who work with the child or young person are aware that they are looked after by the local authority. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher or LAC Designated Teacher to ensure that this information is disseminated. The following people have key roles to play and specific responsibilities in promoting the well-being and educational attainment of children in public care:

- Assistant Headteacher – (Sarah Wilkinson) LAC Designated Teacher who oversees all of the responsibilities
- The Home School Liaison Officer for each child:
 - Monitors welfare and safeguarding
 - Liaises with social care
- Heads of Year for each child:
 - Co-ordinate PEPs
 - Complete educational attainment section of PEPs
 - Set SMART targets in liaison with subject teachers
 - Attend PEP meetings where appropriate
 - Implement intervention strategies where appropriate and review the impact of these interventions
- The Special Educational Needs Coordinator
- All staff working in the school
- The Academy Committee
- A named governor with responsibility for looked after children
- LA representative for looked after children in public care
- The virtual Headteacher with responsibility for supporting LAC

Also see Appendix 1 below for more information.

The role of the LAC designated teacher, Heads of Year and Home School Liaison Officers:**A. Within-school systems**

- To ensure that all staff are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by children and young people in public care and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them.
- To keep up to date with local multi-agency procedures for this group of children and inform members of staff of the general educational needs of children and young people in public care.
- To promote the involvement of children in public care in school homework clubs, extra curricular activities etc.
- To act as an advocate for children and young people in public care.
- To hold a supervisory brief for all children and young people in public care, to ensure all relevant information is available to school staff and carers, and that this information is kept up to date.
- To monitor the educational progress of all children and young people in public care, and ensure that this information is used to inform the planning of provision for this group.
- To ensure the attendance of children in public care is monitored and that ten days absence is reported to the Virtual School for Looked After Children and the LA Attendance Team (Education Welfare Officer).
- To intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy.
- To reach an understanding with individual children of the circumstances that they would be happy to share with staff and other pupils and manage the extent of information sharing about the young person's circumstances. For example, it may be appropriate for the class learning support assistant to have knowledge of the young person's circumstances if this impacts directly upon their work with the young person.
- To enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their Care Plan.
- To ensure, in partnership with the young person's social worker and carer, that each pupil has a Personal Education Plan.
- To ensure the smooth induction of a new child or young person in public care into the school.
- To liaise with other members of staff responsible for related policies, for example monitoring children on the Child Protection register.

B. Liaison with other agencies

- To help co-ordinate Education and Social Care, review meetings so that the Personal Education Plan can inform the Care Plan.
- To attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or to contribute in other ways to Social Care planning meetings.
- To be the named contact for colleagues in Education and Social Care.
- To ensure the swift transfer of information between agencies and individuals, and report on the progress of looked after children in the school.
- To ensure that a home-school agreement is drawn up with the primary carer and signed by the social worker of each child in public care.
- To ensure that children in public care aged 13+ secure appropriate access to the careers/Connexions service.

Responsibilities of all staff in the school:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of LAC & PLAC
- Ensure that all LAC & PLAC are supported sensitively.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's request for information about LAC & PLAC.
- Work to enable LAC & PLAC to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all LAC & PLAC; maintain confidentiality; and ensure that no child is stigmatised in any way.
- Support the implementation of Personal Education Plans.

The role of the Academy Committee:

- Ensure that the school has a designated teacher and that that teacher is enabled to carry out their responsibilities.
- Support the Head, the Designated Teacher and other staff to ensure the needs of LAC & PLAC are recognised and met.
- Ensure all governors are aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of LAC & PLAC.
- Nominate a governor to take a special interest in this area of the school's work.
- Monitor the progress, achievement and outcomes of looked after children

The role of the named governor:

The named governor will report to the Academy Committee on an annual basis:

- The number of young people in the school who are LAC & PLAC
- Compare assessment information of LAC & PLAC with those of other pupils.
- The attendance of LAC & PLAC as a discrete group, compared with other pupils.
- The level of fixed term/permanent exclusions for LAC & PLAC
- LAC & PLAC destinations compared to all other pupils.

The named governor should be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that young people in public care have equal access to:

- The teaching and learning opportunities in the school
- Public examinations
- Careers guidance
- Additional educational support
- Extra curricular activities
- Work experience