

Banks Road Primary School



Looked-After Children Policy

Provenance/ Author	Person(s) Responsible	Version	Reviewers	Effective Date	Recommended Review Date	Distribution
James Savage	Headteacher/ DSL	V1	Governors	May 2024	May 2027	All Staff

Introduction

The Governing Board of Banks Road Primary School is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. This governing body recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of children in residential and foster care, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in "Guidance on the Education of Looked After Children" (May 2000) and Section 52 of the Children Act 2004.

Definitions

Looked After Children (LAC) are defined as:

- Children or young people who are the subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989.
- Children who are placed in foster care, children's residential homes, with relatives or friends, in semi-independent or supported independent accommodation.
- Children subject to a Care or Interim Care Order whilst placed with a parent, where the LA has parental responsibility.
- Children who are not subject to an order, but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents or respite care.

Previously - Looked After Children (PLAC) are defined as:

- Children who are no longer looked after by an LA in England and Wales because they have either been adopted or are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order.
- Children who were adopted outside England and Wales from 'state care' (care that is provided by a public authority, religious organisation, or other organisation whose main purpose is to benefit society).

Looked After Children may (or may not) have some or all the following needs to be met by school:

- 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 of Banks Road Primary School, 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.

The Role and Responsibility of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher should:

- be an advocate for Looked After Children;
- when new to the school, ensure a smooth and welcome induction for the child and carer, and note any specific requirements, including care status;
- ensure that a Personal Education Plan(PEP) is completed, as soon as possible. This should be prepared with the child and the carer, in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies, and be linked to the Care Plan meetings, within 28 days, 3 months and 6 months and, at least, every 6 months; A flow chart showing PEP completion is found at the end of this policy
- keep PEPs and other records up to date, particularly in time to inform review meetings;
- ensure that each child in public care (if they wish) has an identified member of staff that they can talk to (this should be based on the child's request, and may not necessarily be the Designated Teacher);
- co-ordinate support for the child in the school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary;
- ensure staff receive relevant information and training and act as an advisor to staff and governors;
- 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;
- ensure that the child and carer(s) receive early notification of meetings, parents evenings and other events and that communication remains regular and positive.
- encourage Looked After Children to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning, where feasible;
- ensure speedy transfer of information between individuals and other relevant agencies and to a new school if and when the child transfers;
- seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded.
- ensure that any returns on looked after children are completed – as requested by the LA

The Role and Responsibility of the Governing Board

The Governing Board of this school will:

- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Looked After Children;

- be aware of whether the school has Looked After Children and how many (no names);
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Looked After Children;
- liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out her/his responsibilities in relation to Looked After Children;
- support the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of Looked After Children are met;
- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body (These reports should not include any names of individual children for child protection and confidentiality reasons)
- review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually
- review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years.

Confidentiality

Information on looked after children will be shared with school staff on a “need to know basis”. The Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with which school staff at the PEP meeting. Once this has been agreed with the social worker, carer, young person, and other parties, complete confidentiality is to be maintained.

Training

The Head Teacher or the Designated Teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

Personal Education Plan (PEP) Completion

- Social worker informs school of a child becoming looked after (or a looked after children entering the school)
- Date is set for the completion of a Personal Education Plan (PEP).
- A copy of the form is sent to the school to enable completion of educational data PEP meeting takes place within 20 days, involving the social worker designated teacher (or other appropriate staff), carer and young person if appropriate.
- A date is set for the next pep meeting Personal Education Plan
- The PEP is taken to the child’s statutory review and discussed within the wider context of the child’s life.
- PEP sent by social worker to the LAC team with the virtual school