



LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN PROTOCOL

Introduction

Who are our Looked After Children?

Children and young people become 'Looked After Children' (LAC) either if they have been taken into Care by the Local Authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most LAC will be living in foster homes but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or be placed back at home with their natural parent(s).

The Governing Body of Newent Community School and Sixth Form Centre is committed to providing quality education for all its students, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. This Governing Body recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of Looked After Children, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in DfEE Circular 0269/2000 and DfEE/DOH Guidance 2000.

The Children Act (2004) places a duty to safeguard Looked After Children, to promote their educational achievements and to ensure that they are "able to achieve and to reach their full potential". The Guidance recognises the collective responsibility of local authorities and schools to achieve good parenting and sets out six principles:

- prioritising education;
- having high expectations;
- inclusion – changing and challenging attitudes;
- achieving continuity and stability;
- early intervention – priority action; and
- listening to students in our care

The Guidance introduced two key measures:

- To ensure Designated Teachers are nominated in every school
- To ensure Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are in place for all Looked After Children and reviewed twice yearly.

This Governing Body is committed to ensuring that Designated Teachers and staff are enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

Roles and Responsibilities of The Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher:

- is an advocate for Looked After Children
- ensures a smooth and welcoming induction for the student and carer(s) [and parent(s) where possible]. Note any specific requirements, including care status
- ensures that a Personal Education Plan(PEP) is completed (within 20 days of entering care or joining a new school). This is prepared with the student and the carer(s) (and parent(s) if possible), in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies. Where appropriate, the PEP takes account of any Individual Education Plan (IEP), Pastoral Support Plan



(PSP), Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP) career plan or any other relevant plans. The PEP is informative and is regularly reviewed and rewritten twice per year

- ensures that each Looked After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to
- ensures entry to examinations for all Looked After Children
- co-ordinates support for the student in the school and liaises with other professionals and carers as necessary
- ensures staff and, where appropriate governors, receive relevant information and training
- ensures confidentiality for LAC and only shares personal information on a need to know basis
- provides written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensures attendance as far as possible
- encourages Looked After Children to participate in extra-curricular activities, trips and visits and out of hours learning
- seeks urgent meetings with relevant parties where the student is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded

Roles and Responsibilities of All Staff

The staff at this school will:

- as with all students, have high aspirations and celebrate the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children
- ensure entry to examinations for Looked After Children
- be familiar with the Guidance on LAC and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings;
- liaise with Designated Teacher where a Looked After Child is experiencing difficulty

Roles and Responsibility of The Governing Body

The Governing Body of this school will:

- ensure that admission criteria prioritise LAC, according to the Code of Practice on Admissions
- ensure all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for LAC
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Looked After Children;
- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body
- for child protection and confidentiality reasons, ensure all information will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity, and respect the confidentiality of the students concerned
- review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every 3 years
- ensure that the school's other policies and procedures give Looked After Children equal access in respect of:
 - Admission to school
 - The National Curriculum and public examinations
 - Additional educational support where this is needed. Extra curricular activities
 - Work experience and careers guidance

Designated Teachers for LAC

- Kirsten Harrison – Principal with overall responsibility for Child Protection and student welfare, Designated Teacher (transition 2010 - 2011)



- K Thompson – Teacher with responsibility for Child Protection (Designated Teacher for LAC)

Training

The Principal, Designated Teacher and Professional Development Co-ordinator will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in the guidance from the DCSF and DoH (as above).

Monitoring and Review

The Senior Leadership Team shall review this protocol from time to time to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice.

If Staff have any questions about this protocol or suggestions for additions that they would like to be considered on review, they may do so by emailing the Principal or Business Manager.

The School will continue to review the effectiveness of this Protocol to ensure it is achieving its stated objectives.

Date of Review

2013