

Looked After Children Policy



Hazel Oak School

September 2023

(last LA updated September 2021)

To be reviewed September 2024

Agreed by Governors onDate

Signed by.....Chair of Governors

Our vision:

Having fun, discovering our place in the world, building relationships and overcoming challenges. Learning about life beyond the classroom to shape a successful future.

Our mission:

Reaching for the stars.

Our values:

Creativity, respect, wellbeing, growth and community.

Headteacher: Mr A Simms

Deputy Headteacher: Mrs K Robinson

Assistant Headteacher: Mr J Summerfield

Designated Safeguarding Manager: Mrs C Garry

Inclusion Manager/Designated Teacher for LAC: Mrs A Blanchflower

Aims

- The aim of this policy is to promote and maintain the educational attainment of Looked After Children (LAC) and previously Looked After Children (PLAC) in line with the legislation and guidance [Statutory guidance for designated teachers for looked after and previously looked after children](#).
- Hazel Oak School will ensure that they have a Designated Member of Staff who will lead on and run Pupil Education Plans (PEPs) termly for each child who is looked after. Staff, parents and carers will be made aware of who this is.
- Hazel Oak School will ensure that a designated safeguarding lead or deputy will attend Looked After Children reviews.

Name of the Designated Teacher for LAC and PLAC

Mrs A Blanchflower

Name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mr A Simms

Name of the Designated School Governor for LAC and PLAC

Mrs A Mordey

Definitions

- A looked after child (LAC) (or a child in care) is one who:
 - is in care of the local authority;
 - provided with accommodation by a local authority for a continuous period of more than 24 hours.
- A previously looked after child (PLAC) is one who:
 - was in care at point of adoption; ○ is part of a special guardianship;
 - is part of a child arrangement order.

Hazel Oak's aims for Looked After Children:

- To provide a safe and secure environment for all looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- To provide a learning environment that supports looked-after and previously looked-after children to thrive and reach their potential.
- To ensure that their Pupil Premium Plus money is spent on them and used effectively to support them specifically.
- For all looked-after children to have three Personal Education Plans (PEPs) each year, one per term, with these being led by the Designated Teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- For all looked-after child reviews to be attended by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in their absence one of the Deputies.

LAC (Looked After Child) Review Process:

- The process begins when a child becomes a LAC.
- The first LAC review should take place within 28 days, then 3 months and after this every 6 months.
- LAC reviews are chaired by Independent Review Officers (IROs), who are independent of Education or Social Care.
- All LAC have a Care Plan. Any Child Protection Plans previously in place turn into a Care Plan once the child has been taken into care. Care Plans are overseen by the child's social worker.
- The IRO reviews the Care Plan and sets recommendations for all involvement and timescales to which these should be actioned.

PEP (Personal Education Plan) Review Process for LAC

- All looked-after children must have a care plan. The care plan must also include a health plan and a PEP.
- A PEP needs to be written and in place within 20 school days of admissions.

- It is the Designated Teacher's responsibility to ensure that PEPs exist for all children in school and to co-ordinate with all relevant partners.
- The PEP assists stability and continuity for the child by showing a history and story which informs the present.
- The PEP sets short term targets and long term plans.
- It reflects and records the child's aspirations and views.
- It plans for and monitors the use of the Pupil Premium Plus money.
- PEP meetings are held every term and are chaired by the Designated Teacher.
- Previous targets are reviewed and new ones are set.
- Decisions are made in these meetings on how to spend the Pupil Premium Plus money that term. □ Paperwork is provided by the Local Authority and it is the Designated Teacher's responsibility to complete the paperwork during the meeting and send it back to the local authority with the given timescale (5 days in Solihull).

Virtual School for Looked After Children

- All local authorities must have a Virtual School Head (VSH) who is in charge of promoting the educational achievement of LAC.
- The VSH's role is to know how looked-after children are doing and to help school staff and social workers to find out about the extra needs of these children and any additional support available to them.
- The Virtual School for Looked After Children ensures that schools, social workers, carers and professionals understand the statutory responsibilities they all have and are aware of best practice.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Roles and responsibilities for the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children:

- To be the central point of initial contact within school.
- To promote the educational achievement of every looked-after and previously looked-after child on the school's roll.
- To work with the Virtual School.
- To appreciate the central importance of the looked-after child's PEP in helping to create a shared understanding between teachers, carers, social workers and the child.
- To ensure that the PEP is effective in supporting everyone to help the looked-after child to make good educational progress.
- To have a direct and day-to-day role in promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, either directly or through appropriate delegation.
- To provide a culture in which looked-after and previously looked-after children can discuss their own targets, are encouraged to participate in school activities and have high aspirations of themselves.
- To work directly with looked-after and previously looked-after children and their carers, parents or guardians to promote good home-school links, to ensure they are aware of how the school teaches key skills such as reading and numeracy and to encourage high aspirations.
- To work closely with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to.

Roles and responsibilities of all staff

- To have high expectations of looked-after and previously looked-after children's learning and set targets to accelerate educational progress.
- To be aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation (attachment awareness) from birth families.
- To understand how important it is to see looked-after and previously looked-after children as individuals rather than as a homogeneous group.
- To show sensitivity about who else knows about their looked-after or previously looked-after status.

- To appreciate the central importance of the looked-after child's PEP in helping to create a shared understanding between teachers, carers, social workers and, most importantly, the child's own understanding of how they are being supported.

Roles and responsibilities of the governing body

- To delegate a Designated Teacher for looked-after children and previously looked-after children.
- To consider the implications of school policies in reflecting the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- To monitor the support, progress, attendance of looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- To hold school to account on how Hazel Oak School supports its looked-after and previously looked-after children and their level of progress.

Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)

- Looked-after children and previously looked-after children are eligible for PP+ funding. This is additional funding provided to help improve the attainment of looked-after and previously looked after children and close the attainment gap between this group and their peers.
- All pupil premium plus spending should take account of the specific needs of eligible pupils. The extra funding provided by the PP+ reflects the significant additional barriers faced by looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- For looked-after children, PP+ funding is managed by the Virtual School Head for the purpose of supporting their educational achievement. The PEP includes information on how this will be spent.
- For previous looked-after children, PP+ funding is managed by the child's school.

Special Educational Needs

- All children at Hazel Oak have an Educational Health Care Plan and as such will have an annual review. Carers, parents (where appropriate) and the virtual school will be invited to these meetings.

Confidentiality

- Information about looked-after and previously looked-after children will be shared on a 'need to know' basis with appropriate school staff.

Attendance

- Looked-after and previously looked-after children will be monitored for their attendance and any concerns will be discussed with social workers and the Virtual School.
- For looked-after children, their social worker will be informed if absence is persistent.
- Attendance data will be available for monitoring purposes if required.

Safeguarding

- All school staff will be vigilant for any safeguarding issues by reporting any concerns as per the school's safeguarding policy.

Exclusion

- Hazel Oak will make every effort to avoid excluding a looked-after or previously looked-after child. If no other option is available, then the virtual school will be informed.

This policy will be reviewed annually.