

	POLICY TITLE:	Children Looked After
Kingsmead Academy T/A Kingsmead School		
Committee/Person Responsible for Policy:		Assistant Headteacher/SENCo: Inclusion Well-Being & Diversity sub-committee
Date Approved by Governing Body:		May 2020
Date of Last Review:		Term 5 2019/20
Next Review Due:		Term 5 2020/21

Who are 'Children Looked After'?

When referring to 'Children Looked After', this policy is using the legal term 'Looked After' in relation to a provision made under the Children Act 1989 amended by the Children and Families Act 2014 in England and Wales, the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 whereby a local authority/Health and Social Care Trust has obligations to provide for, or share, the care of a child or young person under 16 years of age where parent(s) or guardian(s) for whatever reason are prevented from providing them with a suitable accommodation or care.

A child or young person is 'looked after' if he or she is provided with continuous accommodation for more than 24 hours, or if they are subject to certain provisions such as a Care Order or a Placement Order.

The Governing Body of Kingsmead School is fully committed to providing the very best support to all students to enable them to reach their full potential.

We are committed to enabling all students to equally access the best teaching, learning and student support networks to allow them to take every opportunity to achieve the very best academic and personal outcomes.

Core Values

Care: All members of the school community aspire to provide Children Looked After with the appropriate care in order that they thrive in school.

Respect: All members of the school community nurture respect for Children Looked After. This is central in ensuring they achieve their full potential.

Determination: All members of the school community will endeavor to enable Children Looked

After to foster the determination needed to achieve their best, enjoy school and benefit from a wide range of social and extra-curricular opportunities.

Aspiration: All students, including Children Looked After, have the right to be supported in realising their potential. The school is fully committed to the objectives outlined in this policy that will provide the additional support needed to ensure CLA have high academic and social aspirations.

This policy is designed to set out some of the guiding principles to enable Children Looked After (CLA) to achieve their very best at Kingsmead School. The policy also sets out the responsibilities of key bodies/personnel, including the Governing Body, the Designated Teacher, and the whole school staff. We fully embrace our responsibility to:

'Safeguard and promote the welfare of a child looked after. This includes a specific duty to promote the child's educational achievement, wherever they live or are educated.
(Section 22, The Children Act 1989, amended by The Children and Families Act 2014.)

Context

It is, unfortunately, widely recognised that Children Looked After typically achieve poorer outcomes at school nationally than their peers. This gap seems to be narrowing and improving over time, but there is significant evidence that the gap in attainment both at the end of Key Stage 2 and at the end of Key Stage 4 is marked. These significant gaps are exacerbated by recent evidence that suggests Children Looked After are up to eight times more likely to be permanently excluded from mainstream schools than their peers.
(*Outcomes for Children Looked After by Local Authorities in England – SFR 50/2013 – December 2013*)

All governors and staff at Kingsmead School are fully committed to significantly narrowing these gaps, and if possible eradicating them altogether.

Guiding Principles

In order to achieve the aims of narrowing or eradicating the gaps between the achievement of Children Looked After (CLA) and their peers, this policy outlines a set of guiding principles that will inform best practice. As such, the governing body and staff at Kingsmead School will fully support working with/ supporting Looked after Children by:

1. Doing the things we do for all young people – but more so for Children Looked After.
2. Balancing high levels of support with real challenge, and a relentless focus on high expectations.
3. Enabling Children Looked After to engage in and take responsibility for their learning.
4. Skillfully linking each Child Looked After to a key person they relate well to.
5. Making it a priority to know the young person (CLA) well and to build strong relationships.
6. Developing strong partnerships with carers, local authorities and specialist agencies.
7. Making things happen and seeing things through.
8. Swiftly intervening if any issues emerge, such as those linked with behavior or attendance.
9. Ensuring consistency as well as discrete flexibility.
10. Actively extending the horizons of each young person (CLA) including engagement in after school activities and learning outside of the classroom.
11. Closely monitoring the academic, social and personal progress of all Children Looked After.

12. Planning for future transitions.

All of these principles should be grounded in an ethos that provides a unified but **low profile** support in school for any Child Looked After, so that they are not made to feel different from other children.

These principles are broadly based on the twin documents:

- Looked after children: good practice in schools (Ofsted report 2008): <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/looked-after-children-good-practice-schools>
- 'Improving the attainment of Looked after Children in Secondary Schools' DCSF 2009. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-the-attainment-of-looked-after-children-in-secondary-schools-guidance-for-schools>

Responsibilities of Staff

It is the responsibility of all staff to understand the context affecting the progress of Children Looked After (CLA), as well as embracing the guiding principles that we hope will support them to achieve their very best.

All staff need to understand that CLA may present specific challenges at school, but will also need specific kinds of support, advice and guidance. The Roles and Responsibilities outlined below should support the successful provision for Children Looked After at Kingsmead School:

Governing Body

In order to provide outstanding support for Children Looked After, the Governing Body will:

- ❑ Ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritises children looked after according to the DfE Admissions Code of Practice
- ❑ Ensure all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for Children Looked After
- ❑ Ensure there is a Designated Teacher for Children Looked After
- ❑ Liaise with the Headteacher, Designated Teacher, and all other staff to ensure the needs of Children Looked After are met
- ❑ Nominate a Governor with responsibility for CLA who links with the Designated Teacher
- ❑ Receive regular reports from the Designated Teacher which should include
 - the number of Children Looked After on roll and the confirmation that they have a Personal Education Plan (PEP)
 - their attendance, compared to other pupils
 - their attainment compared to other pupils
 - the number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any)
 - the destinations of pupils who leave the school
- ❑ Ensure that the school's policies and procedures give Children Looked After 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 Children Looked After.

Designated Teacher (Beth Warwick) supported by Team Leader for CLA (Chloe Davis)

- ❑ Be an advocate for Children Looked After.
- ❑ Attend relevant training for Children Looked After.
- ❑ Act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and individuals in relation to Children Looked After seeking advice from Somerset's Virtual School Advisory Teachers when appropriate.
- ❑ Ensure that all Children Looked After receive a positive integration on entering the school
- ❑ Ensure that all Children Looked After have an appropriate Personal Education Plan and that it is completed within 14 days of joining the school or of entering care (see Somerset's Guidance on Personal Education Plans)
- ❑ Keep Personal Education Plans and other records up to date and reviewed appropriately
- ❑ Convene an urgent multi professional meeting if a Child Looked After is experiencing difficulties or at risk of exclusion.
- ❑ Ensure confidentiality on individual children, sharing confidential/personal information on a need to know basis.
- ❑ Act as the key advisor for staff and governors on issues relevant to Children Looked After.
- ❑ 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 Children Looked After.
- ❑ Ensure speedy transfer of information when a Child Looked After transfers into another educational placement.
- ❑ Contribute information to CLA reviews when required.
- ❑ Provide regular reports to the Governing Body regarding CLA in the school and relevant policy and practice development.

Whole School Staff

- ❑ Have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of Children Looked After
- ❑ Positively promote the raising of a Child Looked After's self esteem
- ❑ Ensure any Child Looked After is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained
- ❑ Be familiar with the guidance on Children Looked After and respond appropriately to requests for information to support Personal Education Plans and review meetings
- ❑ Respond positively to the request to be a Child Looked After's named person
- ❑ Liaise with the Designated Teacher where a Child Looked After is experiencing difficulties
- ❑ Give only official exclusions and only use exclusions as a last resort, in line with Somerset's Exclusion Advice
- ❑ Contribute to regular liaison with social care colleagues and other appropriate professionals
- ❑ Keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to other professionals as appropriate.

Appendix 1 - Useful resources and external organisations

- The Who Cares? Trust: <http://www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk/>
- The National Children's Bureau: <http://www.ncb.org.uk/>
- Attachment Aware Schools programme: a new partnership between Bath and North East Somerset Council and Bath Spa University: <http://attachmentawareschools.com/>
- Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire: <http://www.sdqinfo.com/>
- The impact of virtual schools on the educational progress of looked after children (Ofsted report 2012): <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/impact-of-virtual-schools-educational-progress-of-looked-after-children>
- Education Matters in Care: A report by the independent cross-party inquiry into the educational attainment of looked after children in England: http://www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk/data/files/Education_Matters_in_Care_September_2012.pdf
- Framework and evaluation schedule for the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers (single inspection framework) and reviews of Local Safeguarding Children Boards: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/framework-and-evaluation-schedule-for-inspection-of-services-for-children-need-of-help-and-protection>
- Looked after children: good practice in schools (Ofsted report 2008): <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/looked-after-children-good-practice-schools>
- The White Paper, *Care matters: time for change*, June 2007, can be downloaded from; www.dcsf.gov.uk/publications/timeforchange/
The report from the Best Practice in Schools Working Group, led by Professor Dame Pat Collarbone, can also be downloaded from this website.
- Research and statistics relating to looked after children can be found at; www.ttrb.ac.uk/ELibrarianQuestionDetails.aspx?QuestionId=262
- The Department for Children, Schools and Families 'Find Out More' website for articles and research can be found at; http://findoutmore.dfes.gov.uk/2006/10/lookedafter_chi.html and www.children.gov.uk/cgi-bin/rsgateway/textsearch.pl?charset=utf-8&col=rsgate&la=en&qt=september&st=91&type=next10
- All Office of the Children's Director for England reports of the views of looked after children can be found on the children's website; www.rights4me.org
- For publications and guidance see; www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4005321
- Review of international research; www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/0056.asp
- Looked After Children Professional Network; www.youngminds.org.uk/professionals/partnerships/looked-after-children-1
- The role of parents is explored in *Parents, carers and schools* (070018), Ofsted, 2007; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070018
- The role of governors is explored in *Supporting looked after learners: a practical guide for school governors* (DfES-1929-2005), DfES, 2005; <http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&Page>

[Mode=publications&ProductId=DFES-1929-2005&](#)

The views of looked after children are explored further in two reports published by the Commission for Social Care Inspection in March 2007: *About education*
www.rights4me.org/reportview.cfm?id=111 by children;
<http://www.rights4me.org/reportview.cfm?id=112>

Other Resources

Academy admission request form for looked after children:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academy-admission-request-form-for-looked-after-children>

Outcomes for looked after children by local authorities:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/outcomes-for-children>