



St Mark's C of E Academy Policy

Policy Title	Looked After Children (LAC)	Version No	1
Rationale	<p>St Mark's C of E Academy aims to help raise the educational standards and improving the life chances of looked after children. The school tackles the causes of social exclusion through careful planning, monitoring and evaluation. School can also provide a source of continuity and "normality" for children who may have been subject to emotional distress, abuse, and disruption. School can be the place where children maintain friendships and a place where they feel safe and can be themselves.</p>		
Policy Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring information is shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis • ensuring that all staff, through appropriate training, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantages faced by looked after children and understand the need for positive systems to support them, whilst maintaining appropriately high expectations for their educational achievements • acting as an advocate for looked after children in order to allow them equal access to educational opportunities and support with important decisions affecting future life chances <p>The designated officer will set up systems to monitor and record the progress of all looked after children. S/he will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have an overview and co-ordinating role for gathering and holding all information regarding children who are looked after • maintain records regarding all looked after children, including legal status and information regarding who should be contacted regarding matters concerning the child • establish a system for contacting and forwarding educational records to new schools to facilitate a smooth and speedy transfer • monitor the educational progress of all looked after children and intervene, in co-operation with other agencies if required, if there is evidence of underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy, or other similar concern <p>The designated officer will facilitate effective communication by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • building positive home-school relationships between parents / carers with regular opportunities for dialogue • being proactive and participating in setting goals for the child's PEP • playing an active role in care planning by ensuring that the attendance of the most appropriate member of staff and/or written reports are provided to all statutory reviews of looked after children 		

- helping co-ordinate education and PEP meetings
- serving as the named contact for colleagues in social services and education
- ensuring effective communication between all relevant parties
- inviting the responsible social worker to all meetings, and liaising with this social worker regarding the development of Personal Education Plans (PEP).

The **designated** officer will monitor each child's achievement and ensure that they have the support they require within school:

- by meeting with the looked after child to discuss who needs to know they are looked after and to ensure that the young person is informed of their role
- by ensuring each child has a named member of staff who can provide advice and/or practical help on academic or pastoral issues (this maybe the class teacher in a primary school)
- by ensuring each child has a Personal Education Plan
- by requesting support from the SENCO and/or outside agencies, including the Education of children Looked After Service, if a looked after child requires additional academic or behavioural support
- by working closely with the SENCO to ensure all looked after children with special educational needs are being assessed and are getting appropriate resources to support their learning
- by having a strategy for key stage or new school transitions
- by ensuring the involvement of the Connexions service with children in key stage four
- by encouraging all children to continue on to further or higher education
- by ensuring all looked after children are made to feel a part of the school environment

The name of the **designated** officer is: Guy Howford

The name of the designated Governor is : Stephen Coulson

Personal Education Plans

Each child will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP), which their social worker will take the lead in developing. However, the school's role in this plan is crucial and at least one member of staff who knows the child well will attend the meeting to establish and subsequently review this. Other staff will contribute in writing as appropriate.

The PEP will consider:

- the child's strength's and weaknesses
- interests, both in and out of school
- developmental and educational and pastoral needs
- future plans, and how these can be supported
- issues arising for the child

It will also identify targets that will be reviewed during the next PEP meeting.

Admission/Induction Arrangements

Looked after children are a priority for admission and, as such, we will follow the LEA's published admission criteria.

On admission, the child will meet with the designated teacher and their named member of staff. They will discuss any relevant issues, academic or pastoral, and ensure the child is made to feel comfortable in our school. Records will be requested from the child's previous school and as soon as practicable after they are received a meeting will be held with the carer / parent, social worker, and other relevant professionals, and child as appropriate. This will provide information to inform the child's new Personal Education Plan, and ensure that communication systems are established early.

In the first PEP meeting, we will seek clarification from the social worker as to who requires school reports and who may give permission for school trips or other such activities. At this meeting any means of communication to aid the fluid exchange of information between statutory meetings will be discussed and agreed (such as a home/school book to detail any sudden significant changes in a child's circumstances.)

Complaints

If a young person, parent or social worker wishes to complain about the provision or policy, they should in the first instance raise it with the designated officer, who will try to resolve the situation.

If the issue cannot be resolved within 10 days, the young person, carer or social worker can submit a formal complaint in writing to the Principal. The Principal will investigate the complaint and respond within 10 working days.

Any issue that remain unresolved at this stage should be addressed through a meeting in order to assess the impact of any such complaint upon the young person's education. This meeting may include the named Governor and any other outside agency that both parties deem necessary to attend. This meeting should normally be held within 10 working days of the Head teacher's response.

Staff Responsible		EHO	
School Group Responsible		Full Governing Body	
Date approved by Government body	September 2009	Review Date	September 2010