



Policy for Education: Children and Young People in Public Care (Looked After Children)

Introduction

The governing body of Hanson School is committed to providing quality education for all its students, based on equality of opportunity, access and the 5 outcomes of the Every Child Matters:

- To be healthy
- To stay safe
- To enjoy and achieve
- To make a positive contribution
- To achieve economic well being

This governing body recognises that, nationally and locally there is considerable underachievement of children and young people in public care, when compared with their peers. The policy 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;
- Listening to children.

Two key measures are intended to improve multi-agency co-ordination and improve the educational life changes for children and young people in public care:

- The provision of Designated Teacher
- School commitment to the compilation of Person Education Plans for all children and young people in public care.

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 for the Education of Children in Public Care

The Designated Teacher should have sufficient authority to make things happen. The Designated Teacher should be an important resource for the child, carers and parents, social workers and other teachers, school governors and support staff. She or he should be an advocate for children in public care, accessing services and support and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for children in public care.

The Designated Teacher should (or coordinate key staff to):

- Be the advocate for children in public care in school.
- Make themselves known to each looked after child. Each child should have an identified member of staff they can talk to (this should be based on the child's wishes and may not necessarily be the Designated Teacher).

- When a new LAC comes into school, ensure a smooth and welcome induction for the child and carers.
- Keep PEPs and all other documents up to date for children and young people in care and record relevant information about their care status.
- Assist in the completion of Personal Education Plan as soon as possible (at least within 28 days of entering care or joining a new school). The PEP should be instigated by the social worker and involve the child and carers and any other relevant support workers or agencies. Where appropriate, the PEP should take account of any Individual Education Plan (IEP), Pastoral Support Plan (PSP), Pathway Plan or any other relevant plans. The PEP should inform and be reviewed, concurrently with the care plan, i.e. within 28 days, 3 months and 6 months and thereafter, every 6 months.
- Keep the files on children in public care and keep this information confidential. They will have the responsibility for sharing any information on a need to know basis.
- Co-ordinate support for the child in school and liaise with Social Services, the LEA and other agencies as necessary.
- Consult with young people on what information they want sharing. This would depend on age and level of responsibility or maturity.
- Take the opportunity to attend training courses regarding children in public care.
- Seek an urgent meeting with relevant parties where a child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded.
- Be responsible for sharing relevant information and training and act as an advisor for other staff and governors on issues to do with children in public care.
- Be the custodian in school of all circulars, legislation and information on children in public care.
- Monitor the education performance of children in public care and provide statistics requested by the local authority. (These would include SAT results, GCSE results, attendance and exclusion information).
- Should ensure that Home School Agreements are drawn up with the primary carer (even when it is thought that the child's stay is temporary), which may be adapted to take into account any specific points around communication, transport arrangements and consent signatures.
- Should give an annual update to governors of the educational progress of children in care.
- Should consult children about their preferred out of school activities and record their views in the PEP.
- Provide written information to assist planning/reviewing meeting and ensure attendance as far as possible.
- Ensure speedy transfer of information between individuals and other relevant agencies and to a new school if and when the child transfers.

Roles and responsibilities of all staff

Staff should:

- Ensure that any child in public care is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained.
- Be familiar with the Guidance on children and young people in public care and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation (appendix 1).
- Respond positively to a child in public care's request to be the named person they can talk to when they feel it is necessary.

- Contribute to the Designated Teacher's requests for information on educational attainment and needs, as appropriate.
- As with all children, ensure that no child in public care is stigmatised in any way.
- Provide a supportive climate to enable a child in public care to achieve stability within the school setting.
- As with all children, have high expectations for the educational and personal achievement of children in care.
- Positively promote the self-esteem of children in care.

Roles and responsibilities of the governing body

The governing body of this school will:

- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for children and young people in care (appendix 1).
- Be aware of whether the school has children and young people on the school roll and how many (no names).
- Ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for children and young people in care.
- Liase with the Headteacher to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his/her duties in relation to children and young people in public care.
- Support the Headteacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of the children and young people in care are met.
- Nominate a 'designated governor' for children in care who will champion and promote their needs and monitor educational outcomes.
- Review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years.

Training

The Headteacher, Designated Teacher and Professional Development Co-ordinator will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

**Guidance for Governors and Staff
Education of Children and Young People in Public Care
(Looked After Children)**

Who are LAC?

Children who are either subject to a Care Order or Accommodated under the Children Act 1989.

- For Accommodated children parental responsibility remains with the parent.
- For children in Care (Care Order) parental responsibility is shared between the local authority and the parents.

For the academic year 2005/06 there are 22 students who are Looked After on Hanson role. Teachers of LAC's will be informed and should keep this information entirely confidential.

Achievement

The Social Exclusion Unit has identified five key reasons why children in care underachieve in education:

1. Too many young people's lives are characterised by instability;
2. Young people in care spend too much time out of school or other places of learning;
3. Children do not have sufficient help with their education if they get behind;
4. Carers are not expected, or equipped to provide sufficient support and encouragement at home for learning and development;
5. Children in care need more help with their emotional, mental or physical health and well being.

Facts and Figures

- 60,000 children in care at any one time.
- 41% aged 10 and under in 2001-02
- 80% into care for abuse, neglect or family reasons
- Less than 10% into care for their own behaviour
- 66% live in foster homes
- 10% live in children's homes
- 25% live outside their own authority
- 8% obtained 5 or more A* to C grades at GCSE compared to 50% for all young people
- Poor results in Key Stage tests
- 1% go to university
- Many become socially excluded later in life
- Between 25% and 33% of rough sleepers have been in care
- Young People in care are 2.5 time more likely to be teenage parents
- Around 25% of the prison population have spent some time in care
- High Social and economic costs. Improving to level of their peers - estimated saving £300 million. Greater savings by reduced crime and homelessness.

The Bradford Picture

- 829 children in care
- 573 of school age
- 482 in care for 1 year or more
- 136 statemented
- 9.75% missed 25 days or more of education
- 3 permanently excluded
- 140 in purchased care
- 46 in community homes
- 51% achieved 1+ A* to G @ GCSE
- 32% achieved 5+ A* to G
- 5% achieved 5+ A* to C
- 28% LAC statemented
- 2.07% of all children statemented
- 0.62% were permanently excluded
- 0.11% of children permanently excluded
- 51% LAC achieved 1+ A* - G
- 92.2% of all children
- 32% LAC achieved 5+ A* - G
- 84.1% of all children
- 5% LAC achieved 5+ A* - C
- 39.4% of all children

Corporate Parenting

Means:

That the responsibility for children in care rests with **everyone** employed by the local authority / and or school.

- A corporate parent should ensure it is a 'good parent'
- Be aware of the danger of discrimination and of double discrimination against disabled children or those from ethnic minorities
- Aim for continuity and stability
- Have high expectations
- Listen to children and young people

Personal Education Plan (PEP)

All LAC's have a Personal Education Plan which ensures access to services and support; contributes to stability, minimises disruption and broken schooling; signals particular and special needs; establishes clear goals and acts as a record of achievement.

It is the responsibility of the social worker to instigate a plan within 28 days of entering care or joining a new school. The PEP should be instigated by the social worker and involve the child and carers and any other relevant support workers or agencies. Where appropriate, the PEP should take account of any Individual Education Plan (IEP), Pastoral Support Plan (PSP), Pathway Plan or any other relevant plans. The PEP should inform and be reviewed, concurrently with the care plan, i.e. within 28 days, 3 months and 6 months and thereafter every 6 months.

Care Plan Reviews

The care plan for LAC's is reviewed every 6 months. The school endeavours to ensure a key member of staff attends the case review.

Targets

To narrow or close the gap between Looked After Children and their peers with regard to the five outcomes of Every Child Matters:

- To be healthy
- To stay safe
- To enjoy and achieve
- To make a positive contribution
- To achieve economic well being

Key Personnel

The following governor and staff all have access to confidential information regarding care and provision for LAC's. They act as the school's front line in corporate parenting and will share information in a needs basis in consultation with the young person.

Designated governor for LAC's	
Headteacher	Tim Brookes
Designated teachers of LAC's	Christine Finch / Mark Dunnell
Achievement and Student Support Leaders	
Learning Mentors	

All staff are responsible for the day to day monitoring of the progress of LAC's in relation to the five outcomes of Every Child Matters. Form tutors have a particularly significant role. Where concerns arise staff should liase with Achievement Leaders or designated teachers in order to effect support.

Reference and Further Guidance

Helpline

Ewen Godfrey - Education Matters Team

Ewen.godfrey@educationbradford.com

Bradford E-Portal for general information about LAC

01274 385737

- A better education for children in care (Social Exclusion Report 2003)
- Every Child Matter - Green paper (2003)
- Every Child Matters - New Children Act (December 2004)
- Draft Statutory Guidance - March 2005

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Passed by Governors:	
Distributed to staff, students and parents:	
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