

Education Policy for Looked after Children



Approval and review dates

Policy	Date of last review	Date of next review
SVS Education Policy for Looked after Children	September 2021	September 2022

1 Aims

SVS aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of Children Looked After (CLA) and Children Previously Looked After (Post CLA) on the roll of the school.

This policy applies to all personal data, regardless of whether it is in paper or electronic format.

2 Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked-after children.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683556/Promoting_the_education_of_looked-after_children_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf
- The Children and Families Act 2014 amended the Children Act 1989 to require local authorities in England to appoint at least one person to promote the educational achievement of its looked-after children.
- Guidance and Regulations on Care Planning, Placement and Case review Guidance and regulations on care planning, placement and case review (PDF)
- The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has published a guideline on Looked after children and young people, which sets out how organisations, practitioners and carers should work together to deliver high-quality care, stable placements and nurturing relationships for children in care.
- “The roles and responsibilities of the designated teacher for Looked after children” and “The Children and Young Persons Act 2008”, also the “Designated Teacher (Looked After Pupils etc.) (England) Regulation 2009.
- “Improving the attainment of looked after young people in Secondary Schools”.
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3 Definitions

Who are our Looked after Children

Children and young people become 'Looked After' 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 even be placed back at home with their natural parent(s).

LAC will have a care manager who arranges their care plan.

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

- Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked-after children.
- Prioritising education;
- Having high expectations;
- Inclusion-changing and challenging attitudes
- Achieving continuity and stability
- Early intervention – priority action; and listening to children

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.
- This governing body is committed to ensuring that Designated Teachers and staff are enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

4 Role and Responsibility of the Designated Teacher

Our Designated Teacher Lead is Sangeeta Mehra and is contactable via email: smehra@svs.sandwell.sch.uk or telephone 0121 6797522.

The Designated Teacher should:

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- be an advocate for Looked After Children;
- ensure a smooth and welcoming induction for the child and carer/s (and parent/s where possible). Note any specific requirements, including care status;
- ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed (within 20 days of entering care or joining a new school). This should be prepared with the child 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 should take account of any Individual Educational Plan (IEP), Pastoral Support Plan (PSP), Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP), career plan or any other relevant plans. The PEP should inform and be reviewed
- ensure that each Looked After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to
- ensure entry to examinations for all Looked After Children
- co-ordinate support for the child in the school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary;
- ensure staff and governors receive relevant information and training
- ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis;
- provide written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible;
- encourage Looked After Children to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning;
- seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded.

Roles and Responsibilities of All Staff

- as with all children, 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 Looked After Children and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings;
- liaise with the Designated Teacher where a Looked After Child is experiencing difficulty;

Role 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 Looked After Children;

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- 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 that 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 three 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.

5 Training

The Principal, Designated Teacher and HR will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in the guidance from the DfES and DoH (as above).

Sandwell Valley School