



Children Looked After Policy

Introduction

This policy replaces any previous policy and follows DfE regulations and guidance. All staff members of the Tithe Multi Academy Trust (MAT) are affected by and are expected to adhere to this policy.

In line with all of our Equal Opportunities and Special Educational Needs policies, we aim to give all students equal opportunities to take part in all aspects of School and College life, as far as is appropriate, practicable and compatible with giving regard to health and safety and the efficient education of other students.

This policy takes account of our aim for children to have the support they need:

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

The policy will follow the five principles of the Children's Plan:

- to support parents and families;
- to allow children to reach their full potential
- to enable children to enjoy their childhood whilst preparing for adult life
- to provide services in response to children and family needs
- to use preventative measures to help students to avoid the possibility of failure

This policy is founded in the Trust's commitment to the development and maintenance of good behaviour and a positive and inclusive ethos for all members of the Tithe community. It reflects our commitment to safeguard children, as well to encourage diversity in all aspects of School and College life.

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Foreword

The Tithe Multi Academy Trust comprises of Earlsmead Primary school, a mixed 4 to 11 school with a specialist SEN unit and Rooks Heath College which is a mixed 11 to 18 multicultural comprehensive in the London Borough of Harrow. This policy is formulated by the Designated Lead Person for Safeguarding (DSL) and the Chair of Governors group. The policy is subject to annual review and approval by the Governing Body and Board of Trustees.

Best Practice Guidance for Children Looked After

Rationale

In the Tithe Multi Academy Trust we believe that all looked after children should have equal access to excellent education provision and achieve at a similar level to all Harrow children. As an educational community, we aim to be champions for Looked After Children and take a proactive approach to support their success. We recognise that we have a vital role to play in promoting young people's social and emotional development.

Aims

We will work to:

1. Provide a safe and secure environment, which values education and believes in the abilities and potential of all young people.
2. Bring the educational attainments of our Looked After Children in line with those of their peers, ensuring that they have access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
3. Identify the MAT's role to promote and support the education of our Looked After Children, asking the question, 'Would this be good enough for my child?'
4. Nominate a Designated teacher for Looked After Children who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them, liaising with carers, natural parents (as appropriate) and social workers on a wide variety of educational and care issues.
5. Ensure that Looked After Children, along with the rest of the MAT community improve outcomes as outlined below:
 - Be healthy. For example, helping learners to adopt healthy lifestyles, build their self-esteem, eat and drink well and lead active lives
 - Stay safe. For example, keeping learners safe from bullying, harassment and other dangers
 - Enjoy and achieve. For example, enabling learners to make good progress in their work and personal development and to enjoy their education
 - Make a positive contribution. For example, ensuring learners understand their rights and responsibilities, are listened to, and participate in the life of the community
 - Achieve economic well-being. For example, helping pupils to gain the skills and knowledge needed for future employment.

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Statement of Intent

All staff and governors are committed to ensuring an improved educational life chance for Looked After Children.

Designated Person For Looked After Children

(See Appendix 1)

Role	Name	Telephone	email
Designated Lead Person for Looked After Children	Ms Sue Rockell (RHC) Miss Tracey Nobbs (EPS)	020 8422 4675 Ext. 261 020 8864 5546	Rockell1@rooksheath.harrow.sch.uk tnobbs3.310@lgflmail.org
Deputy Persons for Looked After Children	- Ms L Dale (RHC) - Ms L Geoghegan (RHC) Miss Monique Gregory (EPS)	020 8422 4675 Ext. 278 020 8864 5546	LDale@rooksheath.harrow.sch.uk LGeoghegan@rooksheath.harrow.sch.uk mgregory18.310@lgflmail.org
Designated Lead Governor for Looked After Children	Mrs P Hughes (MAT)	020 8422 4675	contactus@rooksheath.harrow.sch.uk
Deputy Lead Governor for Looked After Children	Mr S Savvas (RHC) Ms Sharon St Louis (EPS)	020 8422 4675 020 8864 5546	contactus@rooksheath.harrow.sch.uk sharon_stlouis@hotmail.com

The Designated Person for LAC maintains a register of all Looked After Children (this includes children both from in and out of the London Borough of Harrow).

This will include a record of:

1. The contact person in the Education Looked After Children Team
2. Status, i.e. care order or accommodated
3. Type of placement, e.g. foster, respite, residential
4. Name of Social Worker, area office, telephone number
5. Daily contact and telephone numbers where appropriate, e.g. name of young person, name of parent or carer or key worker in children's home.
6. Share Child Protection / disability information (if appropriate).
7. Relevant health information.

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8. Baseline information and all test results.
9. Named officers in the Local Authority with regard to exclusion issues, attendance issues and transition issues.

We will:

- take the lead role in the professional assessment and preparation of the educational targets and subsequent reviews to be recorded into the relevant sections of the child's Personal Education Plan (electronic for Lincolnshire children). The PEP should be established within twenty school working days for any looked after child starting on roll. This to include the gradual addition and updating of further information over time e.g. attendance, attainment and progress results;
- ensure that personal information is handled carefully and sensitively and that the child's wishes and preferences are taken into account;
- attend relevant update training and cascade information to all staff for their development and updating, regarding looked after children;

Governors will:

1. ensure that staff and governors will be made aware of the DfE Statutory guidance duty on Local Authorities to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children;
2. have a dedicated Governor to champion and monitor the work of the MAT in supporting its Looked After Children as a part of a larger group of vulnerable children.
3. will take a proactive approach in co-operating with, and supporting, the relevant Local Authority with regard to the education of Looked After Children attending the School or College.
4. ensure that Designated teachers and staff are made aware of and enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively with the full support of the Headteacher.

MAT Community

The MAT will:

1. ensure the appropriate sensitivities and confidentiality are maintained;
2. celebrate the achievements of Looked After Children.
3. support carers to value educational, achievement and improve attendance.
4. give the young person the opportunity to engage with a trusted adult in the School or College who is able to take time to listen to them.
5. ensure that systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about looked after children.
6. encourage staff to actively seek training to help them fulfil their roles in relation to looked after young people.

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7. ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when Looked After Children are underachieving and have early interventions to improve this. Contact must be made with the Education Looked After Children Team as soon as concerns are raised.
8. The designated teacher ensures that positive messages about behaviour and achievement are shared within the School or College, and with carers and outside agencies, so that high educational expectations are maintained.

All staff:

1. should have high expectations of the young person, encouraging achievement and ambition.
2. are made aware of the needs of Looked After Children and actively promote their best interests.
3. will be sensitive to the young person's wishes over what is known, and by whom, regarding their looked after status.
4. ensure effective assessment, recording and reporting practices are established in accordance with this policy.
5. promote the engagement of Looked After Children in out hours learning.
6. will work in partnership with parents, carers and agencies.
7. encourage the individual to feel that they are an integral part of a large community, and ensure they have a safe haven and a sympathetic ear when required.
8. ensure that Looked After Children are listened to, and have access to support, counselling and other agencies if required.
9. be aware of a variety of issues that may undermine the young person's ability to engage in the learning process, including feelings of loss, rejection, isolation, confusion and low self-esteem.
10. be aware that being or becoming 'looked after' can have a major impact on children's lives. They need to be aware of unresolved feelings the young person may have about their own families and siblings, in addition to insecurity over their current homes and carers. This may have a detrimental effect on the children's behaviour.

SEND

1. Any special educational needs are quickly identified and appropriate provision is made.
2. If the child or young person has an EHC plan for special educational need, the annual review should coincide with one of the three monthly care planning reviews, which can be obtained from the Social Worker.

Admissions/Transitions

1. Ensure that on admission or transfer, all relevant information is obtained at the outset.
2. We will forward appropriate documents, to a receiving school at point of transition once the receiving school is made known.

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3. We will make every effort to provide continuity of schooling and educational experience.
4. We will prioritise Looked After Children within our own admissions procedures

Attendance

1. Where attendance is a problem, the 2-day contact procedure will be followed.

Exclusion

1. If a Looked After Child is seen to be at risk of exclusion, then contact is made with the Looked After Children's Team immediately to minimise this happening.
2. Be clear on who needs to be informed and holds parental responsibility.

Multi Agency Work

1. The designated teacher will liaise closely with carers, natural parents and the students Social Worker on a variety of issues, including attainment, homework, and equipment required. It is important that positive messages about behaviour and achievement are shared.
2. There should be a well-planned and co-ordinated approach to meeting the young person's educational and social needs.
3. There needs to be clear understanding about the role and responsibility of staff in relation to the young person and the roles and responsibilities of the other professionals involved.
4. Staff will share positive perceptions and high expectations of the young person with other professionals but especially with the young person.
5. The School or College should be aware of and sensitive to the appropriate role of the natural parents, (if applicable).
6. The designated person should ensure that requests from the Local Authority for statistical information held by the School or College are completed and returned on time to comply with statutory obligations.
7. Encourage each Looked After Child to access out of hours learning activities realising the positive impact this could have on their self-esteem and learning.
8. Support the young person to have the opportunity to participate fully in planning and decision making.

Personal Education Plans

1. Ensure that there is a high quality personal education plan for each child within 20 days of starting School or College to include appropriate targets. This must be compatible with the child's Social Services Care Plan and form part of any other College plan, e.g. Statement, Transition Plan, Pastoral Support Programme.
2. Following the writing of a Personal Education Plan, any educational recommendations in that Personal Education Plan will be adhered to by staff in order that any Looked After Child has the opportunity to achieve his or her targets. The designated teacher or

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appropriate members of staff will attend Local Authority training regarding the roles and responsibilities involved in the education of Looked After Children.

We are aware that the new OFSTED inspection framework will consider the provisions that we, as a whole school, have put in place to support looked after children. We understand that a judgement will be made within the OFSTED framework in terms of how far this school is able to support looked after young people. The formal report will include comments about the progress and support provided to these vulnerable young people.

APPENDIX 1

Responsibilities of Designated Person for looked after children

1. Information on Looked After students in the School or College

- 1.1 To keep a list of looked after student updated regularly and stored confidentially.
- 1.2 To ensure that staff have relevant information on Looked After pupils to enable them to plan effectively and to meet the needs of the looked after student.
- 1.3 To keep and to make available to staff circulars, legislation and information pertaining to looked after children

2. Personal Education Plans

- 2.1 To ensure that each looked after student has a current Personal Education Plan and that the plan is implemented.
- 2.2 To co-ordinate School or College based meetings in order to draw up or review the PEP prior to the Care Plan Review.

3. Co-ordinating Support

- 3.1 To liaise with staff on behalf of the looked after students and to contribute to any Care Plan or College based support plan.
- 3.2 To ensure that the Pastoral Care system of the School or College can identify and meet the particular needs of Looked After students.
- 3.3 To liaise between staff and other agencies and be the first point of contact for Social Workers.
- 3.4 To ensure speedy transfer of educational documentation and records between agencies and the School or College.

4. Training

- 4.1 To attend relevant training for Designated Persons responsible for looked after Children.
- 4.2 To act as an advisor for staff and the Governors on any issues relevant to looked after students.