



CHILDREN IN CARE POLICY

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CHILDREN IN CARE POLICY

a) The Objective

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of children who are Looked After by the Local Authority. This may be Trafford, but Pictor Academy also serves surrounding boroughs.

b) The Name of the Designated Teacher/Person

Sarah Anderson

c) The Role of the Designated Teacher/Person

Within school system

- To ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by pupils who are Looked-After and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome any barriers or difficulties.
- To inform members of staff of the general educational and welfare needs of pupils who are looked-after and to promote the involvement of these pupils in all activities across the school.
- To act as an advocate for pupils who are in the care of the responsible Local Authority.
- To develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers and the responsible Local Authority.
- To monitor the educational progress of all pupils who are Looked-After to inform the school's development plan.
- To intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement, absence from school or truancy.

Work with Individual Children in care

- To work with individual pupils, possibly through a carer, to arrive at a statement about their circumstances that they would be happy to share with staff and/or pupils where appropriate.
- To enable the pupil to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their Care Plan.

- To help ensure that each pupil has a Personal Education Plan. This should be updated at termly meetings involving relevant professionals. Where possible, pupils should be invited to these and have their thoughts and opinions clearly recorded in all documentation.
- To supervise the smooth induction of a new Looked After pupil into the school, including liaising with the previous school to ensure information is shared on a need to know basis.

Liaison

- To liaise with the member of staff responsible for monitoring pupils subject to a Child Protection Plan.
- To help co-ordinate education and review meetings, so that the Personal Education Plan reflects current educational and behaviour plans.
- To attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or contribute in other ways to the care planning meetings.
- To be the named contact for colleagues from the responsible Local Authority.
- To ensure the speedy transfer of information between agencies and individuals, and report on the progress of the Looked After pupil.

Training

- To develop knowledge of multi-agency procedures by attending training events.
- To cascade training to school staff as appropriate.

Role of the Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee receive reports on an annual basis about:

- The number of Looked After pupils in the school;
- A comparison of test scores as a discrete group, compared with those of other pupils;
- The attendance of pupils as a discrete group, compared to other pupils;
- The level of fixed term/permanent exclusions;
- Pupil destinations upon leaving Pictor Academy.

The Advisory Committee should be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that Looked After pupils have equal access to:

- The National Curriculum;
- Public examinations;
- Additional educational support;
- Extra-curricular activities.

The Advisory Committee may carry out their functions:

- a. As a whole Advisory Committee by receiving information in the Head Teacher's Report.
- b. By having a named Governor, who links with the school on children in public care and reports back to the Advisory Committee. Pictor Academy has a named LAC Governor.
- c. A committee is given the function and reports back to the Advisory Committee via its committee minutes.

Responsibility for LAC in school

It is important that all teaching staff who are in contact with the pupil are aware that he/she is being Looked After by the Local Authority. The responsibility for the transfer of this information should be that of the Head Teacher and/or Designated Teacher for Looked After Children.

It is appropriate for a classroom support assistant to have knowledge that the pupil is being looked after only when directly involved in the teaching of the pupil.

In the absence of the usual class teacher, some information regarding the pupil's circumstances should be shared with the teacher covering the class. The extent of this sharing should be determined by the Head Teacher or the Designated Teacher/person.

Admission arrangements

On admission, records will be requested from the pupil's previous school and a meeting will be held with carer/parent/Social Worker as appropriate – but always involving someone with parental responsibility. This will provide information to inform the Personal Education Plan. An appropriate school induction will take place.

Involving the pupil

It is important that the pupil is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. How this is shared with them clearly depends on their age and understanding. The explanation should emphasise that the school, Social Worker, and their carer(s) are working together to promote their education.

It is important to establish the pupil's view of their changed circumstances and what they want others to know. It is also important to ensure that a Social Worker/Teacher/Carer prepares the pupil for situations when they may be asked about home, e.g. by other pupils in the playground.

Communication with other agencies

Pictor Academy ensures that copies of all reports [e.g. end of year reports] are forwarded to the young person's Social Worker in addition to the Foster Carer or Residential Child Care Officer. It is good practice to discuss with the Social Worker who should receive information about the pupil. Any safeguarding issues or incidents involving a Looked After child will be shared with the carer and social worker as soon as possible.

Pictor Academy and the responsible Local Authority will endeavour to co-ordinate review meetings, e.g. to have an Annual Review of a Statement combined with a Statutory Care Review.

The responsible Local Authority and Pictor Academy will exchange information between formal reviews if there are significant changes in the young person's circumstances, e.g. if school is considering an exclusion, there is a change of care placement or there are significant attendance issues.

Assessment, Monitoring and Review procedures

Each looked after pupil will have a Care Plan that will include a termly Personal Education Plan (PEP) that a key member of staff takes a lead in developing. This will identify specific areas of concern and include achievable targets. Areas for consideration will include:

- The Pupil's voice
- Attendance
- Achievement Record (academic or otherwise)
- Behaviour
- Homework
- Involvement in wider activities from across the school
- Special Needs
- Development needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge of subject areas and experiences)
- Long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations).

The PEP will be updated at least every term. Virtual Schools will then complete their own Quality Assurance procedures to ensure school are compliant with statutory responsibilities. Virtual Schools will be invited to attend all PEP meetings.