The Heys School

The role of the Designated Teacher for Looked After / Previously Looked After Children

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Date Reviewed:	June 2021
Next review Date:	July 2022
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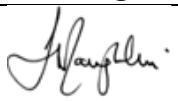
Signed:	

Statement of Policy for the role of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children in promoting the educational achievement of students in care

All schools are required to have a nominated Designated Teacher. This is a statutory requirement whether or not a school has a Looked After Child currently on their roll. This is to ensure that whenever one of the students becomes looked after or a new child in care is admitted to the school there is a teacher who is already trained to carry out this important role.

Details of the role of the Designated Teacher are set out in **Promoting the Education of Looked After Children** (February 2018) and the Role and **Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher for looked after children (2018)**. The member of staff who is appointed as the Designated Teacher must be:

- A qualified teacher
- A headteacher or,
- Acting headteacher

The Governing Body is required to:

- Ensure that the designated teacher undertakes appropriate training (section 20(2) of the 2008 Act).
- As a minimum governors must consider an Annual Report from the Designated Teacher.
- The governing body and school leadership team should consider the report and act on any issues it raises so as to support the Designated Teacher and maximise the impact of the role.

The Designated Teacher should:

- Promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how looked after children learn
- Make sure the young person has a voice in setting learning targets
- Be a source of advice for staff about differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children and in making full use of Assessment for Learning
- Make sure that looked after children are prioritised in one-to-one tuition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home
- Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of the child's Personal Education Plan (PEP) within the school.

(Guidance taken from DCSF Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher, February 2018)

This policy complies with the following statutory guidance issued to all local authorities:

- ***Promoting the education of looked after and previously looked after children DfE (February 2018)***
- ***Promoting the health and wellbeing of looked after children (March 2015)***
- ***Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2020)***
- ***The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children; Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities (February 2018)***
- ***Improving the attainment of looked after young people in secondary schools: Guidance for Schools (DCSF 2009)***

- ***Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years - Statutory guidance for organisations who work with and support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (2015);***
- ***Mental Health and Behaviour in schools DfE Guidance (November 2018)***
- ***Statutory guidance on the exclusion of students from local-authority-maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units (September 2017)***

And

- *The Bury Handbook Section 5.4.3 which outlines procedures for the education of looked after and previously looked after children within the local authority.* ***https://www.proceduresonline.com/bury/cs/chapters/p_educ_lac.html***

The statutory guidance issued by the Department of Education comes under section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970. This means that it **must** be followed unless there are exceptional circumstances that justify departing from it.

Looked After Child: A child who is looked after by a local authority (referred to as a looked-after child) as defined in section 22 of the Children Act 1989 means a child (0-18 years of age) who is subject to a care order (or an interim care order) or who is accommodated by the local authority.

Previously Looked After Child: A previously looked-after child is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales.

The role of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher has a leadership role in promoting the educational achievement of every looked after and previously looked after child on the school's roll. The role should make a positive difference by promoting a whole school culture where the personalised learning needs of every looked after and previously looked after child is important and their personal, emotional, and academic needs are prioritised.

Our Designated Teacher, Miss Helen Pickavance, is a member of our Senior Leadership team and can carry out the statutory duties effectively.

The Designated Teacher provides regular reports on the progress of Looked After Children in school to the Governing Body and any other issues pertaining to their status. This is in line with statutory requirements.

The local authority is kept updated with the name and designation of our Designated Teacher and is promptly informed of any changes.

The designated teacher will work with the virtual school head and the child's social worker to discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan and to ensure their safety and security.

The Designated Teacher undertakes the recommendations set down in the statutory guidance entitled: *The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children; Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities (February 2018).*

In this context the Designated Teacher will:

- become the central point of contact at this school for all professionals and agencies working with and supporting the looked after or previously looked after children on roll;
- 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. 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;
- attend relevant update training and cascade information for staff development and updating regarding looked after children;
- ensure that personal information is handled carefully and sensitively and that the child's wishes and preferences are taken into account;
- establish good working relationships and communications with Foster Carers, ensuring information is received and early notification is provided for them to attend meetings and reviews;
- provide support and sanctuary to help settle a looked after child into the school, and at other times; ensure our looked after or previously looked after children feel safe, know who to trust and who to go to if they feel the need for support;
- ensure the transfer of records if a looked after or previously looked after child moves school;
- provide written information to assist planning, reviews and reporting as required;
- seek and prioritise meetings with, and referrals to, appropriate external agencies in situations that require external support.

The Designated Teacher is responsible for the completion of PEPs and will co-ordinate interventions regularly evaluate their impact. Personal Education Plans (PEPs) each term (or as determined by LA) and Pupil Premium Plus requests are promptly submitted for authorisation by the Virtual Head. We will use best practice to inform decisions and also ensure that each child/young person is able to contribute to those discussions.

PEPs are used to:

- Identify developmental and educational needs in relation to skills, knowledge, subject areas and experiences;
- Set short and long-term educational attainment targets agreed in partnership with the child and the carer where appropriate;
- Include a record of planned actions, including milestones on homework, extra tuition and study support, that the school and others will take to promote the educational achievement of the child, based on an assessment of their educational needs;
- Include information on how the child's progress is to be rigorously monitored;
- Record details of specific interventions and targeted support that will be used to make sure personal education targets are met, especially at the end of Key Stage 2 in relation to English and mathematics, and at Key Stage 4 in achieving success in public examinations;
- Say what will happen, or is already happening, to put in place any additional support which may be required - e.g. possible action to support special educational needs involving the SENDCO,

educational psychologist, or local authority education services (information contained within a EHC plan does not have to be duplicated in the PEP, a reference is sufficient as long as the plans work together to meet overall needs);

- Set out information on what will happen or is already happening to identify and support any mental health needs relevant to the child's education;
- Set out how a child's aspiration and self-confidence is being nurtured, especially in consideration of longer-term goals towards further and higher education, work experience and career plans. Discussions about longer-term goals should start early and ideally well before Year 9 (age 13-14) at school. High aspirations are crucial to successful planning for the future. They should focus on young person's strengths and capabilities and the outcomes they want to achieve;
- Include the child's views on how they see they have progressed and what support they consider to be most effective;
- Be a record of the child's academic achievements and participation in the wider activities of the school and other out of school learning activities (e.g. sporting, personal development);
- Provide information which helps all who are supporting the child's educational achievement to understand what works for them, helping to substitute for the role that parents might otherwise provide; and
- Have clear accountability in terms of who within the school is responsible for making the actions identified in the plan happen.

Communication with the LAC Education Team (Virtual School)

The Designated Teacher understands that the LAC Education team is the primary source of information concerning educational issues and, equally, the team must be kept informed of any developments in the child's life which may impact on educational progress and attainment e.g. exclusions for behaviour concerns.

The Designated Teacher will provide all information requested by LAC Education colleagues or other professionals involved with the child/young person in care.

Training

The Designated Teacher will endeavour to undertake regular training in line with statutory expectations. If this is not possible, then the Designated Teacher understands that 1:1 training, advice and support is always available from the LAC Education Team.

Through CPD, the Designated Teacher will ensure that other staff in school know how to support a LAC / PLAC pupil effectively to ensure that they are prioritised and given the best educational opportunities in order to reduce disadvantage.

Safeguarding looked after and previously looked after children in school

At The Heys School, the designated safeguarding lead is also the Designated Teacher for looked after and previously looked after children. This group is extremely vulnerable, the most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect and the school is aware of the need to monitor the welfare and ensure the support of children in this category.

The designated safeguarding lead will retain details of the of the legal status of each individual looked after child's care arrangements and what the contact arrangements are with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They will also know the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her.

12) Mental Health

Looked-after and previously looked-after children are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues than their peers. For example, they may struggle with executive functioning skills, forming trusting relationships, social skills, managing strong feelings (e.g. shame, sadness, anxiety and anger), sensory processing difficulties, fetal alcohol syndrome and coping with transitions and change. This can impact on their behaviour and education.

The designated teachers is not required to be a mental health expert; however, they have an important role in ensuring they and other school staff can identify signs of potential issues and understand where the school can draw on specialist services, such as HYM. The designated teacher, school counsellor and pastoral team aim to:

- Identify signs of potential mental health issues and know how to access further assessment and support where necessary, making full use of the SENDCO and LAC support team where applicable; and recognise that these issues will continue to affect previously looked-after children, and that the school needs to continue to respond appropriately to their needs.

Related School policies:

- **Admissions**
- **SEN**
- **Attendance**
- **Teaching and Learning**
- **Safeguarding**
- **Pupil Premium**
- **Behaviour and Behaviour Principles**
- **EAL**
- **Equality**