




LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

November 2023

Responsibility	Deputy Head teacher
Date of Next Review	November 2024

Signed: 
Chair of Governors

Signed: 
Head Teacher

Dated: 25/10/2023

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Introduction

The Aspire academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

As Governors and teachers of The Aspire Academy, we aim to:

- make a real difference in helping to provide the best possible education for looked after children as much as any other;
- seek to give our young people in care professional help, encouragement and support, so they find our school a welcoming and friendly place;
- be fully inclusive and we will challenge negative views and stereotypes;
- offer support to and work with their carers on how to assist the young person's learning and enhance educational opportunities.

The Governing Body of The Aspire Academy is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes. This policy includes requirements set out in 'Statutory Guidance on the Duty of Local Authorities to Promote the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children under [Section 52 of the Children Act 2004](#)' and associated guidance on the education of Looked After Children.

The Aspire Academy believes it has a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of Looked After Children. The school understands the powerful role it can play in significantly improving the quality of life and the educational experiences of these pupils. A school ethos which promotes respect for all pupils, values diversity and does not tolerate bullying is a necessary foundation. The Aspire Academy has policies and practice embedded in a whole-school approach to meet this need including The Anti-Bullying Policy, dated September 2023; The Behaviour Policy, dated September 2023; Safeguarding Children Policy (including Child Protection) dated September 2023.

The educational achievement of Looked After Children in general remains unacceptably low. That is why the [Children Act 2004 \(section 52\)](#) places a duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of these pupils.

Worcestershire County Council's Privacy Notice – General Data protection Regulation (GDPR) for Children in Need and Children Looked After and needs to be read in conjunction with this policy. This can be found at <http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/privacy>.

Responsibility for Looked After Children Attending The Aspire Academy

It is important that all staff who are in contact with the child are aware that he/she is Looked After by the local authority. The responsibility for the transfer of this information should be that of the designated member of staff.

In the absence of the usual member of staff teaching or working the pupil at The Aspire Academy, relevant information regarding the pupil's circumstances should be shared with the staff covering the sessions. The extent of this sharing should be determined by the designated member of staff, the Deputy Headteacher or the Headteacher.

Objectives

To ensure The Aspire Academy meets the educational, social and emotional needs of Looked After Children the school will require the appointed Designated Teacher for Looked After Children to undertake the recommendations set out in the statutory guidance entitled: [The Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children 2009](#). 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 individual looked after children we have 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 (ePEP). 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 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 the looked after child feels safe, knows who to trust and who to go to if they feel the need for support;
- ensure the transfer of records if a 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;
- be an advocate for these pupils within school, providing an opportunity for their views to be heard and their feelings made known;
- maintain a current list of looked after pupils including contact information and change of care status and ensure the electronic data concerning looked after pupils is correct;
- closely monitor the progress and attendance of looked after pupils and provide suitable interventions if necessary;
- work in partnership with all professionals, parents and carer(s) of looked after pupils. Social Services, LA and schools will need to exchange information between formal reviews if there are significant changes in the pupil's circumstances e.g. there is a change of care placement or there are significant attendance issues;
- keep governors informed in a yearly report on the achievement of children in public care so they are able to fulfil their duties to these pupils. This report to include:
 - a) The number of Looked After pupils on the school's roll.
 - b) Their attendance, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
 - c) Their end of year attainment, levels, grades, GCSE results and other qualifications achieved as a discrete group compared to other pupils.
 - d) The number of fixed term and permanent suspensions (if any) for Looked After pupils.
 - e) The destinations of Looked After pupils who leave the school.
 - f) The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.
- liaise with referring schools to ensure sharing of information connected to Looked After pupils;

- work closely with the Virtual School to ensure adequate provision;
- ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by children 'Looked After' and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them;
- ensure all relevant education and care information is available to staff and carer(s) and that this information is kept up to date.

In addition we will require our school Teaching and Support Staff to assist in the implementation and support of this policy for looked after children by requiring all staff to:

- ensure the appropriate sensitivities and confidentiality are maintained;
- be familiar with, and respond appropriately to, requests for progress and/or attainment information in order to compile the PEP and other documentation necessary for reviews;
- respond positively to any request by a child to be the person they want to talk with;
- ensure that no child in care becomes the victim of stigmatisation at any time and that any such attitudes are swiftly reported and eradicated;
- positively promote the self-esteem of looked after children;
- convey high aspirations for their educational and personal achievement

Involving the Pupil

It is important that a Looked After pupil at The Aspire Academy 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.

Governor:

The named Governor with special responsibility for Looked After Children in school is:

Carol Hart

Designate Teacher:

The named nominated teacher with special responsibility for Looked After Children in school is:

Mrs Beata Payne, SENDCo

Linked Policies and Guidance

- Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children, dated November 2009. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-children>
- Section 52 of the Children Act 2004, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/section/52/enacted>
- General Data protection Regulation (GDPR) for Children in Need and Children Looked After and needs to be read in conjunction with this policy. <http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/privacy>.
- The Aspire Academy's Anti-Bullying Policy, dated September 2023
- The Aspire Academy's Behaviour Policy, dated September 2023
- The Aspire Academy's Safeguarding Children Policy (including Child Protection) dated September 2023.