



"Inspiring a love of lifelong learning"

Designated Teacher for Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (Post LAC) Policy

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Learning at Charville is underpinned by our Core Values

Respect
Independence
Self-belief
Honesty
Caring
Determination

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1. Scope

This Designated Teacher for Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (Post LAC) policy applies to all of the children who have been looked after by a local authority and are currently attending Charville Academy. It is important to note that children may be looked after by Hillingdon local authority or may be looked after by another authority.

2. Introduction

This Policy is written following the statutory guidance from the Department for Education, issued in relation to sections 20 (4) and 20A (4) of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008.

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They then fall into the four main groups:

- Children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with parents (section 20)
- Children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- Children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (section 44 and 46)
- Children who are compulsorily accommodated- this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21).

LAC children are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and it is nationally recognised that they significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion, compared with their peers. They may experience:

- High level of disruption and change in school placements
- Lack of opportunities for involvement in extra-curricular activities
- Lack of self-esteem and confidence
- Inconsistent support with education.

3. Aim

At Charville Academy we aim to:

- Provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children

- Support our looked after children to achieve and give them every opportunity to enjoy learning and take part fully in school activities
- Work with the virtual school to ensure that carers and social workers of all LAC pupils are kept fully informed of the child's progress and attainment

In pursuit of these aims we will nominate a designated teacher for LAC children who will act as their advocate, co-ordinate support for them and be a key point of contact for the virtual school (VS). The designated teacher will continue to support, monitor and track these pupils after they become Post LAC children.

4. Role of the Designated Teacher

Leadership responsibilities

The designated teacher will:

- Promote the achievement of every LAC and Post LAC child on the academy role by promoting a whole school culture where the needs of these pupils matter and are prioritised
- Take lead responsibility for ensuring that academy staff understand:
 - The range of factors which can affect how LAC and Post LAC children learn and achieve
 - How the academy supports the educational achievements of these pupils
- Contribute to the development and review of academy policies to ensure they consider the needs of LAC and Post LAC children
- Promote a culture in which LAC and Post LAC children are encouraged and supported to engage with their education and wider school activities
- Act as a source of advice for teachers working with LAC and Post LAC children
- Work directly with LAC and Post LAC children and their carers, parents and guardians to promote good home-school links, support progress and encourage high aspirations
- Have lead responsibility for the development and the completion of LAC children's PEPs (Personal Education Plan)
- Work closely with the academy's designated safeguarding lead to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding LAC and Post LAC children are responded to quickly and effectively
- Involve parents and guardians of Post LAC children in decisions affecting their child's education.

Supporting LAC children

The designated teacher will:

- Ensure looked after children's PEPs meet their needs by working closely with other teachers to assess each child's specific educational needs

- Have overall responsibility for leading the process of target setting in PEPs
- Monitor and track how looked after children's attainment progresses under their PEPs
- If a child is not on track to meet their targets, be instrumental in agreeing the best way forward with them in order to make progress and ensure that this is reflected in their PEP
- Ensure identified actions of PEPs are put in place
- During the development and review of PEPs, help the academy and relevant local authority decide what arrangements work best for pupils
- Ensure that:
 - A LAC child's PEP is reviewed before the statutory review of their care plan - this includes making sure the PEP is up to date and contains any new information since the last PEP review, including whether agreed provision is being delivered
 - PEPs are clear about what has or has not been taken forward, noting what resources may be required to further support the child and from where these may be sourced
 - The updated PEP is passed to the child's Social Worker and Virtual School Head (VSH) ahead of the statutory review of their care plan
- Transfer a looked after child's PEP to their next school, making sure it is up to date and the local authority responsible for looking after them has the most recent version.

Supporting both LAC and Post LAC children

The designated teacher will:

- Ensure the specific needs of LAC and Post LAC children are understood by staff and reflected in how the academy uses its pupil premium funding
- Work with VSHs to agree how pupil premium funding for LAC children can most effectively be used to improve their attainment and progress
- Help raise the awareness of parents and guardians of Post LAC children about pupil premium funding and other support available for the child
- Play a key part in decisions on how pupil premium funding is used to support Post LAC children
- Encourage parents' and guardians' involvement in deciding how pupil funding is used to support their child and be the main point of contact for queries about its use
- Ensure all staff have an awareness and understanding of the specific needs of looked after and previously looked after children in areas like attendance, homework, behaviour and future career planning
- Be aware of the special educational needs (SEN) of LAC and Post LAC children and ensure all staff also have an awareness and understanding of this
- Ensure the SEND Code of Practice, as it relates to LAC children, is followed

- Ensure sure PEPs work in harmony with any Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) or additional SEN funding that a LAC child may have
- Ensure that, with the help of the VSH's, they have the skills to identify signs of potential SEN issues in LAC and Post LAC children and how to access further assessments and support where necessary
- Ensure that they and other staff can identify signs of potential mental health issues in LAC and Post LAC and understand where the academy can draw on specialist services
- Put in place robust arrangements to have strengths and difficulties questionnaires (SDQs) completed for LAC children and use the results of these SDQs to inform PEP's.

Relationships beyond the academy

The designated teacher will:

- Proactively engage with social workers and other professionals to enable the academy, to respond effectively to the needs of LAC and Post LAC children
- Liaise with staff at the virtual school responsible for a LAC child's pupil premium funding
- Discuss with social workers how the academy should engage with birth parents and ensure the academy is clear about who has parental responsibility and what information can be shared with whom
- Be open and accessible to parents and guardians of Post LAC children and encourage them to be actively involved in their child's education
- Proactively build relationships with local authority professionals, such as VSHs and SEN departments
- Consider how the academy works with others to maximise the stability of education for looked after children
- Seek advice from VSHs about meeting the needs of individual Post LAC children, with the agreement of their parents or guardians
- Where a looked after child is at risk of exclusion:
 - Contact the VSH as soon as possible so they can help the academy decide how to support the child to improve their behaviour and avoid exclusion becoming necessary
 - Work with the VSH and child's carers, consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to address the causes of the child's behaviour
- Where a previously looked after child is at risk of exclusion, talk to the child's parents or guardians before seeking advice from the VSH on avoiding exclusion.

Although the designated teacher must always have lead responsibility, they may delegate individual functions, including pastoral and administrative tasks to key staff.

5. The Governing Board

The Governing Board is committed to ensuring that the designated teacher and staff at Charville Academy are able to carry out their role effectively.

The Governing Board will:

- Ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritise LAC according to the DfE Admissions Code of Practice
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for LAC
- Ensure there is a Designated teacher for LAC.

6. Our Designated LAC Teacher

The designated teacher for looked after children at Charville Academy is Louise Innes.

Contact details:

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7. Good Practice for all staff

All staff should:

- Be aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation from birth families and how this can manifest in school
- Appreciate the importance of the child's PEP in helping to create a shared understanding between teachers, carers and social workers
- Appreciate the importance of showing sensitivity about who else knows about a child's looked after status
- Promote a culture in which LAC children are encouraged to believe that they can succeed and aspire in their learning
- Promote good home-school links through contact with the child's carer about how they can support the child
- Have high expectations of LAC and Post LAC children's learning and set targets that will accelerate educational progress
- Appreciate the central importance of the LAC child's PEP in helping to create a shared understanding between teachers, carers, social workers and most importantly the child's own understanding of how they are being supported
- Have an understanding of the role of Social Workers, VSHs and carers and how the function of a PEP fits into the wider care planning duties of the authority which looks after a child.

9. Relevant policies

- Child Protection Policy
- Home-school Communication Policy
- Pupil Premium Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy

Written by: Designated Teacher

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