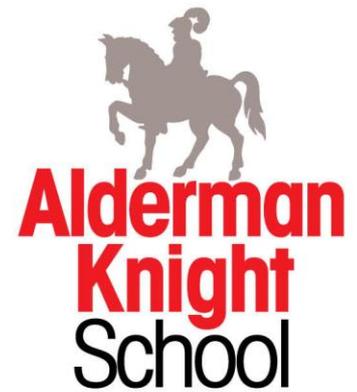


Date Reviewed: July 2018
 Reviewed By: Clare Steel,
 Next Review Due: July 2019



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Policy for Children in Care

Purpose

To promote the educational attainment, achievement, progression and welfare of children that are in care and attending Alderman Knight School. The school works closely with Gloucestershire's Virtual School as well as the local authorities of other young people attending the school whose home authorities are not Gloucestershire. The school recognises that all local authorities have a statutory role to play for all children in its care and act as a Corporate Parent.

Rationale

Children in Care are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. The majority of looked after children have suffered a disrupted childhood and experienced adverse events. It is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational under-achievement when compared to their peers. Looked after children often achieve poor examination success rates in comparison with their peers. It is a fact that fewer children who have been in care progress to higher education or follow progression pathways that will lead to future economic success and well-being.

Legal Framework

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 fall into four main groups:

- Children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (Section 20)
- Children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (Sections 44 and 46)
- Children who are the subjects of a care order (Section 31) or interim care order (Section 38)
- 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)

Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are “accommodated” by the local authority under Section 20 of the Children Act – they may live in foster care, in a Children’s Home or in a residential school. Under the Children Act 1989 – they may live with foster carers, in a Children’s Home, in a residential school, with relatives or with parents under supervision.

For all children who receive more than 75 days of ‘short breaks’ in every 12 months LAC status applies and an Independent Reviewing Officer is appointed. As the care arranged is not continuous academic attainment does not have to be reported in the same way to the DfE.

All these groups are said to be “Looked After Children” (LAC). They may be looked after by our local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

Designated Teachers at Alderman Knight School are:

1. Clare Steel – Head teacher (with overall responsibility)
2. Hannah Shaw and Hannah Silverthorn, Assistant Head teachers

The Role of the Designated Teachers for Looked After Children

Within School:

- To ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have an understanding of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by children in care and that staff understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them;
- To inform members of staff of the general educational needs of the children in care at Alderman Knight School, and to promote the involvement of these children in clubs, extra-curricular activities, home reading schemes, school councils, etc;
- To act as an advocate for children in care;
- To develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers, social workers, health professionals and the Virtual School;
- To hold a supervisory brief for all children in care, e.g. to ensure all relevant education and care information is available to school staff and carer(s), and that this information is kept up-to-date. It is important to be aware that some children in care do not want all adults or peers to know about their accommodation or care status; (The Assistant Head teachers are responsible for managing the children in care within their Key Stage)
- To monitor the educational progress, attainment and attendance of children in care.
- To include targets on the performance of children in care
- To intervene if there is evidence of individual under-achievement or absence from school
- To celebrate the success of all children in care.

Working with individual children in care

- To enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their care plan;
- To help ensure that each pupil has a Personal Education Plan (the PEP should be initiated by the young person's social worker from the Authority responsible for them). The PEP sets out appropriate targets and support available;
- Ensure that the Pupil Premium which applies to children who have been in care 6 months and over is targeted at improving attainment and achievements. (Please note the Pupil Premium Strategy highlighting impact is on the school website)
- To consult where appropriate with the child or young person and ensure they have an appropriate adult who will attend school events e.g. parents' evenings; sports; drama events to provide support and encouragement.

Liaison with other professionals and agencies

- To liaise with the member of staff responsible for monitoring children on the Child Protection Register, ensuring all looked after children in school are safeguarded;
- To help an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) co-ordinate education and Looked After Children review meetings, so that the Personal Education Plan can inform the child's Care Plan;
- To attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or to contribute in other ways to Looked After Children at care planning meetings and PEP meetings;
- To be the named contacts for colleagues working within Gloucestershire Virtual School and other local authorities as appropriate;
- To ensure the speedy transfer of information and school records between agencies and other schools;
- To ensure the school admits Looked After Children in line with the Admissions Code of Practice; schools should admit all looked after children separate to 'In Year Fair Access Protocols'.
- To ensure that a range of strategies is also considered before exclusion for a looked after child, which should be a last resort. This includes contacting the Head of The Virtual School and accessing First Day Response provision.

Training

- To develop a knowledge of Vulnerable Children / Education inclusion procedures by attending training events organised by the Local Authority and other providers;

- To attend training for Designated Teachers as appropriate;
- To cascade training to school staff as appropriate.

The name of a Governor with special responsibility for children in care is Alex Cameron.

The role of this Governor:

Alex Cameron, in his role as Governors, will work with the Head teacher to report to the Governing Body annually at the Standards and Achievement meeting each December.

Areas that may be reported;

- A comparison of test scores for looked after children as a discrete group, compared with the attainment and progress of other pupils;
- The attendance of pupils as a discrete group, compared with other pupils;
- The level of fixed term/permanent exclusions; and
- Pupil destinations.

The governor will ensure that the school's policies and procedure ensure that looked-after pupils have equal access to:

- The national curriculum;
- Examinations;
- Careers guidance;
- Additional educational support;
- Extra-curricular activities;
- Work experience

Alex Cameron will meet following each assessment period (October, February and June) with the designated teachers to discuss the needs of the children in care and review the schools work with them.

(Alex Cameron in his role as a governor and Pastoral Co-ordinator, also supports the monitoring of progress of all disadvantaged groups of children and young people.

Responsibility for Alderman Knight's children in care

It is important that all teaching and support staff are aware which children are being cared for by the Local Authority. The responsibility for the transfer of this information is the Head and Assistant head teachers. In the absence of the usual class teacher, some information regarding the child's circumstances should be shared with the teacher covering the class. The extent of this sharing should be determined by the designated staff.

Admission Arrangements

On admission, records (including the PEP) must be provided from the pupil's previous school and a meeting will be held with carers and social worker to discuss transition and ensure relevant and up-to-date information has been given to the school. A date will be agreed for a review of the existing Personal Education Plan and this will be within six weeks of a new child in care starting the school.

Involving the Young Person

It is important that children in care are aware that information is being shared and recorded regarding their Personal circumstances and that the school will be working with their social worker and carers to help them get the best opportunities and achieve their best while at school. This will be shared sensitively and appropriately.

Communication with Other Agencies

The school will ensure that a copy of all reports (e.g reports, attendance data, EHCPs daily records, IEPs) are shared with all professionals working with the child. It will be agreed at the PEP meeting what information carers will receive and this needs to be in line with the legal framework. A decision will be made with the social worker and carer on necessary and expected correspondence with carers and

approaches to enable carers to give consent for routine school activities.

Assessment, Monitoring and Review Procedures

Each child in care has a Care Plan that includes a Personal Education Plan (PEP) that the social worker takes a lead in developing. This will identify, success, specific areas of concern and include achievable targets. The PEPs generally are age group specific and include the following areas.

- Attendance
- Achievement Record (academic or otherwise)
- Behaviour
- Homework
- Involvement in Extra Curricular Activities
- Special needs
- Support being provided
- Use of Pupil Premium
- Development needs (short and long-term development of skills, knowledge or subject areas and experiences); and
- Long-term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations).

The PEP will be updated at least every six months, as part of the Statutory Reviewing process carried out by Children's Social Care. The PEP will be stored by the relevant local authority management system and circulated to all key parties who attended the PEP meeting.

Pupil Premium

For 2015/ 2016 each school was allowed to request up to £19 00 to support each child in care. This money was only released to the school from the Local Authorities virtual schools on clear evidence of how it would be used to enhance the learning and social opportunities of the child as agreed through the PEP.

The provision for all pupils in care is tracked using the school's internal provision mapping system

During the academic year 2016 – 2017 there are 4 pupils who are in care

1. Year 7 girl – in the care of Worcestershire Authority and living in Worcestershire
2. Year 9 girl – in the care of Swindon Authority but living in Gloucestershire
3. Year 11 boy – in the care of Gloucestershire Local Authority and living in Gloucestershire
4. Year 11 boy – in the care of Doncaster Authority but living in Gloucestershire.

The funding available for each is again £19 00
