



St Brigid's School

Looked After Children (LAC) Policy

Report Author	LP
Report status	Ratified
Ratified by Governors	March 2015
Review date	March 2017

The Governing Body, as Corporate Parent is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation relating to Looked After Children, and that this policy and related protocols, procedures and strategies are implemented.

Guidance is provided in *Guidance on the Education of Children Looked After by Local Authorities: National Assembly for Wales Circular 2/2001* which should be referred to in relation to this policy.

Purpose and Principles

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to staff regarding the welfare of Looked After Children. The Governing Body and Head teacher as Corporate Parents are responsible for implementing the policy: for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support, and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

All staff are expected to identify and challenge stereotyping or discrimination of Looked After Children and to deal with racist, sexist or homophobic incidents that may occur.

The aims of the Looked After Children Policy at St Brigid's School are to;

Ensure that an inclusive ethos is established and maintained

Ensure that Looked After Children are encouraged to reach their full potential

Protect the rights and promote the responsibilities of Looked After Children

Ensure that the school is a place where everyone, irrespective of their family circumstances, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability feels welcomed and valued

Prepare Looked After Children for the challenges, choices and responsibilities of living in a diverse society

Empower Looked After Children to participate in their communities as active citizens who take responsibility for themselves and each other

Foster and encourage positive attitudes and behaviour towards members of the community whose circumstances, race, sexuality or ability is different from their own

Broad Guidelines

The National Assembly for Wales Guidance 2/2001: *Education of Children Looked After by Local Authorities* sets out the duties for those responsible for the welfare of Looked After Children. In particular, it is required that:

- The Governing Body should, with the head teacher, ensure that school's ethos should incorporate high expectations for Looked After Children. They should make every effort to see that support arrangements are in place and that appropriate staffing and funding arrangements are set up.
- Each school should designate a teacher to act as a resource and advocate for Looked After Children. In St Brigid's School the designated teacher is Lynne Price working with June Morris ALN co-ordinator. She should ensure the transfer of educational information between individuals and agencies, check that each child has a Personal Education Plan (PEP), and or an IEP if relevant and that contact is maintained between school, carers and the Denbighshire LAC officer/ Social Services or the local Social Services if the Child is from a different County.
- Every Looked After Child should have a PEP which ensures access to services and support and signals particular educational needs, establishes clear goals and acts as a record of progress and achievement.

Definitions

The term 'Looked After' was introduced in the Children's Act 1989 and refers to children who are subject to care orders and those who are accommodated. Whether children are subject of a care order or are accommodated at a local authority, the local authority, wherever possible, should be working in partnership with the parents. Parents retain primary parental responsibility for their children when they are accommodated; though the local authority still has responsibilities as corporate parent. Many Looked After Children retain strong links with their families and return home to them after periods in care.

Welsh Assembly statistics from March 1999 showed that 76% of Looked After Children lived in foster placements, with the rest living in residential provision or with their families with social work support.

Delivery and Organisation

St Brigid's School ensures that the aims of this policy are taken into account in our planning and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- Planned teaching of relevant knowledge and understanding, skills, values and attitudes within the National Curriculum subjects and RE. Teachers should be sensitive in dealing with aspects of the curriculum which deal with family values.
- Teaching and learning strategies which use interactive and experiential approaches that are relevant and suitable to the needs and attitudes of Looked After Children and which offer ample time for discussion and reflection
- Progress, attainment and assessment, behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Admissions and attendance
- Encouragement of pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and self assessment of progress
- Valuing pupils and promoting positive relationships and self esteem
- Effective co-ordination and staff training and support
- Partnership with Social Services, parents, carers and the community. Regular co-ordination of all staff involved in the care of Looked After Children is monitored in Multi Agency / Review meetings
- Opportunities in school for Looked After Pupils to participate in decision making, particularly through the auspices of the School Council
- Participation in extra-curricular experiences should be encouraged, though the school needs to be sensitive to the fact that some pupils live in families which are suffering hardships. Help should be provided, in a sensitive manner, to ensure that Looked After Children are not excluded. The Pupil Deprivation Grant will be used strategically to ensure that LAC pupils do not miss out on opportunities.
- Personal and Social Education lessons offer opportunities for pupils to discuss and understand the many ways of being 'different', of stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination and bullying and of how to respond to them appropriately
- Support for out of school learning
- Older pupils may need curricular flexibility to re-engage them or to sustain them in school. For them, a mixture of school, college and work related learning may be more suitable. It may also be appropriate to make arrangements for temporary disapplication or modification of the curriculum

Support for Looked After Children

- The school will strive, wherever possible, to support the continued involvement of families in their child's progress and achievement, in particular in the arrangements made for admission, transition and Additional Learning Needs.
- Looked After Children will be encouraged to have high aspirations and to raise standards through regular attendance, out of school learning support, and behaviour support where appropriate. The Head of Learning and Form Tutor will play a vital supporting and monitoring role.
- Looked After Children can be vulnerable to bullying e.g. name calling. Pupils need careful induction into the school and staff need to be diligent to ensure that no one is isolated and bullied. The designated teacher has an important role in supervising the smooth induction of looked after children, considering the child's need for confidentiality and making the child feel welcome.

Links to Other Policies

Guidance on the Education of Children Looked After by Local Authorities: National Assembly for Wales Circular 2/2001

St Brigid's School Behaviour Policy, including anti-bullying strategies

St Brigid's School Admissions and exclusion policies

Equal Opportunities policies

ALN policies

Provision for Regular Review of the LAC Policy

The LAC policy for St. Brigid's School will be ratified by the School's Governing body and reviewed on an annual basis.

LP 2014