



Hebden Royd C.E. (VA) Primary &  
Nursery School

**C.L.A. (Children Looked After) Policy**

<b>Approved by:</b>	Headteacher & Governing Body	<b>Date:</b> January 2020
<b>Last reviewed on:</b>	January 2023	
<b>Next review due by:</b>	January 2025	

Looked After is a term that refers to children for whom the Local Authority is sharing parental responsibility. This can happen either with parental agreement or when a Court makes a Care Order. The child may be living with foster carers, in a residential unit, with family members or sometimes with their parents. These children are therefore subject to corporate parenting. Hebden Royd C of E Primary School recognises that Children who are Looked After may have very specific needs and may be coping with trauma, abuse or rejection, and are likely to experience personal distress and uncertainty.

Hebden Royd C of E Primary School welcomes Children who are Looked After. We recognise the possible impact their experiences may have upon their emotional and social wellbeing. The school commits to doing everything it can; working in partnership with the families, carers and the Virtual School; to ensure that the children have the best opportunities to reach their potential.

We aim through this policy to promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in public care.

**Designated Teacher for LAC - Miss Lauren Hannan**

**Governor with responsibility for CLA – Mrs Frances McGregor**

The Governing Body 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 on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004” (Nov 2005) and associated guidance on the education of LACE.

**The aims of the school are to:**

- ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for CLA as for all children
- ensure that all CLA pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual’s needs and ability
- ensure that CLA pupils play a full part in all school activities
- ensure that carers and social workers of CLA pupils are kept fully informed of their child’s progress and attainment
- ensure that CLA pupils are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision.

**Who are Looked After Children?**

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 a care order (*section 31*) or interim care order (*section 38*)
- children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (*sections 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*).

The term ‘in care’ refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the courts under section 31 of 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. 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. All these groups are said to be "Children who are Looked After" – CLA

They may be looked after by our Local Authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

### **Admissions**

The Governing Body endorses council policy and our admissions criteria allows CLA pupils priority over places. Due to care placement changes, CLA pupils may enter school mid-term. It is vital that we give them a positive welcome. If necessary, we may offer additional support and pre-entry visits to help the new pupil settle.

### **Inclusion**

This policy recognises that all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broadly based curriculum. Our CLA policy reinforces the need for teaching that is fully inclusive. The Governing Body will ensure the school makes appropriate provision for all CLA pupils.

### **Allocation of resources**

The Governing Body will ensure that the school allocates resources (e.g. Pupil Premium Grant) to support appropriate provision for CLA, meeting the objectives set out in this policy. The Virtual School also does this by allowing a proportion of the PPG per term depending upon the progress shown by the child.

### **Monitoring the progress of Children Looked After**

The social worker for the CLA should initiate a Personal Education Plan – PEP - within 20 days of joining the school, or of entering care, and ensure that the young person is actively involved. It is vital that the school assesses each child's attainment on entry to ensure continuity of learning.

The school will monitor and track the achievement and attainment of all pupils at regular intervals. Each child will require their PEP to be reviewed, according to their needs, as initiated by the reviewing office or social worker, and the young person's views should be sought by the Designated Teacher and noted on the PEP.

Class teachers, SENCO and Headteacher are involved in the reviews.

### **Record Keeping**

The Designated Teacher will know who are all the CLA children in school and will have access to their relevant contact details including parents, carers and social worker.

The SENCo will deputise in her absence.

The distribution of PPG will be monitored to ensure that all children eligible benefit from it. The Designated Teacher will also know about any CLA from other authorities. It is important that the school flags CLA status appropriately in the school's information systems so that information is readily available as required.

### **Staff Development**

We encourage staff to attend courses that help them to acquire the skills needed to support CLA. Part of the Designated Teacher's role is to develop awareness of issues associated with CLA.

## **Partnership with parents/carers and care workers**

At school we firmly believe in developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable CLA to achieve their potential. Review meetings are an opportunity to further this partnership working.

## **Links with external agencies/organisations**

We also recognise the important contribution that external support services make in supporting CLA.

Colleagues from the following support services may be involved with individual CLA:

- CLA teams
- Educational psychologists and others from Local Authority SEN services
- Medical officers
- School nurses
- LAARCH
- CAMHS
- Education Welfare Officers
- Social care worker/ Community care worker/ Residential child care worker
- Youth Offending Service
- School age parents' officer

## **CLA policy review and evaluation**

We consider the CLA policy to be important and the CLA Governor and the Designated Teacher review the policy annually alongside the practice within school and progress of the children.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Rationale for roles and responsibilities:**

Children Looked After – CLA - are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational underachievement when compared to their peers. For example, they may experience:

- a high level of disruption and change in school placements
- lack of involvement in extra curricular activities
- inconsistent or no attention paid to homework. This may result in:
- poor exam success rates in comparison with the general population. Nationally, Children Looked After significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Their academic and social progress is likely to be affected by their experiences and compounded by instability in their personal circumstances.
- underachievement in further and higher education. 75% of Children Looked After leave education with no formal qualifications. Only 12% go on to further education compared with 68% of the general population.

These issues may also affect adopted young people.

The majority of children who remain in care are there because they have suffered abuse or neglect. To date the outcomes achieved by CLA have been unacceptably poor and the Government is committed to addressing this disparity. As corporate parents we all have a part to play in this by vigorously applying the principles of good parenting by:

- giving priority to education
- listening to children
- providing stability and continuity
- taking corporate responsibility
- promoting inclusion
- raising standards
- intervening early
- promoting early years experiences
- celebrating success.

**The Designated Teacher will:**

- be an advocate for CLA within school
- give regard to the impact of relevant decisions for CLA on both the CLA and the rest of the school community
- know who are all the CLA in school, including those in the care of other authorities, and ensure the availability of all relevant details from school record-keeping systems as required
- attend relevant training about CLA
- act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to CLA, seeking advice from the CLA team when appropriate.
- ensure that CLA receive a positive welcome on entering school, especially mid year and, if necessary, offer additional support and a pre-entry visit to help the new pupil settle.
- ensure that all CLA have an appropriate PEP that is completed within 20 days of
- joining the school or of entering care and ensure that the young person contributes to the plan
- keep PEPs and other records up to date and review PEPs at transfer and at six monthly intervals
- convene an urgent multi-agency meeting if a CLA is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion
- ensure confidentiality on individual children, sharing confidential and personal information on a need to know basis, bearing in mind the wishes of the individual pupil
- act as the key adviser for staff and governors on issues relevant to CLA
- ensure that care and school liaison is effective including invitations to meetings and other school events
- actively encourage and promote out of hours learning and extra curricular activities for CLA
- ensure a speedy transfer of information, records and coursework, where appropriate, when a CLA transfers to another educational placement
- contribute information to CLA reviews when required
- report to the Governing body on CLA in the school and inform of relevant policy and practice development
- agree with the social worker the appropriate people to invite to parents' evenings etc
- prepare reports for Governors' meetings to include:

- the number of CLA on roll and the confirmation that they have a Personal Education Plan – PEP.
- their attendance compared to other pupils.
- their attainment compared to other pupils.
- the number, if any, of fixed term and permanent exclusions.
- the destinations of pupils who leave the school.
- attend governor meetings as appropriate – such as the admission, disciplinary and exclusion of CLA.
- arrange a mentor or buddy (adult and /or pupil) to whom the young person can talk, possibly through the learning mentor scheme or through Connexions, particularly when the pupil is new to school
- ensure that any Special Educational Needs are addressed in conjunction with the SENCO and in accordance with the Code of Practice for SEN. CLA are six to eight times more likely to have a statement of Special Educational Needs than the general school population.

**Good practice suggests that all school staff will:**

- follow school procedures.
- keep the Designated Teacher informed about a CLA pupil's progress.
- have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of CLA pupils.
- positively promote the raising of a CLA pupil's self esteem.
- ensure any CLA pupil is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained.
- be familiar with the school's policy and guidance on CLA and respond appropriately to requests for information to support PEPs and review meetings.
- liaise with the Designated Teachers where a CLA pupil is experiencing difficulties
- give only official exclusions and only use exclusions in line with the school's exclusion policy, and relevant national guidance, being mindful to the difficulties this may create in the care placement contribute to regular liaison with social care colleagues and other appropriate professionals and keep carers fully informed at all times
- keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to other professionals/ parents/carers/pupil as appropriate
- make extra copies of reports available when required.

**Good practice suggests that the Governing Body will:**

- ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritises CLA according to the DfES Admissions Code of Practice
- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for CLA
- ensure there is a Designated Teacher for CLA
- liaise with the Headteacher, Designated Teacher and all other staff to ensure the needs of CLA are met
- nominate a governor with responsibility for CLA who links with the Designated Teacher
- receive regular reports from the Designated Teacher.
- ensure that the school's policies and procedures give CLA equal access in respect of:
  - admission to school
  - National Curriculum and examinations, both academic and vocational
  - out of school learning and extra curricular activities
  - work experience and careers guidance.
- annually review the effective implementation of the school policy for CLA.
- ensure that the Designated Teacher is invited to the exclusion meetings of CLA.

## APPENDIX 2 – PEP GUIDANCE

### **(A) Initiating PEPs on Child's entry to care**

You will receive a PEP from Calderdale CYPS with the first two pages completed.

*(Personal Education Plan – Details p1&2)*

Complete the education sections of the PEP in consultation with the social worker/carer/parents/child as appropriate.

Discuss plan with child/young person. Encourage and record their comments.

Inform the school nurse that the young person has entered public care or that a young person in care has joined the school.

Keep original completed PEP in child's school file and use as a working document. Take a photocopy of completed PEP and send to the Reviewing Team in the envelope provided within 20 school working days. The team will then distribute the PEP to all relevant people.

### **(B) For Statutory Care Plan Review meetings**

It is a statutory requirement that PEPs are reviewed every six months. Before the Statutory Care Plan review, update the PEP by

- Recording any additions to the Cumulative Record
- Reviewing targets and actions from last PEP meeting
- Completing a new PEP-Plan/Review. Be sure to record any changes here
- as well as setting new targets and record any comments from child/young person
- Take copy of the PEP (and any attached information) to meeting or, if not attending, send it to the Reviewing Team.
- Put a copy of the PEP- Plan/Review form (and any updated information) with the original PEP in the child/young person's school file.

#### **Also consider:**

If the child/young person has Special Educational Needs, you may wish to hold the PEP and IEP reviews together to minimise paperwork and time.

If child/young person moves school forward the completed PEP, including the review documents, along with the child's school file in the normal way to the receiving school.

For fuller explanations please refer to the DfES "Guidance on the Education of Children and Young People in Public Care".