

Looked After Children Policy

2018/2019

Introduction

The Totteridge Academy is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. We recognise that, nationally, there is considerable underachievement of children in residential and foster care, when compared with their peers and we are committed to supporting the Government's agenda for giving all Looked After Children the same life chances as any other child.

The Children Act 2004 and the statutory guidance 'Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children 2015' place duty on us to work together to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children. We recognise that schools and teachers are at the very heart of this process so that we can provide a quality education in order to increase the life chances of this vulnerable group.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher will:

- Be an advocate for Looked After Children;
- Ensure a smooth induction for both the child and carer when new to The Totteridge Academy;
- Be the central point of contact for all professionals and agencies working with and supporting the child;
- Take the lead role in the professional assessment of the educational targets and subsequent reviews to be recorded into the relevant sections of the child's Personal Educational Plan (PEP);
- Attend relevant training and cascade information for staff development;
- Ensure that personal information is handled carefully and sensitively and that the child's wishes and preferences are taken into account;
- Establish positive working relationships and good communication with Foster Carers, ensuring information is received and early notification is provided for them to attend meetings and reviews;
- Provide support and sanctuary and ensure the child feels safe, knows who to trust and who to go to if they feel the need for support;
- 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;
- Work closely with the Virtual School Headteacher and social worker to discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of Looked After Children;
- Ensure the transfer of records if a looked after child moves school.

Roles and Responsibilities of all Staff

- Ensure that any looked after child is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained;
- Be familiar with and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings;
- Respond positively to a looked after child's request to be the named person that they can talk to when they feel it is necessary;
- As with all children, ensure that no looked after child is stigmatised in any way;
- Provide a supportive climate to enable a looked after child to achieve stability within the school setting;
- As with all children, have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children;
- Positively promote the self-esteem of Looked After Children.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Governing Body

- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for Looked After Children;
- Be aware of whether the school has Looked After Children and how many (no names);
- Ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Looked After Children;
- Liaise with the Principal to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out their responsibilities in relation to Looked After Children;
- Support the Principal, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of Looked After Children are met;
- Nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, received regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body (these reports should not include any names);
- Review the effective implementation of this policy.

Confidentiality

Information on Looked After Children will be shared with school staff on a 'need to know basis'. The Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with which school staff at the PEP meeting. Once this has been agreed with the social worker, carer, young person and other parties, complete confidentiality is to be maintained.