Looked After & Previously Looked After Children Policy

Purpose of Policy
Bingley Grammar is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. This governing body recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of children in residential and foster care, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in “Promoting the Education of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children” (February 2018) and Section 52 of the Children Act 2004.

Looked After Children are
Children who are “looked after” may be “accommodated, “in Care” or “remanded/detained” as follows: -

Accommodated (Section 20)
This is a voluntary arrangement, because parents are ill, missing, unable to cope, or, as part of a child protection plan, negotiated with the family. The parents retain parental responsibility.

In Care
A child is in care only if a court has granted a Care Order which it will issue if it believes a child to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. A Care Order generally gives parental responsibility to the local authority, or shares this with the parents.

Remanded/detained
A child can be remanded or detained as in the following: -

- An emergency protection order
- Removed by police using their powers of protection
- Remanded by a court following criminal charges
- A court directing a social services department to accommodate a child (already on a supervision order for criminal behaviour) for up to six months.

Previously looked-after children are those who:
- are no longer looked after by a local authority in England and Wales (as defined by the Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-27 being (Wales) Act 2014) because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order; or
- were adopted from ‘state care’ outside England and Wales. ‘State care’ is care provided by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other organisation whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.
Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children may have some or all the following issues:

- low self esteem
- poor education standards due to time out of school
- delayed social/emotional/ cognitive development
- be bullied or bully others.
- be prone to mental health issues
- be isolated with few friends
- have behaviour issues.
- have poor attachments to others.

This makes them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life chances.

Bingley Grammar School, is committed to ensuring that these children are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following are in place, and are working effectively.

- A Designated Teacher for Looked After Children
- Employment of a specialist support member of staff to work with the students and families
- Personal Education Plans (PEP) for all Looked After Children.
- All staff have a clear understanding of confidentiality and issues that affect Looked After Children.
- Effective strategies that supports the education of this vulnerable group.
- Safe training regarding ACE’s and their impact on young people.

Within this there will be strong focus on the mental health of the child as Looked-after children and previously looked-after children are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues than their peers. For example, they may struggle with executive functioning skills, forming trusting relationships, social skills, managing strong feelings (e.g. shame, sadness, anxiety and anger), sensory processing difficulties, foetal alcohol syndrome and coping with transitions and change. This can impact on their behaviour and education.

Therefore, it is key through training that staff have awareness, training and skills regarding these children’s needs and how to support them, particularly in relation to behaviour management and mental health, with this being built into CPD time.

Role and Responsibility of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher should:

- be an advocate for Looked After Children; acknowledging the school and the designated teacher may need to be proactive in carrying out their responsibilities.
- ensure a smooth and welcome induction when new to the school, for the child and carer, and note any specific requirements, including care status;
- ensure that a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is completed, as soon as possible (at least within 20 days of entering care or joining a new school). This should be
prepared with the child and the carer, in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies, and be linked to the Care Plan meetings, within 28 days, 3 months and 6 months and, at least, every 6 months; A flow chart showing PEP completion is found at the end of this policy.

- keep PEPs and other records up to date, particularly in time to inform review meetings;
- ensure that each child in public care (if they wish) has an identified member of staff that they can talk to (this should be based on the child’s request, and may not necessarily be the Designated Teacher);
- co-ordinate support for the child in the school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary;
- ensure staff receive relevant information and training and act as an advisor to staff and governors;
- ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis;
- provide written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible;
- ensure that the child and carer(s) receive early notification of meetings, parents’ evenings and other events and that communication remains regular and positive.
- actively encourage Looked After Children to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning, where feasible;
- ensure speedy transfer of information between individuals and other relevant agencies and to a new school if and when the child transfers;
- seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded.
- ensure that returns on looked after children are completed on Bradford Schools Online – as requested by the LEA.

Role and Responsibility of All Staff

- Ensure that any child in public care is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained;
- Be familiar with the child’s needs 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 child in public care’s request to be the named person that they can talk to when they feel it is necessary;
- Contribute to the Designated Teacher’s requests for information on educational attainment and needs, as appropriate;
- As with all children, ensure that no child in public care is stigmatised in any way;
- Provide a supportive climate to enable a child in public care 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
Role and Responsibility of the Governing Body

The governing body of this school will:

- 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 Head Teacher to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out her/his responsibilities in relation to Looked After Children;
- support the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of Looked After Children are met;
- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body. (These reports should not include any names of individual children for child protection and confidentiality reasons).
- review the effective implementation of this policy every two years.

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.

Exclusions

The past experiences of looked after children and previously children looked after can impact on their behaviour. This is something we consider when supporting the child or young person with their learning and the design and application of the school’s behaviour policies. As a school body we have regard to the Department’s statutory guidance on Exclusions from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England. In line with that guidance, we, as far as possible, avoid excluding any children looked after child and make reasonable adjustments within the educational setting to ensure barriers to education are removed.

Where a child is at risk of or has been given a fixed-term or permanent exclusion, we work with Virtual School (VS) and others and consider what additional assessment and support (such as additional help for the classroom teacher or one-to-one therapeutic work) needs to be put in place to help the school address the causes of the child’s behaviour and prevent the need for exclusion.

When we as a school have concerns about the behaviour of a previously looked-after child which could result in the child being excluded from school, the child’s parents or the school’s designated teacher, following discussions with the child’s parents, will seek the advice of the Virtual School Head (VSH) on strategies to support the child to avoid exclusion.
Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Looked-after children and previously looked-after children are significantly more likely to have SEN than their peers. Of those with SEN, a significant proportion will have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC plans).

When working with these two facets we refer to the special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice 0 to 25 years, as it relates to looked-after children, this is as follows;

- for looked-after children, that their EHC plan works in harmony with their care plan and PEP to tell a coherent and comprehensive story of how the child's needs are being met.

To do this we work with all professionals to consider how the statement/EHC plan adds to information about how education, health and care needs will be met without unnecessarily duplicating information already in the child’s care plan. Equally, the child’s care plan should be fed into the care assessment section of the EHC plan;

- for previously looked-after children, we ensure the SENCO, class teacher, designated teacher and the specialists should involve parents when considering interventions to support their child’s progress. As a group we agree the outcomes to be achieved through SEND support, including a date by which progress will be reviewed, within this we may also ask VSHs may be invited to comment on proposed SEND provision.

In light of the above, when completing a child’s PEP, a member of the SEND team will always be present to ensure the PEP works in harmony with the EHC plan.

Statutory Guidance Regarding the Personal Education Plan (PEP)

All looked-after children must have a care plan, of which the PEP is an integral part. The PEP (pre-school to age 18) should be initiated as part of the care plan. It is an evolving record of what needs to happen for looked-after children to enable them to make at least expected progress and fulfil their potential. The PEP should reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning that meets the child’s identified educational needs, raises aspirations and builds life chances. The school, other professionals and the child’s carers should use the PEP to support achieving those things.

The quality of the PEP is the joint responsibility of the local authority that looks after the child and the school. Social workers, carers, VSHs, designated teachers and, as appropriate, other relevant professionals will need to work closely together. All of those involved in the PEP process at all stages should involve the child (according to understanding and ability) and, where appropriate, the child’s parent and/or relevant family member.

PEP content

The PEP should cover the full range of education and development needs including:

- access to a nursery or other high quality early years’ provision that is appropriate to the child’s age (e.g. pre-school playgroups) and meets their identified developmental needs;
• on-going catch-up support for those who have fallen behind with school work (including use of effective intervention strategies);
• provision of immediate suitable education where a child is not in school (e.g. because of temporary or permanent exclusion);
• transition support where needed, such as when a child starts attending a new school or returns to school (e.g. moving from pre-school/ early years to primary school, primary to secondary school, from secondary school to further education, or following illness or exclusion) or when a child has a plan for permanence (e.g. placed for adoption) and may change schools as part of that plan;
• school attendance and, where appropriate, behaviour support; and support needed to help the child realise their short and long-term academic achievements and aspirations. This includes:
  ➢ support to achieve expected levels of progress for the relevant national curriculum key stage, and to complete an appropriate range of approved qualifications;
  ➢ careers advice and guidance and financial information about further and higher education, training and employment. Discussions about longer term goals should start early and, ideally, well before Year 9 (age 13-14) at school. High aspirations are crucial to successful planning for the future. They should focus on the child or young person’s strengths and capabilities and the outcomes they want to achieve; and out-of-school hours learning activities, study support and leisure interests.

Initiating, developing and reviewing the PEP
Wherever the child is placed, their social worker, supported by the authority’s VSH, should take the lead to:
• initiate a PEP even where a looked-after child is without a school place. This includes meeting with appropriate education providers and the carer;
• ensure that where a child is placed in an emergency, the PEP is initiated within 10 working days of their becoming looked-after, wherever they are placed;
• ensure, with the support of others, including the VSH, that the PEP contains a summary of the child’s current attainment and progress (including any additional needs such as SEN and mental health needs);
• ensure the PEP is effective and is available for the first statutory review meeting of the care plan; and
• ensure the PEP gives details of who will take the plan forward and specifies timescales for action and review.

Once requesting the initiation of a PEP, the Virtual School will need to work with the child’s social worker and relevant designated teacher to facilitate its completion and agree how pupil premium plus can most effectively be used to facilitate the child’s educational attainment and progress.

VSHs should have a quality assurance role in relation to PEPs. To be effective and high quality, a PEP should:
• be a ‘living’, evolving, comprehensive and enduring record of the child’s experience, progress and achievement (academic and otherwise), and inform any discussion about education during statutory reviews of the child’s wider care plan;
• be linked to, but not duplicate or conflict with, information in any other plans held by the child’s education setting or responsible authority – e.g. their care plan or Education, Health and Care Plan;
• identify developmental (including any related to attachment and past trauma) and educational needs (short and longer term) in relation to skills, knowledge, subject areas and experiences;
• say what will happen or is already happening to identify and support any mental health needs, including detailing any support that is required or ongoing from mental health specialist support services;
• include SMART short-term targets, including progress monitoring of each of the areas identified against development and educational needs;
• include SMART longer-term plans for educational targets and aspirations. These should, according to age and understanding, typically focus on: public examinations, further and higher education, managing money and savings, work experience and career plans and aspirations;
• identify actions, with time scales, for specific individuals intended to support the achievement of agreed targets and use of any additional resources (e.g. the pupil premium plus) specifically designated to support the attainment of looked-after children;
• include behaviour management strategies agreed between the VSH and school to help ensure challenging behaviour is managed in the most effective way for that child; and
• highlight access to effective intervention strategies and how this will make/has made a difference to achievement levels.

Arrangements for the flow of information to develop, review and update the PEP should be in place to ensure the VSH, designated teacher, carer and, where appropriate, child and parent have a copy of the latest version of the document.

The VSH and social worker should work together to ensure that monitoring arrangements are in place so that actions and activities recorded in the PEP are implemented without delay. This involves working in a joined-up way with the child’s school (usually through the designated teacher) and other relevant people and agencies (e.g. educational psychologists or the Children and Young People’s Mental Health Service) where necessary.

VSHs should make arrangements for PEPs to be reviewed each school term. This should include mapping how the pupil premium and any other additional funding has been used to support the targets set in the PEP. This is to ensure that the story of the child’s educational progress is current and continues to meet the child’s educational needs. It is also to ensure that information from the PEP is available to feed into the next statutory review of the wider care plan. The nature of these arrangements and who to involve are for the VSH to decide in partnership with others.
### Getting the most from Pupil Premium Plus

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<th>Approaches that are:</th>
<th>Which emphasise:</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Individually tailored to the needs and strengths of each pupil</td>
<td>• Relationship-building, both with appropriate adults and with peers</td>
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<td>• Consistent (based on agreed core principles and components) but also flexible and</td>
<td>• An emotionally-intelligent approach to the setting of clear behaviour boundaries</td>
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<td>responsive</td>
<td>• Increasing pupil's understanding of their own emotions and identity</td>
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<td>• Based on evidence of what works</td>
<td>• Positive reinforcement</td>
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<td>• Focused on clear short-term goals which give opportunities for pupils to</td>
<td>• Building self-esteem</td>
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<td>experience success</td>
<td>• Relevance to the learner: relate to pupil's interests where possible; make it matter to them</td>
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<td>• Include regular, high quality feedback from teaching staff</td>
<td>• A joined-up approach involving social worker/carer/VSH and other relevant professionals</td>
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<td>• Engage parents/carers in the agreement and evaluation of arrangements for</td>
<td>• Strong and visionary leadership on the part of both of the pupil's head teachers</td>
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<td>education support (e.g. primary-secondary/KS3-4)</td>
<td>• A child centered approach to assessment for learning</td>
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<td>• Supporting pupil transition (e.g. primary-secondary/KS3-4)</td>
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<td>• Raising aspirations through access to high-quality educational experiences</td>
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<td>• Promote the young person's awareness and understanding of their own</td>
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<td>thought process (metacognition) and help to develop problem-solving strategies</td>
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### Training
The Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and Professional Development Coordinator are responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

### Policy Review
The efficacy of this policy will be reviewed every two years by the Governing Body.

*Originator: MMA*
*Partner Governor: Tracy Whitaker*
*Date of Review: November 20*
*Next review: November 21*
Personal Education Plan (PEP) Completion

Social worker informs school of a child becoming looked after (or a looked after children entering the school)

Date is set for the completion of a Personal Education Plan (PEP). A copy of the form is sent to the school to enable completion of educational data

PEP meeting takes place within 20 days, involving the social worker designated teacher (or other appropriate staff), carer and young person if appropriate
A date is set for the next PEP meeting

Personal Education Plan is taken to the child’s statutory review and discussed within the wider context of the child’s life.
PEP sent by SW to the LACE team.

Review meetings are set up with Designated Teacher, Head of Year/SSO and LACE team to periodically review the progress of the LAC. Within school each PEP will be reviewed monthly with student or contact teacher, thus adapting to the needs of student.