

# **Lower Kersal Primary School**

## **LAC Policy**



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# Lower Kersal Primary School

## Who are our Looked After Children:

Looked after children are those in public care and are either:

- Subject to a Care Order or Interim Care Order, living either at home or away from home. The local authority has parental authority which it shares with the parents in a prescribed way.
- Accommodated with friends or relatives, foster carers or residential homes – parents retain full parental responsibility.
- Remanded into care.

A private agreement is not public care, i.e. When a child lives with friends or relatives by private agreement and these children are therefore not designated as Looked After.

## Rationale

Lower Kersal Primary School is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes. We subscribe to the 5 outcomes of Every Child Matters and therefore the Government's aims for every child regardless of their background or circumstances in order to:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

The national outcomes for Looked After Children in terms of educational achievement and subsequent life chances are unacceptably low. It therefore follows that Looked After Children need positive discrimination to help improve their situation. School should be a place offering stability, safety, continuity, positive relationships and individual care and attention.

## Objectives

Lower Kersal :Primary School is committed to implementing the principles and practice as outlined in:

- Dfee circular 0269/2000
- Dfee/DoH guidance 2000
- Children act 2004
- Care Matters 'Time for Change' 2007

## **Involving the Young People**

It is important that a young person is aware that information is being recorded about their personal circumstances. How this is shared with them clearly depends on their age and understanding. The explanation should emphasise that the school, the social worker, and their carer(s) are working together to promote their education.

It is important to establish the child's view of their changed circumstances and what they want others to know. It is also important to ensure that the nominated teacher/ carer prepares the child for situations when they are asked about home eg: by other pupils/teachers.

The Personal Educational Plan (PEP) - (intended to address some of the educational problems) involves the young child/young person and provides an opportunity for them to discuss their schooling and associated issues.

## **Multi-agency**

Lower Kersal Primary school/designated teacher should liaise with parents, carers, children's homes and social workers in a bid to promote the education and welfare of Looked After Children. Other professionals/ agencies also have an invaluable role in promoting education such as:

- The Virtual School Team which has a duty to oversee the education of children in the care of Salford by ensuring good school placements, improving attendance, reducing exclusion rates and by working in partnership with all those involved in the education and care of Looked After Children.

The Virtual School Team help to improve the educational achievements of Looked After Children by providing: training and advice for colleagues, supporting individual young people, implementing government policies on Looked After Children and setting up inter-agency initiatives and work in partnership with the virtual head.

- Parents/carers- play a vital role in ensuring positive outcomes for Looked After Children in terms of promoting young people's attendance, behaviour, learning and progress.
- Social workers should attend PEP meetings thereby involving themselves directly with the process and giving a positive message about school to the young person.
- Health professionals, educational psychologists, education welfare and other local authority colleagues

## **Looked After Children and Admissions**

The School Admissions Code (2008) gives clear guidance on the admittance of all children into schools, including Looked After Children.

### **Admittance during a normal admissions round**

In accordance with the Admissions Code any Looked After Child applying for a reception or year 7 place will be given priority over all other children.

(In the case of a faith based school, priority must be given first to Looked After Children of the faith, ahead of other applicants of the faith. Looked after children not of the faith must be given priority over other children not of the faith. However this is a minimum requirement and faith schools may decide to give priority to all Looked After Child regardless of their faith, over all other applicants).

### **Admittance at any other time**

Where there are places available in a year group any Looked After Child will automatically be given a place in the school.

- (Where the year group has reached its admission number and the Hard to Place Protocol is applied a school would be expected to admit the child under the protocol and exceed their admission number, as long as they have not reached their Hard to Place pupil capacity.
- Where necessary, the LA may direct a school to take a Looked After Child but this **must** be in the child's best interests).

**Primary Schools** – Looked After Children are counted as an exception to the infant class size regulations ( Key Stage 1) by the School Admissions Code of Practice. If a Looked After Child applies outside of the normal admission round for a place in a school, where the class size is 30, they cannot be refused a place.

## **Exclusions**

Looked after children are much more likely to be excluded than their peers and may need more support than others in coping with the effects of exclusion.

Exclusions:

- Can cause looked after children to become further disengaged from school
- Can lead to placement breakdown (particularly those young people in foster placements)

Exclusion is a very serious step for the school to take. It is not acceptable to exclude a child outside of the formal exclusion process (unofficial exclusion)

We (the School) will be proactive in providing support and alternative educational packages to prevent exclusions. An early dialogue with all involved (including young person) is essential. Social workers and carers/parents need to play an active role in working with ourselves (at the earliest opportunity) to help prevent an exclusion.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

<b><u>Governing Body</u></b>	<b><u>Designated Teacher</u></b>	<b><u>Whole School Staff</u></b>	<b><u>Head teacher</u></b>
<p>Ensure that the admissions criteria and practice prioritises LAC according to DCSF Admissions Code of Practice</p> <p>Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for LAC</p> <p>Ensure there is a designated teacher for LAC</p> <p>Liaise with the head teacher, designated LAC teacher and other relevant members of staff to ensure the needs of LAC are met</p> <p>Nominate a LAC governor who links with the designated teacher</p> <p>Receive regular reports from the designated teacher</p> <p>Ensure that the school's policies and procedures give LAC equal access in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School admissions</li> <li>• National curriculum, examinations and vocational opportunities</li> <li>• Out of school learning and extra curricular activities</li> </ul> <p>Annually review the implementation of the</p>	<p>Be an advocate for LAC</p> <p>Attend relevant training for LAC</p> <p>Act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and individuals in relation to LAC</p> <p>Ensure all LAC have an appropriate Personal Education Plan and that it is completed within 20 days of joining the school or entering care</p> <p>Convene an urgent multi professional meeting if a LAC is experiencing difficulties or at risk of exclusion</p> <p>Ensure confidentiality on individual children sharing information on a 'needs to know basis'</p> <p>Act as the key advisor for staff and governors on issues relevant to LAC</p> <p>Ensure that care and school liaison is effective including invitations to meetings and other school events</p> <p>Actively encourage and promote out of hours learning and</p>	<p>Ensure any LAC is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained</p> <p>Be familiar with the guidance on LAC and respond appropriately to requests for information to support PEP's and review meetings</p> <p>Respond positively to a LAC's request to be 'their support'</p> <p>Liaise with the designated teacher where a LAC is experiencing difficulties</p> <p>Use exclusions as a last resort</p> <p>Contribute to liaison with social care colleagues and other appropriate professionals as required</p> <p>Actively seek training to help fulfil their roles with regard to LAC</p>	<p>Appoint a designated teacher for LAC</p> <p>Ensure appropriate training for designated teacher and other school staff</p> <p>Ensure appropriate policies in place which encompass LAC and promote their well-being (e.g. behavioural, bullying, exclusion)</p> <p>Liaise with governing body to ensure appropriate information is shared e.g.: test results, attendance, exclusions</p> <p>Use exclusions only as last resort</p> <p>Ensure designated teacher has sufficient time to fulfil their role (obviously this will be dependant on the numbers of LAC on school roll)</p>

school policy for LAC	extra curricular activities for LAC Ensure speedy transfer of information when a LAC transfers to another educational establishment Contribute information to LAC reviews when required Build positive home/school relationships between parents/carers with opportunities for dialogue Promote raising the self esteem of LAC Ensure school has a LAC policy		
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All our governors and staff will support Salford City Council in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievements of our looked after children.



Chair of Governors