

AYLSHAM LEARNING FEDERATION

POLICY FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE LOOKED AFTER

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Signed: _____

Chair

Purpose

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of children who are looked after (CLA) within Aylsham Learning Federation.

Rationale

Children who are looked after (CLA) are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. The majority of children who are looked after have suffered abuse or neglect and it is nationally recognised that considerable educational underachievement exists when compared to their peers. This can result in poor exam success rates in comparison with the general population with fewer children who are looked after progressing to higher education or following progression pathways leading to future economic success and well-being.

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 subject of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38).
- Children who are 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 court 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 Norfolk Local Authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in Norfolk.

Introduction

Aylsham Learning Federation's aim is to promote the educational attainment and achievement and welfare of children who are looked after (CLA).

The senior designated teacher for children who are looked after at Aylsham High School is Kathryn Garnham, Director of Inclusion, and at Bure Valley School and John of Gaunt Infant and Nursery School, Ruth Abramson, SENCo.

A lead teaching assistant (TA) and assistant TA also support students who are looked after at Aylsham High School.

The governors with special responsibility for children who are looked after are Judy Taylor and Di Scott.

The Governing Board is committed to providing a quality education for all its students/pupils/children 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" (November 2005) and associated guidance on the education of children who are looked after.

As corporate parents we believe in 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
- celebrating success

Aims

The aims of the Federation are to:

- Ensure that Federation policies and procedures are followed for CLA students/pupils/children as for all students/pupils/children.

- Ensure that all CLA students/pupils/children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual's needs and ability.
- Ensure that CLA students/pupils/children take as full a part as possible in school activities.
- Ensure that carers and social workers of CLA students/pupils/children are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment.
- Ensure that CLA students/pupils/children are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision.

Admissions

The Governing Board endorses the Norfolk County Council policy for the admission of children who are looked after. Due to changes in care placements, children who are looked after may enter school at any time in the term. This Federation believes that it is vital that we give each CLA student/pupil/child a positive welcome and full support for their induction to help them settle and be part of our learning community.

Inclusion

This policy recognises that all students/pupils/children are entitled to a balanced, broad based curriculum. Our policy for CLA reinforces the need for teaching and learning that is fully inclusive. The Governing Board will ensure the Federation makes appropriate provision for all CLA students/pupils/children.

Allocation of Resources

The Governing Board will ensure that the Federation allocates resources to support appropriate provision for CLA students/pupils/children, meeting the objectives set out in this policy. We will work in partnership with Norfolk County Council who have responsibility for CLA students/pupils/children and other local authorities, to ensure that CLA students/pupils/children receive the full range of support to which they are entitled to enable them to make progress and achieve.

Monitoring the progress of Children who are Looked After

This Federation assesses each CLA student/pupil/child's attainment on entry to ensure continuity of learning. The social worker for the CLA student/pupil/child initiates a Personal Education Plan – PEP – within **20 days** of the student/pupil/child joining the school, or of entering care, and ensures that the young person is actively involved. Following the initial PEP, the role of the senior designated teacher is to liaise with other agencies involved to attend LAC and PEP reviews and provide information at these on progress and outcomes for students/pupils/children who are CLA.

The two TA's for looked after children supports all students who are looked after at Aylsham High School and run regular support meetings with them and liaise with their carers.

Record Keeping

The senior designated teacher and TA support team know all the CLA students/pupils/children in school and have access to their relevant contact details including parents, carers, specialist staff, teacher/support worker and social worker. The status of CLA students/pupils/children are identified within the Federation's information systems so that information is readily available to all classroom teachers and relevant associate staff. CLA students/pupils/children are identified as a vulnerable group when tracking, monitoring and reporting on attainment and progress.

Staff Development

We encourage staff to attend courses that help them to acquire the skills needed to support a CLA student/pupil/child. Part of the senior designated teacher's role is to raise awareness of issues associated with CLA within each school and disseminate information.

Partnership with parents/carers and care workers

We believe in developing strong partnerships with parents/carers and care workers to enable CLA students/pupils/children to achieve their potential to aid their further economic well-being. Review meetings are an opportunity to further this collaboration and partnership working. The TA support team for looked after children at Aylsham High School will liaise with carers at regular intervals.

Links with external agencies/organisations

We recognise the important contribution that external support services make in supporting CLA students/pupils/children. Colleagues from the following support services may be involved with individual CLA:

- Social care worker/community care worker/residential child care worker
- Children who are looked after in education team
- Other virtual schools for CLA from other local authorities
- Educational psychologist and others from local authority SEN services
- Medical officers
- School nurses
- Attendance improvement officers
- Youth offending services
- External learning providers
- Parent support adviser

Policy for CLA Review and Evaluation

The senior designated teacher for CLA will undertake a thorough review and evaluation of the impact of the policy for children who are looked after and CLA practice each year and report to the relevant Governing Board committee.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The senior designated teacher and the CLA Support TA's (the CLA team) will:

- Be an advocate for CLA students/pupils/children within school.
- Be proactive in identifying ways in which each school can raise attainment of CLA students/pupils/children.
- Work in partnership with Norfolk CLA team, and/or other virtual schools for those students/pupils/children who are from other local authorities, providing progress data on the progress of CLA students/pupils/children.
- Give regards to the impact of relevant decisions for CLA students/pupils/children on both the CLA student/pupil/child and the rest of the school community.
- Know all the CLA students/pupils/children 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 children who are looked after and disseminate information and good practice to other staff.
- Influence school policy and practice for CLA students/pupils/children.
- Act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to CLA students/pupils/children.
- Ensure that CLA students/pupils/children receive a positive welcome on entering school, especially mid-year, and offer additional support whenever possible such as a pre-entry visit to help the new student/pupil/child settle.
- Ensure, with the allocated social worker, that all CLA students/pupils/children have an appropriate PEP that is completed when joining each school or of entering care and ensure that the young person contributes to the plan.
- Arrange and contribute to PEP review meetings.
- Keep PEPs and other records up to date and will support the social worker to ensure that the PEPs and other records are kept up to date at transfer and at regular intervals (as stated by the local authority).
- Monitor the targets set out in the PEP.
- Convene an urgent multi-agency meeting if a CLA student/pupil/child is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion (where possible be present at the re-integration meeting following an exclusion).
- Ensure confidentiality of individual children, sharing confidential and personal information on a need to know basis, bearing in mind the wishes of the individual student.
- Act as the key adviser for staff and governors on issues relevant to CLA students/pupils/children.
- Ensure a speedy transfer of information records and coursework, where appropriate, when a CLA student/pupil/child transfers to another educational placement.
- Ensure that any special educational needs are addressed in conjunction with the SENDCO and in accordance with the code of practice for SEND.
- Will ensure that CLA funding is spent appropriately to support the educational needs of the CLA students/pupils/children.

All Federation staff will:

- Positively promote the raising of a CLA student/pupil/child's self-esteem.
- Have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of CLA students/pupils/children.

- Keep the senior designated teacher informed about a CLA student/pupil/child's progress.
- Ensure any CLA student/pupil/child is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained.
- Follow school procedures.
- Be familiar with the Federation's policy and guidance on children who are looked after and respond appropriately to requests for information to support PEPs and review meetings.
- Liaise with the senior designated teacher and TA support team where a CLA student/pupil/child is experiencing difficulties.
- Keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to the senior designated teacher.

The Governing Board will:

- Ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritises CLA students/pupils/children according to the DFE Admissions Code of Practice.
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for CLA students/pupils/children.
- Ensure there is a senior designated teacher for children who are looked after.
- Liaise with the executive headteacher/head of school, senior designated teacher and all other staff to ensure the needs of the CLA students/pupils/children are met.
- Nominate a minimum of 1 governor with responsibility for CLA students/pupils/children who links with the senior designated teacher.
- Ensure that the Federation's policies and procedures give CLA students/pupils/children equal access in respect of:
 - admission to school
 - National Curriculum and examinations, both academic and vocational
 - out of school learning and extra-curricular activities
 - additional educational support
 - work experience and careers guidance
 - annually review the effective implementation of the Federation policy for children who are looked after
- In the event of an exclusion, ensure that the senior designated teacher is invited to the exclusion meeting of the CLA student/pupil/child.

Linked Policies:

- SEND and inclusion policy
- Admissions policy
- Attendance policy
- Single equality scheme
- Behaviour for learning policy
- Safeguarding policy