

# Heathfield Primary School



## LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

Signed Head:  
Signed Chair:  
Date:

## PROMOTING THE EDUCATION OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN IN BOLTON SCHOOLS

Directors of Children's Services have a statutory responsibility to make sure that their local authority promotes the educational achievement of the children they look after.

To ensure this responsibility is discharged Bolton Children's Services have created 3 virtual schools to monitor and promote the educational progress of our looked after pupils. The policy below seeks to identify actions that help this process and asks schools to become signatories to the policy.

Although available current data shows improvement, Looked After pupils both nationally and locally are known to significantly underachieve, have poorer educational outcomes and remain at greater risk of education and social exclusion compared with their non-looked after peers. Therefore, Heathfield Primary School acknowledges that with Children's Services it plays a major role in ensuring that Looked After pupils are encouraged to achieve, to be healthy, to stay safe, to enjoy their lives and to have high expectations of their lives to come.

As such, Heathfield Primary School's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children is based on the following principles:

Primarily, our school will ensure every looked after pupil has an up to date Personal Education Plan (PEP) which will:

- emanate from a multi-agency PEP meeting;
- monitor and promote good attendance;
- involve the pupil in its planning;
- maintain high expectations for looked after pupils;
- in partnership with pupils, social workers and carers ensure the Pupil Premium Grant is spent efficiently on individual looked after pupils and that use is recorded for monitoring by the Bolton Virtual Schools;
- promote inclusion by challenging and changing stereotyped attitudes towards looked after children and the care system;
- provide stability and continuity within pupils education;
- intervene early in concerns and ensure all partner agencies are informed and involved;
- always have awareness that looked after children may be experiencing emotional upset in their life;
- encourage them to seek practical and emotional support within the school, listen to them and if necessary signpost them to find additional help and support;
- exclude looked after pupils only as a very last resort and ensure that all agencies have delivered their services and been fully consulted prior to such an exclusion.

## **ACTIONS FOR HEATHFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Heathfield Primary School and governing body is committed to helping every Looked After Child to achieve the highest levels they can, including supporting and promoting aspirations to achieve in their further and higher education.

Improved achievement will be measured by monitoring classroom levels, achievements and attendance which the school will monitor and report on via the PEP.

We will respond quickly and accurately to requests for attainment data and other relevant information requested by the Bolton LAC Virtual Schools

For our Looked After pupils, we will also:

- ensure a Designated Teacher of suitable seniority is identified and enabled to carry out the responsibilities as set out below; this is the SENCO
- identify a governor as Designated Governor for Looked After Children; see Gov file
- identify and champion the needs of Looked After young people, raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them, and ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible.

## **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE KEY PROFESSIONALS**

The governing body of Heathfield Primary School will:

- Identify a nominated governor to represent the interests of Looked After Children and ensure that they governor is fully trained on the requirements of their role and associated legal issues. At Heathfield, this is the SENCO.
- Be aware of and understand the statutory guidance applicable to the education of Looked After Children. (<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/DCSF-00342-2010>)
- Allocate school resources to meet the academic and out of school learning needs of Looked After Children.
- Ensure all school policies and procedures support their needs including the schools admissions and over subscription policy.
- Request performance data on Looked After pupils at every governors meeting
- Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school by looked after children
- Ensure that the school has an identified Designated LAC Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher has enough resource and authority to carry out his or her responsibilities. (It is strongly recommended that this person should be a member of the Senior Management Team). (*annual training for Designated Teachers will be available through the 3 Bolton Virtual Schools.*)
- Commission and receive a report once a year setting out the achievements/attendance etc of the schools looked after pupil population.

## **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HEAD TEACHER**

The Head Teacher of Heathfield Primary School will:

- Identify a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children – the SENCO - whose role is set out as below. It is essential that another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or be away from school for any length of time.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusion of Looked After Children and take immediate action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.

- Be able to report on the progress, attendance and achievements of Looked After Children.
- Ensure that staff in the school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related legislation and guidance.

## THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

Government Guidance states that the statutory role of the designated teacher should be delivered by “someone with sufficient authority to make things happen... [who] should be an advocate for Looked After Children, assessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them”

In Heathfield Primary School our Designated LAC Teacher will:

1. Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their Carer, using the Personnel Education Plan to plan for their transition in consultation with the child’s Carer, their social worker and associated professionals.
2. Ensure that a Personal Education Planning meeting is held and actions from it inform the statutory care review. .
3. Track and monitor the academic progress of looked after children within the school and target support appropriately.
4. Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing sensitive personal information with teaching staff on a need to know basis.
5. Encourage Looked After Children to join in extra-curricular activities and access out of school learning opportunities.
6. Ensure (when appropriate) the attendance of pupils at their PEP and Looked After review meetings.
7. Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of Looked After Children and informing the delivery of any sensitive course work (such as Family Tree lessons.)
8. Liaise with all professionals and agencies who are working with the pupil
9. Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and – if the pupil changes school – to a new school.
10. Be pro-active in supporting transitions and associated planning when moving to a new phase in education.
11. Promote inclusion in all areas of school life.
12. Be aware that many Looked After Pupils say they are bullied, so will actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school’s anti-bullying policy.
13. Ensure that requests for information that come from the Virtual Schools are responded to quickly.
14. Ensure awareness of available grants and bursaries available to Looked After Children
15. Ensure that all school staff have relevant training for Looked After Children’s needs and of this policy, to enable them to positively promote their education.
16. Act as a champion for Looked After Children and advocate for them in school.
17. In consultation with the pupils Social Worker, ensure an informed Personal Education Planning meeting is held within 20 days of the child entering the school, a plan is designed, implemented and regularly reviewed twice per year for every Looked After Child, (*in line with Bolton’s guidance on Personal Education Plans.*)