



# Looked After Children Policy

**Approved by the Management Committee**

**Hawkswood Group**

**Date of Next Review:           October 2024**

**Ratified:                            October 2022**

# The Hawkswood Group

## Looked After Children (current and former children in care) Policy

*Looked after children are children who are in the care of local authorities as defined by Section 22 of the Children Act 1989. In relation to school admissions legislation a 'looked after child' is a child in public care at the time of application to a school.*

*Hereafter referred to as 'Children in care'*

*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-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.*

**Hereafter referred to as 'Former children in care'**

### **IN PURSUIT OF THIS POLICY WE WILL**

- Nominate a Designated Teacher in each school for current and former children in care who will act as their advocate, target support and champion them in aspects of school life.
- Nominate a school governor to ensure that the needs of current and former children in care in the school are taken into account at a school management level and to support the Designated Teacher in carrying out their duties. This is our Safeguarding governor.
- Support the Designated Teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they engage with training on current and former children in care, Virtual School forums and network meetings
- Abide by the admissions code in all matters relating to the admission of current and former children in care

As a school, we keep the following in mind and provide tailored provision to support the development of:

- Self esteem
- Gaps in school experience
- Social/emotional/cognitive development
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Making and maintaining friendships
- Attachment
- Confidentiality and discretion

### **ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNING BODY/ Management Committee**

- Identify a Nominated Governor for current and former children in care (safeguarding governor).
- Ensure that all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of current and former children in care.

- Ensure the school has an overview of the needs of all its current and former children in care regardless of the originating authority.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of current and former children in care.
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.

**This Governing Body will:**

- Monitor the academic progress of current and former children in care, through an annual report from the Headteacher of each provision within the Hawkswood Group.
- Ensure, where relevant, that current and former children in care are given top priority when designating and applying for places in accordance with the school's criteria.
- Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school, by ensuring the school implements policies, practices and procedures to ensure current and former children in care achieve and enjoy their time at the school.
- Ensure the school has a designated teacher for current and former children in care on each provision and that they are enabled and supported, along with the Headteacher and other staff, to carry out their responsibilities as below
- Receive a report each year setting out:
  - The number of looked after pupils on roll (if any) and dates of joining and/or leaving.
  - Their attendance, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils
  - Their results in SATs, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
  - The number and duration of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any) as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
  - The destination of pupils who leave the school
  - The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.
- Ensure systems are in place to share the above annual report with School Improvement Partners and OFSTED in line with current statutory requirements

**ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER**

The Designated Teacher on site at each provision will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy and will directly report to the Virtual Headteacher for Hawkswood Catherine Davies in advocating and reporting back on children in care.

The Designated teacher will:

Be a qualified teacher

- Maintain an up to date record of all Current and former children in care who are on the school/ provision roll. This will include:
  - Status i.e. care order or accommodated.
  - Type of Placement i.e. Foster, respite, residential.
  - Name of Social Worker, area office, telephone number.
  - Daily contact and numbers e.g. name of parent or carer or key worker in children's home.
  - SEN Code of Practice
  - Child Protection information when appropriate.
  - Baseline information and all test results.
  - Attendance figures
  - Exclusions
- Ensure that there is an up-to-date Personal Education Plan (PEP) for every Looked After Child which is completed within statutory timescales (appendix 2) and reviewed at least termly in

accordance with the placing authority's guidance. The PEP should be a 'live document' with a clear narrative, SMART targets and a meaningful Pupil Premium Plus spend. The PEP must acknowledge the child's Care Plan and other appropriate documents (e.g. EHC Plan).

- Contribute to reviews and meetings on each child/young person as appropriate.
- Liaise with the Virtual School of the placing authority on a regular basis
- Ensure that if/when the child transfers school all relevant information is forwarded to the receiving school as a matter of priority.
- Ensure that any underachieving Looked After Child is identified and prioritised for school based interventions
- Share information about Current and former children in care appropriately and sensitively with staff.
- Listen regularly to current and former children in care and champion them within the school community.
- Keep the school up-to-date with current, relevant legislation and its implication.
- Report to the Governing body annually on the performance of all current and former children in care on the school roll.

## **ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL STAFF**

All of our staff will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of current and former children in care, as for all pupils.
- Maintain confidentiality and ensure that Current and former children in care are supported sensitively.
- Respond positively to requests to be the child's key trusted adult
- Respond promptly to the designated teacher's requests for information.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that may affect the learning of Current and former children in care

Information on current and former children in care will be shared with school staff on a "need to know" basis. All staff have a clear understanding of confidentiality and issues that affect current and former children in care.

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.

## **Relevant legislation**

- The Children Act 1989, as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010, as amended.
- Promoting the education of looked after and previously looked after children (2018)
- The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children (2009)