



King's Norton Boys' School

Looked After Children Policy

Adopted by the Governing Board: July 2018
To be reviewed by: July 2019

This Policy has been adopted by the Governing Board of King's Norton Boys' School:

Signed by:

_____ Headteacher Date: _____

_____ Chair of governors Date: _____

Looked after Children Named Parties:

Position in School	Name / contact details
Headteacher	Mr Jonathan Butcher j.butcher@knbs.co.uk
Assistant Headteacher (Designated Teacher)	Mr. Andrew MacKenzie a.mackenzie@knbs.co.uk
Looked After Children Nominated Governor	Mr Andrew Collyer a.collyer@knbs.co.uk

Introduction

The governing body of King's Norton Boys' School is committed to providing quality education for all its students, 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 DfES Circular 0269/2000 and DfES/DOH Guidance 2000 and Promoting the Education of Looked after Children: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities – DfE, July 2014. The Guidance recognises the collective responsibility of local authorities and schools to achieve good parenting and sets out six principles:

- Prioritising education;
- Having high expectations;
- Inclusion – changing and challenging attitudes;
- Achieving continuity and stability;
- Early intervention – priority action; and
- Listening to children

The Guidance introduced two key measures, in order to improve multi-agency co-ordination and improve educational life chances for Looked after Children;

- Designated Safeguarding Lead for every school
- Personal Education Plans for all Looked After Children

This governing body is committed to ensuring that the Designated Safeguarding Lead and staff are enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

Research has shown there are seven areas schools need to consider to help ensure a whole school approach to Looked after Children:

- Supporting emotional and developmental well-being;
- Raising and monitoring attainment;
- Supporting Learning;
- School environment;
- Equality and diversity;
- Effectiveness and deployment of staff;
- Supporting equality and diversity; and Working together with carers and other professionals.

Role and responsibility of the Designated Teacher (DT)

The DT should:

- be an advocate for Looked After Children;
- when new to the school, ensure a smooth and welcome induction for the child and carer, and note any specific requirements, including care status;
- ensure that a Personal Education Plan 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, where in place. Where appropriate, the PEP should take account of any Individual Educational Plan (IEP), Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP), career plan or any other relevant plans. The PEP

should inform and be reviewed, concurrently with the Care Plan, i.e.: within 28 days, 3 months and 6 months and, at least, every 6 months;

- keep PEPs and other records up to date, particularly in time to inform review meetings;
- by the end of the third month in care, ensure a baseline assessment form is completed and returned to the School Improvement Advisor for Looked After Children;
- ensure that each Looked After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to (this should be based on the child's wishes and may not necessarily be the DT);
- 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. The Home School Agreement may be adapted to take into account any specific points around communication, transport arrangements and consent signatures;
- 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.

Work with Individual Looked After Children

- To discuss with individual children, possibly alongside a carer, to arrive at a statement about their care arrangements and circumstances that they would be happy to share with staff and/or students;
- To enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their Care Plan;
- To ensure that the Student Voice section of the PEP is completed with each child and is the result of a one to one meeting so that the views of the student are faithfully represented in the PEP;
- To ensure that a Home-School Agreement is drawn up with the primary carer and signed by the Social Worker; and
- To supervise the smooth induction of a new child in care into the school.

Liaison:

- To liaise with the member of school staff responsible for monitoring children on the Child Protection Plan;
- To develop good communication with Children's Services staff so that the PEP is supported by the child's Care Plan;
- To attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or to contribute in other ways to care planning meetings and statutory reviews;
- To be named contact for colleagues in Children's Services; and

- To ensure the speedy transfer of information between schools, agencies and individuals, and report on the progress and attendance of all children in care on the school role to the Virtual School as requested – attainment termly and attendance each month.

Training:

- To cascade training to school staff as appropriate;
- To develop knowledge of procedures by attending training events organised by Children’s Services, the Virtual School or local Designated teachers cluster groups; and
- To keep informed of any updated guidance from DfE or other research or policy.

Role and responsibility of the Governing Body

The governing body of this school should:

- nominate a designated governor for children in care to take the lead role in matters relating to children in care and 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;
- 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;
- 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;
- review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years.
- ensure that the named governor reports annually to the Governing Body on the progress of all Looked After Children.

The designated teacher should be given the appropriate level of support in order to fulfil their role. The governing body should, in partnership with the head teacher, ensure that the designated teacher has or will, through their training and development, have the opportunity to acquire and keep up-to-date with the necessary skills, knowledge and training to understand and respond to the specific teaching and learning needs of children in care. This means in particular that they make sure the designated teacher understands and helps others to understand the emotional, psychological and social implications of separation from birth families and the reasons for that separation. It will be particularly important for governing bodies, in partnership with the school’s leaders, to ensure that the focus of the designated teacher’s role is on assessing and meeting the teaching and learning needs of the children and that administrative tasks which support that work are undertaken by support staff.

The governing body should ensure that the designated teacher is a member of the teaching staff with appropriate seniority, professional experience and status to provide leadership, training, information and advice to others that will influence decisions about the teaching and

learning needs of child in care. Where the designated teacher is not a member of the senior leadership team, a member of the team should be designated as a champion of children in care issues to work closely with the designated teacher.

The governing body should monitor the effectiveness of the designated teacher in undertaking these responsibilities. The governing body should consider a brief termly (three times a year) report from the designated teacher on the progress and educational needs of child in care on the school's roll. This should include:

- The number of looked-after students on the school's roll (if any);
- Their attendance, as a discreet group, compared to other students.
- The level of progress been made across their subjects;
- The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any);
- Whether any have special educational needs (SEN) and whether those needs are being met through statements;
- The destinations of students who leave the school.

The reports should enable the governing body to make judgements about the designated teacher role in relation to:

- any workload issues arising as a result of the number of children in care on roll at the school and the number of local authorities which are involved;
- any process or planning issues arising from PEPs;
- training undertaken by the designated teacher in order to impart knowledge and understanding about the education and wellbeing of children in care to colleagues;
- work with virtual school heads or their equivalents in local authorities; and
- the impact of any of the school's policies, for example on charging for educational visits and extended schools activities, on children in care.

Roles and responsibilities of all staff

- Ensure that any Looked After child is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained
- Be familiar with the Guidance on Looked After Children 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 Looked After child's request to be the named person that they can talk to when they feel it is necessary;
- Contribute to the DT's requests for information on educational attainment and needs as appropriate;
- As with all children, ensure that no Looked After Child 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
- Have high expectations of the educational and social achievements of children in care;
- Keep the designated teacher informed about a child in care's progress and if they are experiencing any difficulties;
- Positively promote raising the self-esteem of Looked After Children;

- Ensure any children in care are supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained;
- Contribute to regular liaison with Children's Services colleagues and other appropriate professionals and keep carers fully informed at all times; and
- Keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to other professionals/parents/carers/student as appropriate.
- It is important that all teaching staff who are in contact with the child or young person are aware that he/she is being looked after by the Local Authority. The responsibility for the transfer of this information should be that of the Head Teacher and/or the designated teacher for Looked after Children.
- It is appropriate for a teaching assistant to have knowledge that the young person is in care only when directly involved in the teaching of the young person.
- Where deemed necessary in the absence of the usual class teacher, some information regarding the child's circumstances should be shared with the teacher covering the class. The extent of this sharing should be determined by the head teacher or the designated teacher for Looked after Children.

Involving children in care

It is important that children in care are aware that information is being recorded regarding 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 that children in care are supported to complete the Student Voice section of the PEP by the designated teacher to inform the PEP and Care Plan review meetings

It is important to establish their view about them coming into care / being in care and what they want others to know. It is also important to ensure that a Social Worker/teacher/carer prepares the child for situations when they may be asked about home, e.g. by other students in the playground.

Training

The Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and Continued Professional Development Co-ordinator will be responsible for ensuring that all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

Related School Policy Documents:

- Behaviour & Discipline Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education Policy