Dream Believe Achieve

DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

VERSION 1

DATE OF ORIGINAL RATIFICATION: November 2019

DATE OF MOST RECENT REVIEW: November 2022

SUMMARY OF CHANGES AT LAST REVIEW
November 2022 - *Change of name to Laura Phillips. Contact details also changed.*

Dream Believe Achieve

RECORD OF CONSULTATION	
DATE	**CONSULTATION DETAILS**
November 2020	Consultation with Lead Safeguarding Governor

THE GRANGE SCHOOL
DAVENTRY, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

1. Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

A suitable member of staff is appointed as the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children

The designated teacher promotes the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, and supports other staff members to do this too

Staff, parents, carers and guardians are aware of the identity of the designated teacher, how to contact them and what they are responsible for

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance on the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

It also takes into account section 20 and section 20A of the Child and Young Persons Act 2008.

3. Definitions

Looked-after children are registered pupils that are:

In the care of a local authority, or

Provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services functions, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours

Previously looked-after children are registered pupils that fall into either of these categories:

They were looked after by a local authority but ceased to be as a result of any of the following:

- A child arrangements order, which includes arrangements relating to who the child lives with and when they are to live with them
- A special guardianship order
- An adoption order

They appear to the governing board to have:

- Been in state care in a place outside of England and Wales because they would not have otherwise been cared for adequately, and
- Ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted

Personal education plan (PEP) is part of a looked-after child's care plan that is developed with the school. It forms a record of what needs to happen and who will make it happen to ensure the child reaches their full potential.

Virtual school head (VSH) is a local authority officer responsible for promoting the educational achievement of their authority's looked-after children, working across schools to monitor and support these pupils as if they were in a single school. The VSH is also responsible for providing information and advice to schools, parents and guardians in respect of previously looked-after children.

4. Identity of our designated teacher

Our designated teacher is Laura Phillips.

You can contact them by email at mrs.phillips@thegrangeschooldaventry.net.

Our designated teacher takes lead responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children at our school. They are your initial point of contact for any of the matters set out in the section below.

As LAC and PLAC children are automatically in receipt of the Pupil Premium, our Pupil Premium Lead also takes an active responsibility for the education and welfare of any LAC and PLAC children. Our Pupil Premium Lead is Elaine Wagg and she can be contacted at mrs.wagg@thegrangeschooldaventry.net.

5. Role of the designated teacher

5.1 Leadership responsibilities

The designated teacher will:

Act as a central point of initial contact within the school for any matters involving looked-after and previously looked-after children

Promote the educational achievement of every looked-after and previously looked-after child on roll by:

- Working with the Virtual School
- Promoting a whole school culture where the needs of these pupils matter and are prioritised

Take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand:

- The things which can affect how looked-after and previously looked-after children learn and achieve
- How the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils

Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies to ensure they consider the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children

Promote a culture in which looked-after and previously looked-after children are encouraged and supported to engage with their education and other school activities

Act as a source of advice for teachers about working with looked-after and previously looked-after

children

Work directly with looked-after and previously looked-after children and their carers, parents and guardians to promote good home-school links, support progress and encourage high aspirations

Delegate organisational responsibility for pupil's wellbeing needs to the Strategic Wellbeing Lead (Elaine Wagg) and the Wellbeing Lead (Janice Hennessy). The designated teacher will, however, evaluate the impact of any work completed and the impact of this upon the child, family and educational attainment.

Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of looked-after children's PEPs

Work closely with the school's designated safeguarding lead to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to

Involve parents and guardians of previously looked-after children in decisions affecting their child's education

5.2 Supporting looked-after children

The designated teacher will:

Make sure looked-after children's PEPs meet their needs by working closely with other teachers to assess each child's specific educational needs

Have overall responsibility for leading the process of target-setting in PEPs

Monitor and track how looked-after children's attainment progresses under their PEPs

If a child is not on track to meet their targets, be instrumental in agreeing the best way forward with them in order to make progress, and ensure that this is reflected in their PEP

Ensure the identified actions of PEPs are put in place

During the development and review of PEPs, help the school and relevant local authority decide what arrangements work best for pupils

Ensure that:

- A looked-after child's PEP is reviewed before the statutory review of their care plan – this includes making sure the PEP is up to date and contains any new information since the last PEP review, including whether agreed provision is being delivered
- PEPs are clear about what has or has not been taken forward, noting what resources may be required to further support the child and from where these may be sourced
- The updated PEP is passed to the child's social worker and VSH ahead of the statutory review of their care plan

Transfer a looked-after child's PEP to their next school or college, making sure it is up to date and that the local authority responsible for looking after them has the most recent version

5.3 Supporting both looked-after children and previously looked-after children

The designated teacher will:

Ensure the specific needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children are understood by staff and reflected in how the school uses pupil premium funding

Work with Virtual School to agree how pupil premium funding for looked-after children can most effectively be used to improve their attainment

Help raise the awareness of parents and guardians of previously looked-after children about pupil premium funding and other support for these children

Play a key part in decisions on how pupil premium funding is used to support previously looked-after children

Encourage parents' and guardians' involvement in deciding how pupil premium funding is used to support their child, and be the main contact for queries about its use

Ensure teachers have awareness and understanding of the specific needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children in areas like attendance, homework, behaviour and future career planning

Be aware of the special educational needs (SEN) of looked-after and previously looked-after children, and make sure teachers also have awareness and understanding of this

Ensure the SEND code of practice, as it relates to looked-after children, is followed

Make sure PEPs work in harmony with any education, health and care (EHC) plans that a looked-after child may have

Ensure that, with the help of the Virtual School, they have the skills to identify signs of potential SEN issues in looked-after and previously looked-after children, and know how to access further assessment and support where necessary

Ensure that they and other staff can identify signs of potential mental health issues in looked-after and previously looked-after children and understand where the school can draw on specialist services

Put in place robust arrangements to have strengths and difficulties questionnaires (SDQs) completed for looked-after children, and use the results of these SDQs to inform PEPs

Put in place mechanisms for understanding the emotional and behavioural needs of previously looked-after children

5.4 Relationships beyond the school

The designated teacher will:

Proactively engage with social workers and other professionals to enable the school to respond effectively to the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children

Discuss with social workers how the school should engage with birth parents, and ensure the

school is clear about who has parental responsibility and what information can be shared with whom

Be open and accessible to parents and guardians of previously looked-after children and encourage them to be actively involved in their children's education

Proactively build relationships with local authority professionals, such as VSHs and SEN departments

Consider how the school works with others outside of the school to maximise the stability of education for looked-after children, such as:

- Finding ways of making sure the latest information about educational progress is available to contribute to the statutory review of care plans
- Ensuring mechanisms are in place to inform the Virtual School when looked-after children are absent without authorisation and work with the responsible authority to take appropriate safeguarding action
- Talking to the child's social worker and/or other relevant parties in the local authority regarding any decisions about changes in care placements which will disrupt the child's education, providing advice about the likely impact and what the local authority should do to minimise disruption
- Making sure that, if a looked-after child moves school, their new designated teacher receives any information needed to help the transition process

Seek advice from the Virtual School about meeting the needs of individual previously looked-after children, but only with the agreement of their parents or guardians

Make sure that for each looked-after child:

- There's an agreed process for how the school works in partnership with the child's carer and other professionals, such as their social worker, in order to review and develop educational progress
- School policies are communicated to their carer and social worker and, where appropriate, birth parents
- Teachers know the most appropriate person to contact where necessary, such as who has the authority to sign permission slips

Where a looked-after child is at risk of exclusion:

- Contact the Virtual School as soon as possible so they can help the school decide how to support the child to improve their behaviour and avoid exclusion becoming necessary
- Working with the Virtual School and child's carers, consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to address the causes of the child's behaviour

Where a previously looked-after child is at risk of exclusion, talk to the child's parents or guardians

before seeking advice from the Virtual School on avoiding exclusion

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by Vicki Masters, Designated Teacher. At every review, it will be approved by the Governor with responsibility for Safeguarding, who will communicate their findings to the full governing board for approval.