

THE HARVEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL



LAC POLICY

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Statement of Intent:

Educational achievement and subsequent life chances for Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) are of real concern. Pupils who are looked after often require additional support and attention in order to improve their situation.

The Harvey Grammar School endeavours to provide positive experiences and offer stability, safety, and individual care and attention for all our pupils. With this in mind, we aim to plan support for LAC realistically and use the school's resources efficiently to ensure the school meets their needs.

Legal Framework:

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children Act 1989
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE (2018) 'Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2018) 'The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2023) 'Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement'
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education 2023'
- DfE (2023) 'Working together to safeguard children 2023'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies and documents:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy.
- Anti-bullying Policy.

Definitions:

"Looked-after children (LAC)" are defined as:

- Children or young people who are the subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989
- Children who are placed in foster care, children's residential homes, with relatives or friends, in semi-independent or supported independent accommodation
- Children subject to a Care or Interim Care Order whilst placed with a parent, where the LA has parental responsibility
- Children who are not subject to an order, but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents.

"Previously LAC (PLAC)" are defined as:

- Children who are no longer looked after by an LA in England and Wales because they have either been adopted or are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order
- Children who were adopted outside England and Wales from 'state care' (care that is provided by a public authority, religious organisation, or other organisation whose main purpose is to benefit society)

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Ensuring the school has coherent policies and procedures in place for LAC and PLAC.
- Reviewing the school's policies and procedures in conjunction with legislation and statutory guidance
- Ensuring that Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Looked After Children.
- Ensuring the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Looked After Children.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff have access to appropriate training on keeping LAC and PLAC safe
- Ensuring that staff understand how to use the school's clear systems and processes for identifying and reporting possible safeguarding or mental health concerns amongst LAC and PLAC
- Ensuring LAC and PLAC have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and that reasonable adjustments are made, if necessary
- Appointing a designated teacher for LAC and PLAC
- Ensuring the designated teacher for LAC and PLAC has received appropriate training
- Allowing the designated teacher, the time and facilities to succeed in carrying out their duties
- Ensuring all members of staff are aware that supporting LAC is a key priority

The Designated Teacher for LAC and PLAC is responsible for:

- Building relationships with health, education and social care partners and other partners so that they and the designated Virtual School Head (VSH) understand the support available to LAC and PLAC
- Promoting the educational achievement of LAC and PLAC at the school
- Acting as the main contact for social services and the DfE
- Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations
- Ensuring LAC are involved in setting their own targets
- Advising staff on teaching strategies for LAC
- Ensuring that LAC are prioritised for one-to-one tuition and support
- Leading on how the child's PEP is developed and used in school to ensure the child's progress towards targets is monitored
- Liaising with the SENCO to ensure all pupil needs are met
- Being vigilant in observing any potential safeguarding concerns that could arise surrounding LAC and PLAC due to their increased vulnerability to harm
- Working with the child's VSH and social worker to develop and implement their PEP
- Working with the VSH to discuss how funding can be used to support the child's progress and meet the needs identified in their PEP
- Keeping up-to-date records of LAC's respective social worker and VSH

- Promoting amongst staff the importance of recognising and reporting safeguarding concerns surrounding LAC and PLAC as soon as possible due to their increased vulnerability to harm
- Where a child ceases to be looked after and becomes a care leaver, keeping up-to-date contact details of their LA personal advisor and liaising with the advisor as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver

The designated teacher for LAC/PLAC is Mr A Allon (Deputy Headteacher).

Staff are responsible for:

- Being aware of LAC and PLAC and providing them with support and encouragement
- Preserving confidentiality, where appropriate, and showing sensitivity and understanding
- Being vigilant for any signs of bullying towards LAC and PLAC
- Being vigilant for any signs of safeguarding concerns surrounding LAC and PLAC due to their increased vulnerability to harm, and reporting any concerns to the DSL as soon as possible
- Promoting the self-esteem of LAC and PLAC

Personal Education Plan (PEP):

All LAC must have a care plan; PEPs are an integral part of this care plan. The PEP is an evolving record of what needs to happen for a pupil to enable them to make the expected progress and fulfil their potential. The PEP will reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning which meets the identified educational needs of the child. The PEP will be reviewed termly.

The school, with other professionals and the child's carers, will use the PEP to support the child's educational needs, raise the child's aspirations and improve their life chances. All relevant bodies, such as the LA, the designated teacher and carers, will involve the child in the PEP process at all stages. The VSH and the designated teacher will ensure that information is included within a LAC's PEP surrounding how they are benefitting from any use of PP+ funding to improve their attainment. Any interventions supported by PP+ will be evidence-based and in the best interests of the pupil.

Working with Agencies and the Virtual School Head (VSH):

The school will ensure that copies of all relevant reports are forwarded to the social workers of LAC, in addition to carers or residential social workers. The school will coordinate their review meetings; for example, hold their annual review of LAC with their statutory care review. The school will work with other agencies to exchange information, such as changes in circumstances, exclusions or attendance issues, taking prompt action, where necessary, to safeguard LAC and PLAC.

Through the designated teacher, the school will work with the VSH, social worker and other relevant agencies to monitor any arrangements in place so that actions and activities recorded in the child's PEP are implemented without delay. The designated teacher will communicate with the VSH and agree on how PP+ can be used effectively to accommodate the child's educational attainment and progress. The designated teacher will ensure consistent and strong communication with the VSH regarding LAC who are absent without authorisation.

Safeguarding:

The school recognises that many LAC and PLAC have experienced trauma, abuse or complex family circumstances that have led to them being placed in care, and will ensure that all staff are aware that experiences of adversity such as these can leave pupils vulnerable to further harm or exploitation. Staff will be encouraged to report to the DSL any concerns they have over LAC or PLAC

in line with the processes outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. When there is reasonable cause to suspect that a LAC or PLAC is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the school will collaborate in the multi-agency strategy discussion where appropriate to determine the pupil's welfare and plan rapid further action as necessary.

Suspension and Exclusion:

The school will have regard to the DfE's statutory guidance 'Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement' and recognises that suspending or excluding LAC can make them more vulnerable to harm due to not having the protection and opportunities school provides. The Headteacher will balance this recognition alongside the need to ensure a calm and safe environment for all staff and pupils.

Where the school has concerns about a LAC's behaviour, the VSH will be informed at the earliest opportunity. As far as possible, the school will engage proactively with the social worker or carer of a LAC to provide appropriate support for underlying issues that may be causing poor behaviour and improving this behaviour. Where a looked-after child is at risk of being suspended or permanently excluded, the school will engage with those individuals involved in the pupil's care. Where a looked-after child is excluded, the school will document the provision of immediate suitable education in the pupil's PEP.

Monitoring and Review:

This policy will be reviewed every three years and any changes to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.