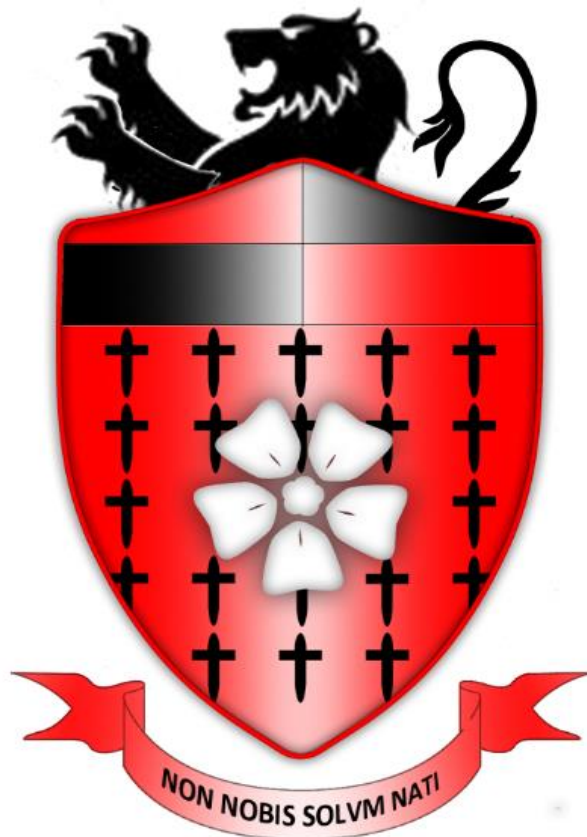


# Hornsea School & Language College



## Looked After Child Education Policy

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## Looked After Child Education Policy

### **Introduction**

Hornsea School and Language College (HSLC) continues to adopt an innovative multi agency approach to supporting the emotional needs, well-being and educational progress and attainment of our Looked After Children (LAC). Our dedicated Student Support Team of non-teaching staff is managed by a qualified and HCPC registered Social Worker and continues to be a demonstration of our investment in and commitment to supporting our more vulnerable/disaffected students, including those who are 'Looked After'. HSLC has a dedicated LAC Pastoral Manager in post who focuses on supporting the LAC cohort in school on a daily basis and liaising with partner agencies and carers to promote and ensure positive engagement with learning for each and every LAC at HSLC. An established and structured program of LAC mentoring support and academic progress tracking is in place alongside 'open door' access to the LAC Pastoral manager.

The LAC Designated Teacher is Assistant Head (Gail Smith), the Student Support Team Manager and LAC Pastoral Manager work collectively and take the professional lead role in terms of oversight and ensuring that the LAC at HSLC are fully supported. The Learning Support Team Manager assists as required. Work is undertaken and support provided in accordance with statutory guidance, identified best practice and relevant local protocols and procedures.

The Student Support Team comprises professionals and access to specialist staff from a variety of partner agencies and backgrounds and disciplines – including Social Work, Counselling, Education Welfare, Youth and Family Support Service, Substance Misuse and Sexual Health, Emotional Literacy and Mental Health and School Nurse, - as well as an Attendance Officer and access to a dedicated learning environment within the Student Support Team building.

Based in its own building on the school site, the Team is at the heart of an even wider network of support for our pupils. It may be rightly viewed as a multi-agency hub that is in place to support the diverse needs of the school community.

Routine, day to day contact and liaison with academic Progress Leaders and Pastoral Manager's and other teaching staff along with the strong links with partner agencies, ensures that early intervention / support (with a strong emphasis on transitional work into Year 7) is co-ordinated and that the individual needs of each LAC s are understood and supported throughout their school life.

The Student Support Team works closely with relevant professionals (e.g. Social Work Case Manager and respective LA Virtual School Head) to undertake timely and informed LAC Reviews and Personal Education Planning (PEP) meetings in line with the timescales stipulated by statutory guidance and in conjunction with the policy and procedures of the relevant Local Authority that has responsibility for the individual LAC. HSLC has developed strong, positive and mutually supportive links with the each respective LAC Virtual School, which serves to promote effective and accountable use of PPG funding and the well-being, safeguarding and educational progress of the LAC cohort. The same principle applies to the relationships developed with foster carers.

We work closely with partner agencies and professionals to ensure that the Pupil Premium Grant is utilised effectively and have established procedures within school to monitor and evaluate the impact of this. This brings transparency and accountability to the use of LAC funding received. We foster strong and close links with foster carers and support the viability of placements wherever possible. LAC academic progress and attainment, meaningful engagement with education, healthy personal development and wellbeing remains a key focus for this school.

LAC educational progress is specifically tracked by the school as part of the Pupil Premium Grant / Vulnerable Group monitoring process involving members of the SLT, Governor's, Progress Leader's, Learning Support Team and Student Support Team.

### **Principles**

Hornsea School and Language College is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, fairness and an inclusive ethos. As you would expect, we remain committed to 'Help Children Achieve More' agenda (formerly Every Child Matters and associated outcomes). This school recognises that there is considerable educational underachievement of children in residential and foster care, when compared with their peers.

With specific regard to LAC education, the school observes and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in statutory guidance and identified best practice, this includes for example,

- Promoting the education of looked after children, statutory guidance for local authorities, July 2014 (DfE)
- School Admissions Code, December 2014 (DfE)
- Annual and revised guidance Pupil Premium: Allocation and conditions of grant
- Section 22 of the Children Act, 1989
- The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children (DCSF November 2009)
- Local Authority Virtual School policies and procedures

Children who are "looked after" may be "Accommodated, "In Care" or "remanded/ detained" as follows.

#### **Accommodated (Section 20)**

This is a voluntary arrangement between parents (or those with parental responsibility) and the Local Authority, it could come about due to parents being incapacitated, missing, unable to cope, or as part of a child protection plan negotiated with the family. The parents retain parental responsibility. This can be both a short term and ongoing arrangement.

#### **In Care**

A child is in care only if a court has granted a Care Order (Interim or full) which it will issue if it believes a child to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. A Care Order bestows parental responsibility to the local authority, usually on a shared basis with the parents.

#### **Short Term Emergency Removal/ Remanded / Detained**

A child can be removed by the Police, remanded or detained by a Youth Court in the following circumstances:-

- A successful application by the Local Authority for an Emergency Protection Order
- Removed or retained in a place of safety by police using their powers of protection (72 hours)
- Remanded by a court following criminal charges
- In certain circumstances a Court may sanction 'secure' accommodation for a young person who is in care or Accommodate by the Local Authority.

As a result of the adversity that they may have faced Looked After Children may have some or all the following, often mutually reinforcing issues:-

- Low self esteem
- Poor education standards due to time out of school
- Delayed social/emotional/ cognitive development
- Be bullied or bully others.
- Be prone to mental health issues
- Be isolated with few friends
- Have behaviour issues
- Poor attachments to others

This makes Looked After Children an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education achievements and related future life chances and a well documented and respected evidence base support this.

Hornsea School and Language College is committed to ensuring that these children are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following are in place, and are working effectively:

- A lead professional with responsibility for LAC and a 'team around the child' approach to supporting each LAC with support as appropriate drawn from across the school staff and partner agencies to promote and maintain positive engagement with education and progress.
- Personal Education Plans for all LAC, supported by a mentoring program and robust academic progress tracking with clearly targeted use of PPG and bespoke interventions as required
- All staff have a clear understanding of confidentiality and issues that affect Looked After Children.
- Effective strategies that supports the education of this vulnerable group (e.g. consideration of past adversity and 'attachment' issues).
- Strong links and joint working with the HSLC Learning Support Team

### **Role and Responsibilities of the Lead Professional for LAC**

The Lead Professional's at HSLC (Student Support Team Manager, Learning Support Team Manager and LAC Pastoral Manager) will:

- be an advocate for Looked After Children within school and the Local Authority
- support the transition process from Yr 6 or non-standard entry
- when new to the school, ensure a smooth and welcome induction for the child and carer, and note any specific requirements, including care status;
- support the established procedures that are in place by each Local Authority to ensure that a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is completed and up to date. Discuss with the relevant Social Worker and Virtual School Head the timing of PEP meetings, which should be timely and completed in line with the timescales outlined in statutory guidance or by exception in the event of changes in circumstances .This should be prepared with the child and the carer, in conjunction with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies, and be linked to and inform the statutory LAC Review process and associated timescales. collect, collate and share information as appropriate from school staff to inform the planning process
- keep PEPs and other records up to date, prepare information and updates in time to inform review meetings
- ensure that each Looked After Child (in line with their wishes) has an identified member of staff that they can talk to (this should be based on the child's request, and may not necessarily be the Lead Professional for LAC)
- ensure that foster carers have an identified and easily accessible point of contact in school (LAC Pastoral Manager)
- 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.
- 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;

- share information and any concerns and seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded and work with partner agencies (e.g. Virtual School and Children's Social Care) to review and put in place appropriate and supportive arrangements for the continuation of education in line with statutory guidance
- ensure that appropriate data is provided to inform planning and progress monitoring – as requested by the relevant Local Authority
- be proactive in requesting appropriate supporting information from partner agencies e.g. Child's Plan, relevant assessments etc
- Challenge appropriately any decision that are deemed to be to the detriment of a LAC and escalate concerns in line with local procedures and protocols in event of continued concerns (e.g. using Resolving Inter-Agency Disagreements guidance) and involving then CISRO as appropriate

### **Roles and Responsibilities of all staff**

- Ensure that any LAC is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained
- be familiar with the and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings (e.g. LAC reviews) on educational attainment and needs, as appropriate
- respond positively to any request from a LAC to be the named person that they can talk to when they feel it is necessary
- support the Lead Professional for LAC when requests for information are made
- as with all children, ensure that no LAC is stigmatised in any way;
- provide a supportive climate to enable a LAC 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
- work with the school Lead Professional for LAC to review progress and address any difficulties or shortcomings in progress
- make every effort to attend meetings in school when circumstances dictate that this would be useful to supporting LAC

### **Roles and Responsibilities of the Governing Body**

The governing body of this school will:

- ensure all governors are fully aware of the appropriate legal requirements and guidance for supporting Looked After Children in school
- be aware of whether the school has Looked After Children and how many (no names);
- ensure that there is a named Lead Professional for LAC
- liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure that the Lead Professional for LAC is enabled to carry out his responsibilities in relation to Looked After Children
- support the Head Teacher, Lead Professional for LAC and other staff in ensuring the needs of Looked After Children are met
- nominate a governor (Ian Smith) who links with the Lead Professional for LAC, 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.
- review the effective implementation of this policy on an annual basis

### **Confidentiality**

- Information on looked after children will be shared with school staff on a "need to know basis"
- The Lead Professional for LAC 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.

## **Training**

The Head Teacher and the Lead Professional for LAC will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.