

# Oakdene Primary School

Policy for Children who are Looked After by the Local Authority (LAC) and Previously Looked After children (PLAC)

Ratified by Governors July 2020

# Oakdene - Growing and Learning Together

The above statement is our Mission Statement which is what we are all aiming to achieve at Oakdene. We will try to achieve this through our aims in everything we do at Oakdene.

At Oakdene, we have the following aims:

- 🌱 to enable all members of our School community to reach their full potential. (*Being Healthy; Enjoying and achieving.*)
- 🌱 to prepare each child, through all aspects of School life, to become responsible citizens respecting themselves, others and the environment. (*Economic well being*)
- 🌱 to become independent and highly motivated learners. (*Make a positive contribution; Enjoy and achieve*)
- 🌱 to equip children to be flexible and adaptable to the modern world (*Economic well-being; Make a positive contribution*)
- 🌱 for each child to feel valued, safe and confident. (*Staying Safe*)

The School Community will achieve these aims through:

- 🌱 engaging all members of the School community in providing a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum for every child.
- 🌱 opportunities for continuing professional development for all members of staff.
- 🌱 children becoming partners in their own education and make a positive contribution to the school environment and ethos.
- 🌱 opportunities for children to take responsibility for their own learning.
- 🌱 using technology effectively to improve children's learning.
- 🌱 a secure and safe environment.
- 🌱 sport, exercise and healthy living.
- 🌱 an enriching programme of extra curricular activities and visits.
- 🌱 learning partnerships between home, school and community.

The statements in brackets relate to the 'Every Child Matters' Agenda. At Oakdene we always believe that Every Child does matter.

We have very high expectations of behaviour as we believe if we ensure that each child has a firm grounding in the basic principles of right and wrong then they will develop into well rounded, successful citizens in our Community.

## Oakdene Values

Our core school values underpin everything we expect from our children in terms of behaviour. These values are as follows:

- Responsibility
- Friendship
- Respect
- Honesty
- Determination
- Excellence

### Intent

Oakdene's bespoke curriculum is broad and balanced ensuring that we develop children who are aware of the impact of the past, are learning about life in the present and are prepared to deal with the changes of the future. Through our School Values we aim for our children to be inquisitive, enthusiastic, tolerant, respectful and happy individuals with the ability to prosper in a diverse society. High expectations in the core and foundation subjects enable our children to confidently move onto the next stage of their learning. All children, irrespective of background, needs or abilities are entitled to a wide - ranging curriculum and we consider cultural and social capital, and physical and mental well-being as essential aspects of the curriculum, helping us to develop children who are comfortable in their own minds and skins and able to enhance their social, moral and cultural understanding.

### Implementation

English and mathematics underpin all the work that we carry out, with reading at the heart of all work, enabling children to access the full curriculum. Learning is carefully planned for each year group ensuring progression throughout the School years. The curriculum is not narrowed and all children undertake all subjects throughout each year group. Clear, strategic planning around quality texts allows the curriculum to be dynamic and is adapted to the needs of Oakdene children. Developing a wide range of vocabulary is key to the knowledge that children learn and retain. Our curriculum has high expectations for all children and we embody this in day to day teaching. Teachers' planning shows thought is given to prior learning, building on skills and knowledge already achieved and is responsive to individual children's needs. We aim to teach our children how to retain information and facts while also developing knowledge and skills across all areas of the curriculum. Our feedback processes ensure that children can make good progress in their learning. Our curriculum includes the wider area of cultural and social aspects to ensure that all our children receive a well-rounded and extensive offer to enhance their learning and life skills. Children in all year groups are offered trips and enhancements closely linked to the curriculum. Cultural Capital is a major strand of our curriculum ensuring children are prepared for their future stages of education and work. In a constantly changing world, we recognise that our children will need to have transferrable skills and we aim to develop this skill for all our children.

### Impact

We are constantly reviewing the curriculum offer which we give to Oakdene children. In-depth monitoring ensures that all children are receiving the broad and balanced curriculum they are entitled to with clear progression in all subjects. Senior Leaders work with Subject Leaders to review learning, evaluate pupil voice and provide

feedback to move practice forward, celebrating positives and highlighting areas of development. Our whole school team work together to embody our vision and values through the curriculum. We aim to ensure that all children make good progress in all subjects and we do not confuse this with coverage. We plan activities so learning is embedded and knowledge is retained. Feedback from Children and Parents shows that they value the curriculum we offer and Parents attend many workshops, sharing sessions and information meetings. We aim to ensure that at Oakdene we can 'Grow and Learn Together' for all our children to be healthy, well-educated and happy individuals.

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 require special treatment and additional attention in order to improve their situation.

Oakdene 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:

- Encourage pupils to reach their potential and to make good progress in relation to their professional, social and emotional development.
- Ensure that pupils enjoy high quality teaching and a curriculum which meets their needs and the requirements of legislation.
- Plan support for LAC realistically and use the school's resources efficiently to ensure the school meets their needs.
- Promote a positive culture in all aspects of school life.
- Help pupils develop their cultural, moral and social understanding
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## **1. Legal framework**

1.1. This policy has due regard to 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 (2017) 'Exclusions from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England'
- DfE (2019) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2019) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'

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

- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Home School Agreement
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Equality Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy

## 2. Definitions

2.1. "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.

2.2. "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).

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1. The Governing Body of Oakdene is responsible for:

- Ensuring the school has a coherent policy for LAC and PLAC .
- Reviewing the school's policies and procedures in conjunction with legislation and statutory guidance.
- Ensuring the designated teacher for LAC and PLAC has received the appropriate training.
- Ensuring that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to each looked after child's:
  - Legal status (i.e. whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.

- Care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the LA.
- Ensuring that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep LAC and PLAC safe.
- Ensuring LAC and PLAC have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and that reasonable adjustments are made, if necessary.
- Reviewing the annual report provided by the designated teacher to evaluate the progress of LAC in the school.
- Ensuring they receive feedback from the headteacher regarding the effectiveness of the policy on a two yearly basis.

3.2. The Virtual School Headteacher (VSH), employed by the Local Authority from where the child is based, is responsible for:

- Monitoring the attendance and educational progress of the children their authority looks after; this includes children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders, or who were adopted from state care outside of England and Wales.
- Ensuring that arrangements are in place to improve the education and outcomes of the authority's LAC, including those placed out-of-authority.
- Building relationships with health, education and social care partners, as well as other partners, so they and the designated teachers understand the support available to LAC and PLAC.
- Working with the school to ensure all LAC in attendance are fully supported in reaching their full potential.
- Acting as the educational advocate for LAC.
- Acting as a source of advice and information to help parents of PLAC as effectively as possible.
- Monitoring the school's allocation of pupil premium plus (PP+) for LAC.
- Ensuring there are effective systems in place to:
  - Maintain an up-to-date roll of the LAC who are in school settings, and gather information about their educational placement, attendance and progress.
  - Inform the headteacher and designated teacher if they have a pupil on roll who is looked after by the LA.
  - Ensure social workers, schools, designated teachers, carers and independent reviewing officers understand their role and responsibilities regarding a pupil's PEP.
  - Ensure that up-to-date and effective PEPs that focus on educational outcomes are maintained for all LAC.
  - Avoid delays in providing suitable educational provision.
  - Ensure the education achievement of LAC is seen as a priority by everyone who has responsibilities for promoting their welfare.

- Report regularly on the attainment, progress and school attendance of LAC through the authority's corporate parenting structures.

3.3. At the current time, the Headteacher at Oakdene is the Designated Teacher for LAC and PLAC. In the absence of the Headteacher, the Deputy Headteacher will take on this role. The Designated Teacher:

- Needs time and facilities to succeed in carrying out their duties.
- Oversees this policy and monitors its implementation, feeding back to the Governing Body annually on the following:
  - The number of LAC and PLAC in the school
  - An analysis of assessment scores as a cohort, compared to other pupil groups
  - The attendance of LAC and PLAC, compared to other pupil groups
  - The level of fixed term and permanent exclusions, compared to other pupil groups
- Ensuring all members of staff are aware that supporting LAC is a key priority.
- Ensuring PP+ for PLAC is managed effectively.
- Promoting the advantages of actively challenging negative stereotypes of LAC.

3.4. 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 VSH understand the support available to LAC and PLAC.
- Promoting the educational achievement of LAC and PLAC at the school; this includes those that left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.
- 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.
- 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.
- Submitting an annual report to the governing board, which details the progress of all LAC and PLAC.

3.5. The DSL is responsible for:

- Keeping up-to-date records of LAC's respective social worker and VSH.

- 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.

3.6. The SENCO is responsible for:

- Ensuring they are involved in reviewing PEP and care plans for LAC and PLAC.
- Liaising with the class teacher, designated teacher, specialists and parents when considering interventions to support the progress of LAC and PLAC.

3.7. 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.
- Promoting the self-esteem of LAC and PLAC.

#### 4. Personal education plan (PEP)

4.1. All LAC must have a care plan; Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are an integral part of this care plan. Care Plans are written by Social Workers and PEPs are written by School.

4.2. 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.

4.3. The PEP will reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning which meets the identified educational needs of the child.

4.4. 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.

4.5. All relevant bodies, such as the LA, the designated teacher and carers, will involve the child in the PEP process at all stages.

4.6. The PEP will address the pupil's full range of education and development needs, including:

- On-going catch-up support, which will be made available for children who have fallen behind with work.
- Suitable education provided by the LA, where the child is not in school because of suspension or exclusion.
- Transitional support where needed, such as if a child is moving to a new school.
- School attendance and behaviour support, where appropriate.
- Support to help the child meet their aspirations, which includes:
  - Support to achieve expected levels of progress for the relevant national key stage and to complete an appropriate range of approved qualifications.
  - Careers advice, guidance and financial information about FE, training and employment, that focusses on the child's strengths, capabilities and the outcomes they want to achieve.

- Out-of-school hours learning activities, study support and leisure interests.

## **5. Working with agencies and the VSH**

- 5.1. The school will ensure that copies of all relevant reports are forwarded to the LAC social workers, in addition to carers or residential social workers.
- 5.2. The school will coordinate their review meetings; for example, PEP reviews.
- 5.3. 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.
- 5.4. Behaviour management strategies will be agreed between the VSH and the school, to ensure challenging behaviour is managed in the most effective way for that individual child.
- 5.5. The designated teacher for LAC and PLAC will communicate with the VSH and child's social worker to facilitate the completion of the PEP.
- 5.6. 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.
- 5.7. 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.
- 5.8. PP+ for PLAC will be allocated directly to, and managed by, the school.
- 5.9. The school will work with the VSH to manage allocation of PP+ for the benefit of our cohort of LAC, or PLAC, and according to their needs.
- 5.10. If deemed necessary, the school will allocate an amount of funding to an individual to support their needs.
- 5.11. The designated teacher will ensure consistent and strong communication with the VSH regarding LAC who are absent without authorisation.
- 5.12. The school will share their expertise on what works in supporting the education of LAC and PLAC.

## **6. Training**

- 6.1. The designated teacher and, if appropriate, other school staff involved in the education of LAC and PLAC have received training including information about the following:
  - School admissions arrangements
  - SEND
  - Attendance
  - Exclusions
  - Homework
  - Managing challenging behaviour

- Promoting positive educational and recreational activities
- Supporting pupils to be aspirational for their future education, training and employment
- Safeguarding

## **7. Pupil mental health**

- 7.1. LAC and PLAC are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues which can impact their behaviour and education. Designated teachers will have awareness, training and skills regarding a child's needs and how to support them in relation to behaviour management and mental health.
- 7.2. The designated teacher will work with the VSH to ensure the school is able to identify signs of potential mental health issues, understand the impact issues can have on LAC and PLAC, and knows how to access further assessment and support, where necessary.

## **8. Exclusions**

- 8.1. The school will have regard to the DfE's statutory guidance 'Exclusions from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England' and, as far as possible, avoid excluding any LAC.
- 8.2. Where the school has concerns about a child's behaviour, the VSH will be informed at the earliest opportunity.
- 8.3. Exclusion will only be used as a last resort, after the school and VSH have considered what additional support can be provided to prevent exclusion, and any additional arrangements to support the pupil's education in the event of exclusion.
- 8.4. The school will inform parents that they can seek the advice of the VSH on strategies to support their child to avoid exclusion.

## **9. Pupils with SEND**

- 9.1. Support for LAC with SEND, who do not need an EHC plan, will be covered as part of the child's PEP and care plan reviews.
- 9.2. The SENCO, class teacher, designated teacher and specialists will involve parents when considering interventions to support their child's progress.
- 9.3. If appropriate, the VSH will be invited to comment on proposed SEND provision for PLAC.

## **10. Information sharing**

- 10.1. Appropriate and specific arrangements for sharing reliable data are in place to ensure that the education needs of LAC and PLAC are understood and met.

## **11. Monitoring and review**

- 11.1. This policy will be reviewed on a two yearly basis.