



Oakridge Schools Federation Children Looked After and Post Children Looked After Policy

Approved by:	Full Governing Body
Review frequency:	Annually
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Next review date due:	Autumn 2026

Section 1

Aims of the Policy

This policy aims to ensure that Oakridge Schools Federation:

- Provides a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children
- Supports the school's Children Looked After and Post Children Looked After to make academic progress
- Supports the school's Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential and enjoy learning
- Supports the school's Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After emotionally with the changes they may experience, such as changes of placement, changes of social worker etc.
- Fulfils the schools' role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After, by asking the question, '**Would this be good enough for my child?**'

Oakridge Schools Federation will therefore:

- Prioritise education
- Promote attendance
- Target support
- Have high expectations
- Promote inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes
- Achieve stability and continuity
- Intervene early and prioritise action
- Listen to children
- Promote health and wellbeing
- Reduce exclusions and promote stability
- Work in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals

Children Looked After (CLA) and Post Children Looked After (PCLA)

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority.

Children Looked After fall into four main groups:

- a) Children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents;
- b) Children who are the subject of a full care order or interim care order;

- c) Children who are the subject of emergency orders for the protection of the child;
- d) Children who are compulsorily accommodated.

Rationale

Children in care perform less well academically than any other group of children. Therefore, improving outcomes for children in care is a vital priority. There are around 60,000 children in care in England at any one time although it is a rapidly changing group as they move in and out of care. These children are taken into care for their own protection but once in care many do not receive a quality learning experience. The gap in attainment between these children and all other children is wide. The Virtual School Team in Hampshire works on narrowing this gap through rigorous tracking and intervention where necessary, working closely with social workers and schools and by using one to one tuition.

Research reveals that the day to day support from a teacher continues to be the key determinant of success. Oakridge Schools Federation believes this starts with quality first teaching.

The Designated teacher has a statutory role within the school and is responsible for developing and reviewing the education progress of the child and in partnership with others, helping them to achieve and enjoy.

Oakridge Schools Federation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of Children Looked After/Post Looked After and expects the school community to share this commitment.

Section 2

Roles and Responsibilities

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare and achievement of Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After. There are, however, key people within school and the LA who have specific responsibilities for the current school year (2023-24) are:

- The Hampshire Virtual School
- The Headteacher – Miss Diane Charman
- The Designated Teacher (DT) – Mrs Claire Cameron/Mrs Ceri Frost
- Designated Children Looked After Governor – Mr Ian Hemstock

The role of the Designated Teacher

The DT will work closely to:

- Maintain an up to date record of all Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After who are on the school roll. This will include:
 - Status i.e. care order or accommodated
 - Type of Placement i.e. Foster, respite, residential
 - Name of Social Worker, area office, telephone number
 - Daily contact and numbers e.g. name of parent or carer or key worker in children's home
 - SEN Code of Practice – SEN Support/EHCP where appropriate
 - Child Protection information when appropriate
 - Baseline information and all test results
 - Attendance figures
 - Exclusions

- Ensure that there is a Personal Education Plan (PEP) for each child/young person to include appropriate targets and above information. This must be compatible with the child's/young person's Care Plan and where applicable include any other school plan, e.g. Statement of Special Education Need, and associated plans, Transition Plan, Pastoral Support Programme
- Ensure that a member of staff attends Children's Services' reviews on each child/young person and/or always prepares a written report which promotes the continuity and stability of their education
- Liaise with the Education Support Service for Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After on a regular basis with regard to the performance, attendance and attainment of Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After
- Ensure that if/when the child transfers school all relevant information is forwarded to the receiving school as a matter of priority
- Ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when Children Looked After/ Children Post Looked After are underachieving and have early interventions to improve this in line with existing school policy
- Apply to the Hampshire Virtual School to obtain funding to support the academic progress of Children Looked After/ Children Post Looked After, and to monitor the impact of this funding
- Ensure that systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about Children Looked After/ Children Post Looked After where and when appropriate
- Ensure that Children Looked After/ Children Post Looked After, along with all children are listened to and have equal opportunity to pastoral support in school.
- Ensure that they keep the school up to date with current legislation and its implication for the school in respect of Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After
- Report to the Governing body annually on the performance of the Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After who are on roll of the school with the following information:
 - The number of looked-after pupils on the school's roll (if any)
 - Their attendance, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils
 - Their SAT scores, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils
 - The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any)
 - The destinations of pupils who leave the school
 - The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned

The responsibility of all staff is to:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After, as for all students
- Maintain Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively
- Respond positively to a student's request to be the named member of staff whom they can talk to when they feel it is necessary
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information
- Work to enable Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After to achieve stability and success within school
- Promote the self-esteem of all Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After
- Be aware that 60% of Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After say they are bullied so work to prevent bullying in line with the School's Anti-Bullying policy

The role of the governing body:

- Identify a nominated Governor for Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After
- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After
- Ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs

Section 3**Operating this policy:**

In order to operate this policy the school will:

- Nominate a Designated teacher for Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them
- Nominate a school governor to ensure that the needs of Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After in the school are taken into account at a school management level and to support the Designated Teacher
- Support the Designated teacher and Pastoral Team in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend training on Children Looked After/ Children Post Looked After

Section 4**Government Policy/Guidance:**

- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The Children and Young Person's Act 2008
- The County Council's duty under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 to promote the educational achievement of Children Looked After (LAC)
- The Education (Admission of Children Looked After) (England) Regulations 2006.
- Relevant DfES guidance to Governing Bodies (Supporting Looked After Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors)

Appendices

Appendix 1: HCC Children in Care Pledge

Monitoring and Evaluation of Policy

- Staff/governor training will be recorded and monitored to ensure that key staff/governors keep abreast of current legislation.
- Staff awareness training will be undertaken each year. For new staff and staff arriving mid-year, CLA/PLAC training will be included within the Induction Programme.
- The effectiveness of the policy will be evaluated as part of the school's /governors' review cycle.

Review of Policy

The Children Looked After and Children Post Looked After Policy will be reviewed annually by the governing body. An earlier review will be undertaken if there is a change to government or Local Authority legislation.

Other Relevant Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with other related policies and procedures in school. These include:

Anti-Bullying Policy

Attendance Policy

Behaviour Policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Single Equality Plan and Equalities Objectives

Exclusion Policy

Special Educational Needs Policy

A copy of the School's Looked After Children and Children Post Looked After Policy is available on line at www.oakridgeschoolsfederation.co.uk

APPENDIX 1

HCC CHILDREN IN CARE PLEDGE

Within your school you will probably have at least one young person who is in care, whether it is in a children's home or in foster care. This children in care pledge outlines Hampshire's commitment to ensure that children looked after and care leavers have equal access to a range of key services and support wherever they live, go to school or access employment or training opportunities in Hampshire. Indeed this is something that we would want for all our young people.

Young people who live in the care of Hampshire County Council and care leavers were invited to contribute their experiences and identify the issues that matter to them most, and this living document was created as a result of the consultation and discussions on these issues. Is your school supporting children in care?

Your health – we will:

- help you to access health services, e.g. doctors, dentists, counselling, etc.
- support you in being healthy, both physically and mentally
- support you in identifying and taking part in positive activities, interests and hobbies

Your education – we will:

- not make you feel different at school, e.g. taking you out of a class for a meeting, paying for you to go on trips, etc.
- support you in accessing academic and non-academic opportunities, not just school or college, e.g. apprenticeships, NVQs, other qualifications and job opportunities
- involve you in decisions made about your education and when additional help is needed why this is necessary
- involve you in decisions around your individual budget
- support you to access the college/university of your choice, should this be something you wish to do

Your placement – we will:

- where possible, try to find you a placement with your siblings
- support you in transitions from placement to placement
- make better long term plans for you, not just quick fixes
- find you a foster carer that suits you and meets your needs
- involve you in your placement planning
- keep you informed, where appropriate, about contact arrangements and how and when this can happen

Your voice – we will:

- be contactable through a variety of ways and get back to you within 24 hours
- make time for you to talk one-to-one with us on your own
- be open and honest about your care and support you when changes are made
- encourage your participation in your care plan and other plans related to your care
- listen to your complaints and act on them as soon as is possible
- make information available to you, so you know your entitlements and rights

Leaving care – we will:

- provide you with support, if you feel you need it
- not kick you out on your 18th birthday
- provide and support you in building the skills to live on your own
- help you find somewhere to live and make sure you have everything you need
- give you information about your entitlements and support you in accessing them

Your future – we will:

- help you plan for your future, as a good parent should
- support and help you build the life skills needed to becoming an adult
- not judge you based on how you have acted in the past, but who you are now
- encourage you to be the very best you can be
- support and help you in achieving your goals
- always be there to support you, even when you make mistakes