



<b>Title:</b>	<b>Children Looked After Policy (CLA)</b>
<b>Policy Coordinator:</b>	<b>Dhanisha Tailor</b>
<b>Date Reviewed:</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> October 2024</b>
<b>Date Ratified:</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> October 2024</b>
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Statutory</b>
<b>Delegation:</b>	<b>Management Committee</b>
<b>Review Frequency</b>	<b>Annually</b>
<b>Policy Review Date</b>	<b>October 2025</b>

<b>Chair of Management Committee:</b>	<b>Seeta Mepani</b>
<b>Head Teacher:</b>	<b>PK Maselino</b>

We believe this policy should be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the school ethos, enables consistency and quality across the school and is related to the following legislation:

- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015

The following documentation is also related to this policy:

- Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other Staff: Guidance for Local Authorities, Headteachers, School Staff, Governing Bodies and Proprietors of Independent Schools (DfE)
- Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools (DfE)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges (DfE)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years. Statutory Guidance for Organisations Who Work With and Support Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (DfE) and (DoH)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children

We understand that children or young people who have been taken into care by the local authority or who have a voluntary care arrangement are known as 'Looked After'. This is because of family breakdown, abuse, neglect or social need. Children Looked After will either be living in foster homes, children's residential homes, living with a relative or with their natural parent(s).

We are committed to providing quality education for all our students including Children Looked After. It is nationally recognised that Children Looked After significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of suspension when compared with their peers. Therefore, we believe we have a duty 'to safeguard Children Looked After, to promote their educational achievements and to ensure they are able to achieve and reach their full potential'. (Children Act 2004)

We are aware that children in care are too often missing out on treatment for mental health problems despite being four times more likely to experience them because they move placement too often.

We work hard to ensure children in care are 'given priority access to mental health assessments and are never refused care based on their placement or severity of their condition.'

We have a duty to:

- ensure Children Looked After are never refused a service, including mental health, on the grounds of their placement;
- in the event of oversubscription to give priority to Children Looked After and previously Children Looked After
- appoint a designated qualified teacher to promote the educational achievement of Children Looked After and previously Children Looked After
- ensure the designated teacher undertakes appropriate training;

- Staff, parents and carers are aware of who the designated teacher is, how to contact them and what they are responsible for
- have in place a personal education plan for all Children Looked After drawn up in consultation with the local authority;
- ensure Children Looked After and previously Children Looked After are involved in planning and decision making in regard to their education;
- act on any issues as highlighted in the annual report from the designated teacher (DT).

We have a duty to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. We are aware that there are extremist groups within our country who wish to radicalise vulnerable children and to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. School personnel must be aware of the increased risk of online radicalisation, and alert to changes in student's behaviour. Any concerns will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

We are aware that under the 'Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015' we have the duty to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This duty is known as the Prevent duty and we believe it is essential that school personnel are able to identify those who may be vulnerable to radicalisation or being influenced by extremist views, and then to know what to do when they are identified.

We provide a safe environment where we promote students' welfare. Within this environment we work hard to build students' resilience to radicalisation and extremism by promoting fundamental British values and for everyone to understand the risks associated with terrorism. We want students to develop their knowledge and skills in order to challenge extremist views.

We as a school community believe this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that is connected with this policy.

## **Aims**

- To promote the educational achievements of Children Looked After and previously Children Looked After by ensuring they are able to achieve and reach their full potential.
- To help children who are Looked After and previously Children Looked After make positive life choices.
- To ensure children in care are 'given priority access to mental health assessments.
- To give priority consideration to Children Looked After in the school's oversubscription criteria.
- To protect children from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.
- To work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

## **Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure**

## **Role of the Management Committee**

The Management Committee has:

- appointed a member of staff to be responsible for Children Looked After;
- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel and visitors to the school are aware of and comply with this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring the school's admission criteria complies with current legislation therefore giving top priority for Children Looked After in the event of over subscription;
- responsibility for ensuring Children Looked After have equal access to admission to school, the National Curriculum, examinations, out of school learning and extra-curricular activities;
- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- nominated a designated Equalities governor to ensure that appropriate action will be taken to deal with all prejudice related incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;
- nominated a link governor to:
  - visit the school regularly;
  - work closely with the Headteacher and the Designated Teacher;
  - ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date;
  - ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy;
  - attend training related to this policy;
  - report to the Management Committee every term;
  - annually report to the Management Committee on the success and development of this policy.
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

### Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- the Children Looked After policy is implemented;
- a designated teacher is in place who is an advocate for Children Looked After;
- appropriate support and training is provided for the Children Looked After teacher;
- ensure all school personnel and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- all staff receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities;
- in the event of oversubscription priority is given to Children Looked After;
- effective tracking procedures are in place to monitor, admissions, attendance, suspensions, progress, behaviour and support;
- data and other student information is in place to create an accurate record that can be handed on to the next school;
- effective behaviour management systems and measures are in place to support student well-being;
- a personal education plan is in place for all Children Looked After drawn up in consultation with the local authority;
- any issues as highlighted in the annual report from the designated teacher are acted on;
- children in care are given priority access to mental health assessments and are never refused care based on their placement or severity of their condition;
- there are good links with local support agencies especially Social Services;
- Children Looked After and previously Children Looked After are involved in planning and decision making in regard to their education and their personal development;
- a peer support group is in place;

- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- work closely with the link governor and the Designated Teacher;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy;
- the Management Committee receives an annual report that outlines the following:
  - the number of Children Looked After in the school
  - an analysis of test scores, as a discrete group, compared to other students
  - attendance figures compared to other students
  - the level of fixed term and permanent suspensions compared to other students
  - the number of complaints
  - the destinations of Children Looked After and previously Children Looked After when they leave the school

### Identity of the Designated Teacher

Our designated teacher is Dhanisha Tailor, you can contact her on 0208 353 4170 or at [senco@thehelix.harrow.sch.uk](mailto:senco@thehelix.harrow.sch.uk)

### Role of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher is a strong advocate for Children Looked After and will ensure that:

- all Children Looked After and their carers receive a positive and smooth induction into the school;
- an appropriate Personal Education Plan is completed within 20 days of Children Looked After joining the school or entering care;
- each Child Looked After has an identified fully trained member of staff, other than the Designated Teacher, that they can talk to;
- strong and positive home/school relationships are in place;
- they are the point of initial contact within the school for matters involving Looked After and previously Children Looked After, acting as a source of advice
- they promote the educational achievement of looked after and previously Children Looked After by:
  - working with the virtual school and other external professionals
  - ensuring staff understand what can affect Looked After and previously Children Looked After and how they learn and achieve
  - developing a whole school approach to supporting the academic achievement of these students
- Children Looked After are included in all areas of school life;
- Children Looked After are not bullied in any form by actively monitoring and preventing bullying by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy;
- all staff and governors are kept up to date on all issues relevant to Children Looked After and receive the necessary training;
- all Children Looked After receive the necessary support within the school;
- strong links are in place with all agencies dealing with Children Looked After;
- urgent multi agency meetings will be convened if a Looked After Child is experiencing difficulties or at risk of suspension;
- Children Looked After have full access to the National Curriculum;
- Make sure Looked After Children's PEPs meet their needs
- Ensure identified actions following the PEP are implemented and that they work with any EHCP
- out of hours learning and extra-curricular activities are promoted for Children Looked After;

- procedures are in place to provide confidentiality for all Children Looked After and that access to information is on a need to know basis;
- realistic but challenging educational and personal targets are set in consultation with the child;
- academic progress, attendance and behaviour is tracked with appropriate support given;
- all information is transferred quickly and efficiently when Children Looked After move to another school or phase;
- works closely with the school's DSL to ensure any safeguarding concerns are dealt with quickly and effectively
- confidentiality is adhered to and access to information is on a need to know basis;
- the nominated Governor is kept up to date;
- the Management Committee receives an annual report on Children Looked After.

### **Role of the School Personnel**

All teaching and support staff will:

- be made aware of and will be familiar with the Guidance on Children Looked After;
- liaise with the Designated Teacher to enable Children Looked After and previously Children Looked After to achieve stability, success and to overcome any problems they may experience;
- on request provide relevant information for Personal Education Plans and review meetings;
- encourage Children Looked After to achieve their full educational and personal potential which could be celebrated at weekly achievement assemblies and the Annual Presentation of Awards;
- constantly endeavor to promote self-esteem;
- prevent bullying in line with the school's anti-bullying policy;
- accept a request to be a Child Looked After's named person to whom they can speak with when they feel it necessary;
- maintain Children Looked After's confidentiality;
- ensure Children Looked After are supported sensitively;
- be aware of all other linked policies;
- maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour within and outside school and not to undermine fundamental British values;
- work in partnership with parents and carers keeping them up to date with their child's progress and behaviour at school;
- implement the school's equalities policy and schemes;
- report and deal with all incidents of discrimination;
- attend appropriate training sessions on equality;
- report any concerns they have on any aspect of the school community.

### **Role of Parents/Carers**

Parents/carers will:

- be aware of and comply with this policy;
- work in partnership with the school;
- comply with this policy for the benefit of their children;
- be asked to take part in periodic surveys conducted by the school;
- support the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure the smooth running of the school.

### **Role of Looked After Children**

Students will be encouraged to:

- be confident about themselves and to understand that they are able to achieve and reach their full potential;
- participate in discussions concerning their personal and social development as well as their academic progress and attainment;
- work in partnership with the school by making decisions and exercising choice in relation to their educational programme;
- discuss improvements to this policy during the school year;
- review the effectiveness of this policy with the Management Committee.

### **Raising Awareness of this Policy**

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- the School Handbook/Prospectus
- the School website
- the Staff Handbook
- meetings with parents such as introductory, transition, parent-teacher consultations and periodic curriculum workshops
- school events
- meetings with school personnel
- meetings with multi-agency professionals
- communications with home such as by newsletters and of end of half term reports such annual report to parents and Headteacher reports to the Management Committee
- information displays in the main school entrance

### **Training**

All school personnel:

- receive training on induction which specifically covers:
  - All aspects of this policy
  - Special Educational Needs
  - Safeguarding and Child Protection
  - Inclusion
  - Equal opportunities
  - Inclusion
- receive periodic training so that they are kept up to date with new information
- receive equal opportunities training on induction in order to improve their understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and its implications.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any student and it helps to promote equality at this school.

### **Monitoring the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Policy**

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the coordinator, the Headteacher and the nominated governor.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Management Committee for further discussion and endorsement.

### **Linked Policies**

- Special Educational Needs
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Inclusion
- Behaviour