

Acorn Trust Children Looked After Policy



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Review date: Spring 2019

Chairs signature:

Mission Statement

The Acorn Trust is a Multi-Academy Trust established with the aim of providing outstanding learning and opportunities for the children within its care.

Children are our nation's most precious resource. Their school life and learning experience will shape them for the whole of their lives

Safeguarding Statement

At the Acorn Trust we recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

We work to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

The procedures contained in the Safeguarding Policy apply to all staff, volunteers and governors

The Acorn Trust's schools' **Designated Person for Child Protection** will be the **Headteacher**.

The **Deputy Designated Person or Persons** will be one of the following: Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher, Pastoral Manager

All schools within the trust will have a named **Governors with responsibility for Children Looked After**.

The Acorn Trust recognises that **all** pupils are entitled to a balanced, broad-based curriculum and aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in local authority care. The trust, its school and their governing body welcomes all Children Looked After who may be looked after by the local authority or those who may be in the care of another authority but living in the borough of Wigan.

This policy includes requirements set out in "Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004" and associated guidance on the education of Looked after Children.

The Acorn Trust's approach to encouraging and supporting the educational achievement of Children Looked After is based on the following principles:

- ✓ prioritising education set within an inclusive context which makes reasonable adjustments to ensure a personalised curriculum
- ✓ listening to the Looked after Child
- ✓ working closely with home, voluntary and statutory agencies
- ✓ promoting attendance, through a programme of early intervention, priority action, reducing exclusions and promoting stability within a positive learning environment
- ✓ identifying need, including social and emotional as well as learning needs or gifted and talented skills and abilities
- ✓ targeting support, including accessing resources from other agencies as well as provision from school resources
- ✓ having high expectations

Rationale

Many children and young people who are in care have suffered a form of abuse or neglect. Despite having as broad a range of abilities as their peers, Children Looked After are particularly vulnerable to underachievement.

Barriers to their progress include a high levels of disruption and change in home and school placements, lack of motivation or involvement in extra-curricular activities.

The Acorn Trust believes that the educational experience of **all** children should be positive and powerful and aims to provide a learning environment in which every Looked after Child can be successful.

The Trust believe that our schools have a major part to play in ensuring that Children Looked After are able to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being.

Admission arrangements

The Trust recognise that due to care arrangements Children Looked After may enter school mid-term and that it is important that they are given a positive welcome and where appropriate additional support and pre-entry visits to help them settle.

The Trust recognises that looked after children are an 'accepted group' and will prioritise Children Looked After in the school's oversubscription criteria following the DCSF Admissions Code (Admissions of Looked after Children (England) Regulations 2006).

Support and resources

The Governing body of each school will ensure that they allocate resources, including professional time and expertise, to support appropriate provision for Children Looked After, meeting the objectives set out in this policy.

Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Staff

The duties of the Designated Teacher will include:

- ✓ ensuring that Children Looked After are welcomed into the school, necessary meetings are held and arrangements are put in place to ensure their needs are identified and met. This may include providing basic equipment and resources if necessary and providing appropriate support in meeting uniform requirements if needed
- ✓ maintaining an up-to-date record of the Children Looked After in school, including those in the care of other authorities and ensuring all necessary information is passed to other staff as required
- ✓ monitoring and tracking progress of Children Looked After in school and intervening if there is evidence of individual underachievement
- ✓ holding a supervisory brief for all children being looked after and acting as advocate for the CLA in school
- ✓ liaising with teaching and non-teaching staff in school, including the person responsible for Child Protection as well as pastoral and subject staff to they are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage CLA's may face
- ✓ establishing and maintaining regular contact with home (in line with guidance from social care and the local authority), statutory and voluntary agencies

- ✓ ensuring PEP review meetings are held regularly and information passed to all those concerned, including the local authority
- ✓ attending training as required and to keep fully informed of latest developments and policies regarding Children Looked After through attendance at the CLA Network Meetings
- ✓ ensure that Children Looked After records are retained for 99 years

Record keeping and information sharing

The Designated Teacher will keep an up-to-date record of Children Looked After in school and will ensure that relevant information is made known to appropriate staff.

A Personal Education Plan (PEP) will be initiated within 20 school days by the social worker of the Looked after Child starting at the school or being taken into care and will be reviewed regularly and as necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the Looked after Child.

The PEP will provide a regular opportunity to review progress, note any concerns and ensure all relevant parties are informed accordingly. Copies of reports and appropriate documentation will be sent to authorised carers and agencies involved with the child as well as any receiving school at point of transition.

It is vital that the Children Looked After are aware of information being recorded, in what circumstances and who will have access to it. How this is shared with them will depend on their age and level of understanding.

Exclusions

The Acorn Trust and its schools recognises that Children Looked After are particularly vulnerable to exclusions. Where a Looked after Child is at risk of exclusion the school will try every practicable means to maintain the child in school. A multi-professional meeting will be arranged, bringing together all those involved with the young person to discuss strategies to minimise the risk of exclusion.

The child's Personal Education Plan will reflect strategies to support the child. All relevant measures and resources will be considered to provide support and provide alternative educational packages to prevent an exclusion from happening. Please refer to the school's Behaviour Policy for more information.

Staff development and training

Arrangements will be made to ensure that the Designated Teacher is kept up to date with developments relating to the education and attainment of Children Looked After.

Other staff will receive relevant training and support to enable them to work sympathetically and productively with Children Looked After, including those who are underachieving or at risk of underachieving or who have additional needs.

These may include EAL, Gifted and Talented or having learning or physical needs. Teachers with responsibility for Special Educational Needs provision and for children who are Gifted and Talented will be informed of those Children Looked After who have particular gifts, talents or learning needs and will work with them appropriately.

Home-school Liaison

The Trust recognises the value of a close working relationship between home and school, each school will work towards developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and social workers to enable Children Looked After to achieve their full potential.

Links with other agencies

The Trust and its schools recognises the value of working together with other agencies and organisations, and each school will work closely with colleagues from services involved with the Children Looked After or Young Person including Social Care teams; Community Educational Psychologist; Health Services, CAMHS; Youth Offending Teams etc.

Racial Equality & Equal Opportunities Statement

The Acorn Trust and its schools are committed to creating a positive environment that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment and to achieve their full potential.

All children have equal access and inclusive rights to the curriculum regardless of their gender, race, disability or ability. Schools within the trust plan work that is differentiated for the performance of all groups and individuals.

The Acorn Trust is committed to creating a positive environment that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment and to achieve their full potential.

All staff have equal access and inclusive rights to their work regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, race, disability or ability.