



Central Schools Trust

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC) POLICY

Central Schools Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. It expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Introduction:

As teachers and governors of the Central Schools Trust, we aim to:

- Make a real difference in helping to provide the best possible education for looked after children as much as any other;
- Seek to give our young people in care professional help, encouragement and support, so they find our schools a welcoming and friendly place;
- Be fully inclusive and ensure we challenge negative views and stereotypes;
- Offer support to and work with their foster carers on how to assist the young person's learning and enhance educational opportunities.

Aims:

1. We will support the Government's agenda for giving all looked after children the same life chances as any other child, in that we want them to: be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution to society, and achieve economic well-being.
2. 'The Children Act' 2004 and the statutory guidance 'Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children' 2015, place duty on us to work together to promote the educational achievement of looked after children. We recognise that schools and teachers are at the centre of this process and have significant impact on this vulnerable group. We are highly ambitious for these young people, knowing that securing the best possible progress for them will greatly enhance their life chances.
3. The Central Schools Trust recognises it's responsibilities in supporting Looked After Children to succeed in education and we support the local authority in undertaking its statutory responsibility, under section 52 of the Children Act 2004.
4. Governors are aware of the significant difference that can be made and the importance of supporting Looked After Children. It is recognised that Governors have a key role and major influence to ensure that the needs of looked after children are considered at the improvement planning and policy level, through to monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes.
5. Central Schools Trust will ensure that a monitoring procedure is implemented across all schools and the progress that looked after children are making is monitored to enable early identification of any barriers to learning and implement strategies to support.

6. The Designated teacher for Looked After Children (LAC) for each school will report annually on the progress and performance of looked after children. This report will be presented to the head of the trust and the governing body.
7. The Designated LAC Teacher in each school will ensure that recommendations outlined in the statutory guidance 'The Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children 2009' are followed, meaning that the Designated teacher will:
 - Become the central point of contact for all professionals and agencies, working with and supporting any looked after children that are on roll;
 - Take the lead role in the professional assessment and preparation of the educational targets, ensuring that subsequent reviews are recorded into the relevant sections of the child's Personal Education Plan. The PEP should be established within twenty school working days for any looked after child starting on roll.
 - Attend relevant update training and cascade information regarding looked after children to all staff that are involved with the looked after child.
 - Ensure that personal information is handled carefully and sensitively and that the child's wishes and preferences are taken into account.
 - Establish and maintain a good working relationship and communication with Foster Carers and families, ensuring information is received and early notification is provided for them to attend meetings and reviews.
 - Provide support and sanctuary to help settle a looked after child into the school, ensuring that, at all times, the looked after child feels safe, knows who to trust and who to go to if they feel the need for support.
 - Ensure the transfer of records if a looked after child moves school.
 - Provide written information to assist planning, reviews and reporting as required;
8. All employees' of Central School's Trust are to assist in the implementation and support of this policy for looked after children by requiring all staff to:
 - Ensure the appropriate sensitivities and confidentiality are maintained.
 - Ensure they are familiar with, and respond appropriately to, requests for progress and/or attainment information in order to compile the PEP and other documentation necessary for reviews.
 - Ensure they respond positively to any request by a child to be the person they want to talk with.
 - Ensure that no child in care becomes the victim of stigmatisation at any time and that any such attitudes are swiftly reported to schools leadership and eradicated.
 - Positively promote the self- esteem of looked after children;
 - Convey high aspirations for every child's educational and personal achievement.
9. All employees' of Central Schools Trust will endeavour to raise expectations and achievement of looked after children, encouraging them to do well by combining high expectation and standards with inclusion.
10. We will consider and set appropriately challenging targets and in so doing facilitate the appropriate resources in order to support the child to reach those targets.
11. Central Schools Trust are aware of the new Ofsted inspection framework will consider the provisions that we, as a school, have put in place to support looked after children. We understand that a judgement will be made within the Ofsted framework linked to how we support looked after children within the school.

12. Looked after children are extremely vulnerable, the most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. The majority of children looked after will also have special educational needs and/ or disabilities. Central Schools Trust is aware of the need to monitor the welfare and ensure the support of children in this category.
13. The Designated Looked After Child teacher has details of the of the legal status of each individual looked after child's care arrangements and what the contact arrangements are with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They will also know the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her.
14. The designated teacher will work with the virtual school head and the child's social worker to discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs identified in the child's Personal Education Plan (PEP) and to ensure their safety and security.

Central Schools Trust designated staff:

Balsall Common Primary School

Designated Governor is:

Designated Teacher is: Kate Whittlesey.

Damson Wood Primary School

Designated Governor is:

Designated Teacher is: Rosalind Fitter.