

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

I. INTRODUCTION

I.1 Who are our Looked After Children?

Children and young people become 'Looked After' either if they have been taken into Care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most LAC will be living in foster homes but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even be placed back at home with their natural parent(s).

All LAC have a social worker allocated to them who arranges their care plan. As at March 2010 the College has 4 Looked After Children on its roll.

2. PRINCIPLES

2.1 The Governors of Kingsbridge Community College are committed to providing quality education for all its students, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. The Governors recognise that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of Looked After Children, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing best practice, The Children Act (2004) places a duty to safeguard looked after children, to promote their educational achievements and to ensure that they are able to "achieve to and reach their full potential". The Guidance recognises the collective responsibility of local authorities and schools to achieve good parenting and sets out six principles:

- prioritising education;
- having high expectations;
- inclusion – changing and challenging attitudes;
- achieving continuity and stability;
- early intervention – priority action; and
- listening to children/young people.

The Guidance introduced two key measures:

- To ensure designated Teachers are nominated in every school
- To ensure Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are in place for all Looked After Children.

The Governors are committed to ensuring that Designated Teachers and staff are enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

3. PROCEDURES

3.1 ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

The Designated Teacher for Looked After children is Mick Philips. He:

- is an advocate for Looked After Children;
- ensures a smooth and welcoming induction for the young person and carer/s (and parent/s where possible). Note any specific requirements, including care status;
- ensures that a Personal Education Plan is completed (within 20 days of entering care or joining a new school). This should be prepared with the young person and the carer/s (and parent/s if possible), in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies. Where appropriate, the PEP should take account of any

Individual Educational Plan (IEP), Pastoral Support Plan (PSP), College Support Plan, career plan or any other relevant plans.

- ensures that each Looked After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to
- ensures entry to examinations for all Looked After Children
- co-ordinate support for the young person in the College and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary;
- ensures staff and governors receive relevant information and training
- ensures confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis;
- provides written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible;
- encourages Looked After Children to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning;
- seeks urgent meetings with relevant parties where the young person is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded.

3.2 ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GOVERNING BODY

The Governors of this College:

- ensure that admission criteria prioritise LAC, according to the Code of Practice on Admissions
- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Looked After Children;
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Looked After Children;
- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body
- for child protection and confidentiality reasons, ensure that information will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity, and respect the confidentiality of the students concerned.
- review the effective implementation of this policy every two years.
- ensure that the College's other policies and procedures give looked after children equal access in respect of:
 - ▶ Admission to College
 - ▶ The National Curriculum and public examinations
 - ▶ Additional educational support where this is needed. Extra curricular activities
 - ▶ Work experience and careers guidance.

3.3 TRAINING

The Principal, Designated Teacher and Professional Development Co-ordinator will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in the guidance from the DCSF and DoH (as above).

4. REVIEW OF POLICY

This policy is reviewed by the Governors' Community Committee every two years.

**Ratified by the Governors' Community Committee
8th March 2010**