



**RICARDS LODGE HIGH SCHOOL**

**LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY**

Reviewed October 2014

# **Ricards Lodge High School Policy on the Education of Looked After Children**

## **Mission Statement**

The Governors and Staff at Ricards Lodge High School recognise their responsibilities as corporate parents and therefore are committed to improving educational attainment and achievement for children in public care to achieve government targets and to bring attainment closer in line with their peers.

## **Context**

Education matters and it is a child's entitlement. School is an important part of everyday life. It is somewhere to

- Develop self-confidence and skills.
- Receive praise and encouragement.
- Learn about and build relationships.
- Achieve.

## **At Ricards Lodge we aim**

- To improve and promote life chances of children in public care.
- To track and raise the educational achievement and attainment of looked after students.
- To foster multi-agency working.
- Ensure LAC students receive equal educational opportunities despite any disadvantage they have encountered or continue to encounter in life.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

**The role of our Governors** is to:

- Ensure the needs of each looked after child are met, so that each child receives equal of opportunity in education.
- Ensure that a policy for children in public care is in place.
- Ensure school has a designated teacher for looked after children.
- Ensure the designated teacher undertakes appropriate training.
- Appoint a Governor with special responsibilities to oversee the education of children in public care in Ricards Lodge High School
- Receive and discuss termly report on children in public care
- Assist the school in looking at whether its policies adequately meet the needs of looked after children.

**The role of the Head Teacher** is to:

- Nominate an appropriate person to fill the role of designated teacher. It would be desirable for it to be someone with sufficient authority to influence school policy and practice.
- Liaise on a regular basis with the designated teacher on issues relating to children in public care.
- Monitor the statutory requirement that every child in public care has a Personal Education Plan.
- Keep Governors informed about the achievement of children in public care.

**The role of the Designated Teacher** is to:

- Oversee the progress of all children in public care.
- Liaise with foster carers and inform them of school issues.
- Keep an up to date register of looked after children on roll from any local housing authority.
- Keep a record of social worker and social services contact numbers.
- Keep the Virtual School informed of amendments to the list of children in public care.
- Liaise with other agencies on issues relating to children in public care.
- Be an advocate for looked after children
- Inform staff of a child's care status and determine the extent to which information is shared with other members of staff.
- Ensure that the school has high expectations for looked after students
- Participate in Virtual School and multi-agency training on the education of looked after children
- Ensure that staff have relevant information/skills to enable them to positively promote the education of children in public care whilst at the same time being sensitive to the issue of what information the young person may or may not want generally known.
- Ensure that children in public care have a person in school that they can trust and to talk to, and this may not necessarily be the designated teacher.
- Check that all children in public care have a Personal Education Plan and that this is reviewed concurrently with the care plan (i.e. within 28 days, 3 months, 6 months etc).
- Ensure that when children in public care are new to the school, they have a welcoming induction, as for all new entrants to the school.
- Ensure speedy transfer of educational information between the agencies, new schools and relevant parties.
- Be aware and access when appropriate funding from originating authority.
- Attend statutory reviews as requested or ensure that a written report is presented.
- Work closely with the social worker and carers to ensure relevant information is shared regarding changes in the child/young person's life.
- Develop knowledge of Care and Education procedures by attending training events organised by the Virtual School and disseminate to staff.
- Act as a curriculum advisor for other staff and governors on developments relevant to children in public care.
- Monitor the attendance of children in public care
- To ensure that LAC children are prioritised for one to one tuition and other initiatives.

**The role of the Head of Year/Form Tutor** is to

- Liaise with the designated teacher on issues relating to children in public care in their class.
- Liaise with carers and inform them of school issues, and providing opportunities for them to discuss educational progress.

### **The role of the Inclusion and Learning support manager is to**

- Liaise with the designated teacher and class teacher relating to issues of children in public care on the SEN register/Code of Practice.
- Liaise with SENAT regarding looked after children who have statements/EHC Plans.
- Liaise with carers and advise them of strategies that can support educational needs of the children in their care who are on the SEN register/Code of Practice.

### **The role of the Personal Education Plan (PEP)**

- The PEP forms part of the care plan and should be completed within 20 days when a new LAC joins the school.
- The second PEP should be done after three months, subsequent PEPs are completed six monthly.
- The outcomes of the PEP should be used to enhance and promote the education of the LAC student.
- The PEP and other information should be speedily transferred to a new school.

### **Confidentiality**

The Head and/or the designated teacher have responsibility for informing all staff who are in contact with the student of their care status.

As the initial contact of carers and other agencies with the school, the school office will have knowledge of the student.

It is appropriate for a Teaching Assistant (TA), to know that the child or young person is in public care when directly involved in the teaching of the child or young person.

Other staff may need to know if there are particular concerns that require a whole-school approach.

In each case, the extent of the information shared will be determined by the Head teacher and the designated teacher. In every case, only information that is critical to the effective working relationship will be passed on.

### **Admissions**

On admission to the school, records will be requested from the previous school, where appropriate and a PEP meeting held usually triggered by Social Services.

An appropriate school induction will take place.

### **Involving the child or young person**

The child/young person will be consulted and involved in decisions about themselves according to their age and understanding.

A child or young person will be made aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. How this is shared with them depends on their age and understanding. The explanation will emphasise that the school, social worker and the carers are working together to support their education.

Staff may discuss, or ask an appropriate person to discuss, how the child or young person will tackle questions about their home, by peers in the playground for example.

### **Involving the parent/carers**

The school recognises that support from home greatly assists a child's educational progress and aims to involve parents and carers.

The school will maintain regular communication with the foster carer and will ensure copies of reports are forwarded to the social worker and Virtual School in addition to the foster carer and parent (where appropriate).

### **Involving other agencies**

The school recognises that multi-agency working is critical to the support and progress of children in public care, which may include Social Services, Virtual School, Education Welfare Officer, School Nurse etc.

The school will work closely with other agencies involved in supporting the achievements and welfare of the child, particularly the social worker.

The school will exchange significant information to appropriate personnel between reviews when necessary.

### **Assessment, planning, monitoring and review procedures**

Assessment, planning and monitoring will be carried out by class and subject teachers as with all pupils, in accordance with general school practice.

Each student in public care will have PEP as part of their Care Plan. This will identify basic information, act as a record of progress, identify specific areas of concern and include achievable targets. The PEP will be reviewed and will feed into the Care Plan.

When a LAC has SEN the additional support will be put in place as described in school's SEN and Inclusion Policy.

The designated teacher will maintain an overview of the progress and needs of each child in public care.

The Head teacher and designated governor will report termly to the Governing body. This policy will be reviewed regularly.

This policy links to a number of other school policies including-:

Admissions	EDCC
SEN and Inclusion	Safeguarding
Behaviour for learning policy	

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**POLICY ON THE EDUCATION OF  
LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN 2010**