

Children Looked After Policy



This policy will be reviewed every three years, earlier if necessary

Signed:

Headteacher: Aled ap Iwan

Date: July 20206

Chair of Governors: Hannah Fernandez

Date: July 2026

'We owe it to all young people to give them the best chance to succeed in life. This is especially true of children that, often for no fault of their own, have found themselves placed in the most challenging of circumstances.'

Huw Lewis, Minister for Education and Skills (Feb 2015).

This policy primarily applies to children who are currently looked after by a local authority (CLA). The school also recognises that some children who were previously looked after (PCLA) may continue to experience barriers to learning and wellbeing. This includes children who were looked after before becoming subject to an Adoption Order, Special Guardianship Order or Child Arrangements Order. The school is committed to providing appropriate support to all children who have experienced care in order to promote positive educational and personal outcomes. Throughout this policy, the term *care-experienced children* may be used to refer to these learners collectively.

Welsh Government data shows that the educational performance of children who are looked after is significantly below that of other mainstream pupils at all progression steps.

Schools are key in helping to raise the educational standards and improving the life chances of care-experienced children (looked after children), and in tackling the causes of social exclusion through careful planning, monitoring, and evaluation. Schools can also provide a source of continuity and "normality" for children who may have been subject to emotional distress, abuse, and disruption. School can be the place where children maintain friendships and a place where they feel safe and can be themselves.

Raising levels of achievement has been strongly and clearly highlighted as a major part of improving the life chances of care-experienced children (looked after children) and schools play a pivotal role in this.

Aims:

- to raise the educational aspirations of care-experienced children (who are looked after, and adopted) and of those who care for them.
- to reinforce accountability and leadership across our School.
- to ensure that education remains a priority even during unsettling periods in a child's life.

- to make better use of data to aid practice, policy making and monitoring or educational outcomes.
- to promote and share good practice.
- To ensure the views, wishes and feelings of care-experienced children are heard and considered in decisions affecting them.

Definition of Children Looked After and Care-Experienced Children

The term 'child looked after' refers to a child who is either accommodated by a local authority (whereby the local authority provides for the child on an agreed basis with the person who has parental responsibility) or is subject to a care order (whereby a court order grants shared parental responsibility to the local authority in order to protect and promote the child's welfare). Children in both instances may be living with foster carers, in a residential unit, in a residential school, with relatives, or with parents on a part-time or full-time basis.

The term "*care-experienced children*" is used throughout this policy to describe children who are currently looked after, as well as those who were previously looked after. This includes children who were looked after immediately before becoming subject to an Adoption Order, Special Guardianship Order (SGO) or Child Arrangements Order (CAO). The school recognises that care-experienced children may continue to require support to overcome barriers to learning, wellbeing and achievement, and is committed to promoting positive educational and life outcomes for all care-experienced learners.

Our School's Commitment:

We recognise that many care-experienced children may have experienced trauma, loss, disrupted attachments and adversity, and promoting a nurturing, relationship-based and trauma-informed approach to support their wellbeing, engagement and achievement is a key priority in our school.

This is planned for by:

- having high expectations for the child and ensuring equal access and opportunities to participate fully in a balanced and broadly based education with extra-curricular activities and the opportunity to enjoy the school experience fully in line with corporate parenting principles;
- prioritising the recording and monitoring of the academic achievement of the child in addition to their health and wellbeing;
- ensuring as much stability and continuity as is possible with regards to staffing and friendship groupings;
- prioritising reductions in exclusions and promoting attendance and punctuality;

- promoting inclusion through challenging and changing negative attitudes / stereotypes and by promoting a climate of acceptance;
- promoting good communication between all those involved in the child's life and listening to the child;
- maintaining and respecting the child's confidentiality wherever possible and ensuring discretion when addressing a child's care status and sensitivity to the background of children who are care-experienced especially surrounding curriculum work on family and belonging;
- ensuring staff awareness of, and sensitivity to, the difficulties and educational disadvantages of care-experienced children;
- ensuring an appropriately trained Designated Teacher is appointed, who will be responsible for all children looked after;
- drawing up a Personal Education Plan (PEP) between the School, the child, and the child's social worker, which will identify the child's individual needs alongside the support and resources that they require;
- reviewing all school policies regularly in light of the LA's guidance, Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Legislation, Welsh Government guidance, and other relevant and statutory guidance relating to children who are looked after and care-experienced children;
- ensuring that a clear protocol for sharing of information will be followed both within School and with outside agencies.
- endeavoring to support all care-experienced children educated in this School to achieve their fullest possible academic potential.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Link Governor will ensure that:

- the School has a coherent policy for care experienced children
- the School's policies and procedures are reviewed in the light of social inclusion guidance and WG / UK guidance and legislation;
- the designated teacher has received appropriate training;
- care-experienced children have equal access to all areas of the curriculum;

The Head Teacher will:

- appoint the designated teacher.
- ensure that the designated teacher has received appropriate training.
- oversee the development of the Policy on care experienced children.
- be responsible for all systems to support care-experienced children.

The Designated Teacher

The designated teacher will help establish and maintain the ethos regarding care-experienced children of the school by:

- serving as the contact for Children's Services;
- maintaining and respecting confidentiality of all care-experienced children and ensuring information is shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis;

- ensuring that all staff, through appropriate training, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantages faced by care-experienced children and understand the need for positive systems to support them, whilst maintaining appropriately high expectations for their educational achievements;
- acting as an advocate for care-experienced children in order to allow them equal access to educational opportunities and support with important decisions affecting future life chances.

The designated teacher will set up systems to monitor and record the progress of all care-experienced children and will:

- have an overview and coordinating role for gathering and holding all information regarding CLA;
- maintain records regarding all CLA, including legal status and information regarding who should be contacted regarding matters concerning the child;
- establish a system for contacting and forwarding educational records to new schools to facilitate a smooth and speedy transfer;
- monitor the educational progress of all care-experienced children and intervene, in co-operation with other agencies if required, if there is evidence of underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy, or other similar concern.

The designated teacher will facilitate effective communication by:

- building positive home-school relationships between parents / carers with regular opportunities for dialogue;
- being proactive and participating in setting goals for the child's PEP;
- playing an active role in care planning by ensuring that the attendance of the most appropriate member of staff and/or written reports are provided to all statutory reviews of CLA;
- helping co-ordinate education and PEP meetings;
- serving as the named contact for colleagues in Children's Services and Education;
- ensuring effective communication between all relevant parties;
- inviting the responsible social worker to all meetings and liaising with this social worker regarding the development of the child's PEP.

The designated teacher will monitor each child's achievement and ensure that they have the support they require within School by:

- meeting with care-experienced children, where appropriate, to discuss confidentiality, support arrangements and who needs to be aware of relevant information.
- ensuring each who is looked after has a PEP;

- working closely with the ALNCo to ensure all care-experienced children with additional learning needs are identified, assessed and supported appropriately.
- ensuring all care-experienced children are valued members of the school community and feel included in all aspects of school life.

Personal Education Plans

Every Child Looked After (CLA) will have a PEP which will be developed, implemented and reviewed in partnership between the child, their social worker, carers and the school. The social worker will lead the coordination of the PEP however, the School's contribution is crucial in ensuring that educational, pastoral and wellbeing needs are identified and appropriately supported.

The Designated Teacher, or another member of staff who knows the child well, will attend PEP meetings and contribute to the development, implementation and review of the plan. Other staff will provide information and written contributions as appropriate. The school will work collaboratively with all relevant parties to ensure that agreed actions are implemented and progress is monitored between review meetings.

The PEP will consider:

- the child's strengths and areas for development.
- their interests, both in and out of School.
- developmental, educational and pastoral needs alongside future aspirations and how these can be supported.
- Any barriers to learning or wellbeing;
- The views, wishes and feelings of the child;
- issues arising for the child.

It will also identify targets that will be reviewed during the next PEP meeting.

Admission and Induction Arrangements

Children Looked After are a priority for admission in accordance with the LA's published admission criteria. The school also recognizes that other care-experienced children may benefit from additional transition and induction support to ensure a successful start and positive engagement with school life.

On admission, every Child Looked After will meet with the designated teacher and their named member of staff. They will discuss any relevant issues, academic or pastoral, and ensure the child is made to feel comfortable in our School. Records will be requested from the child's previous School and as soon as practicable after they are received, a meeting will be held with the carer / parent, social worker, other relevant professionals and child as appropriate. This will provide information to inform the child's new PEP and ensure that communication systems are established early.

In the first PEP meeting, the social worker will inform School as to who requires

school reports and who may give permission for school trips or other such activities. At this meeting, any means of communication to aid the fluid exchange of information between statutory meetings will be discussed and agreed such as a home/school book to detail any sudden significant changes in a child's circumstances.

School Trips and Special Activities

Given the delays that some CLA experience in getting parental consent for school trips and activities, School will aim to ensure that the children enjoy the same extra-curricular opportunities as other children by reserving placements for them on trips or on activities.

Complaints

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If a young person, parent or social worker wishes to complain about the provision or policy, they should in the first instance raise it with the designated teacher who will try to resolve the situation.

If the issue cannot be resolved within 10 days, the young person, carer or social worker can submit a formal complaint in writing to the Head teacher. The Head teacher will investigate the complaint and respond within 10 working days.

Any issue that remains unresolved at this stage should be addressed through a meeting in order to assess the impact of any such complaint upon the young person's education. This meeting may include the named Governor and any other outside agency that both parties deem necessary to attend. This meeting should normally be held within 10 working days of the Head teacher's response.