

# Model School Policy for Care Experienced Children in Herefordshire

**Explanatory note:** This policy reflects the language that young people have told us they prefer to use. Whilst this school is aware of the legal terms and definitions of 'Looked After Child', 'Previously Looked After Child' and 'Care Leaver', this policy reflects the language young people have said they prefer and we will refer to Care Experienced Children / Young People.

For further information, please see the ['Language That Cares' document](#).

## **Policy Objective**

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of care experienced children and young people.

## **The Name of the Designated Teacher:**

### **The Role of the Designated Teacher:**

[Full guidance can be found in this document.](#)

## ***Within School Systems***

- to ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have an understanding of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by care experienced children and young people and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them;
- to inform members of staff of the general educational needs of care experienced children and young people, and to promote the involvement of these children in school homework clubs, extra-curricular activities, home reading schemes, school councils etc.
- to act as an advocate for care experienced children and young people;
- to develop and monitor systems for liaising with those who care for them, Children's Services and the Virtual School.
- to hold a supervisory brief for all care experienced children and young people e.g. to ensure all relevant education and care information is available to school staff and those who care for them, and that this information is kept up to date;
- to monitor the educational progress of care experienced children and young people in order to inform the school's development plan;
- to intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy; and
- to ensure care experienced young people in year 10 and 11 are able to access independent Information, Advice and Guidance to help them make good decisions regarding their education or training post 16.

## ***Work with individual care experienced children and young people:***

- to enable the child or young person to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their care plan;
- to help ensure that each pupil with current care experience has their own education plan (legally known as a Personal Education Plan /PEP). The statutory guidance states that the education plan should be initiated by the young person's social worker. In Herefordshire, social workers are assisted by the Virtual School team;
- to help ensure that each pupil with previous care experience when necessary or requested has their own education plan (or one-page profile) that details the support the young person is receiving
- to ensure that the home-school agreement is signed by the person who cares for the child

***Liaison:***

- to liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- to help co-ordinate education and other review meetings (including Annual Reviews where appropriate), so that the education plan can inform the child's Care Plan;
- to attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or to contribute in other ways to care planning meetings e.g. via the Virtual School team;
- to be the named contact for colleagues in the Virtual School and children's social care;
- to ensure the speedy transfer of information between agencies and individuals.

***Training:***

- to develop knowledge of procedures for care experienced children and young people in Herefordshire by attending training events organised by the Local Authority;
- to cascade training to school staff as appropriate

**The name of a Governor with special responsibility for care experienced children and young people:**

**The role of that Governor**

The named governor will receive a report on an annual basis (where numbers allow anonymity) detailing:

- a comparison of test scores as a discrete group, compared with those of other pupils;
- the attendance of pupils as a discrete group, compared with other pupils;
- the level of fixed term/permanent exclusions; and
- individual pupil destinations.

The named governor should be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that care experienced pupils have equal access to:

- the curriculum;
- public examinations;
- careers guidance;
- additional (educational) support;

- extra-curricular activities; and
- work experience.

## **Responsibility for care experienced children and young people in school**

It is important that relevant staff who are in contact with the child or young person are aware that he/she has current or previous experience of being in care. The responsibility for the transfer of this information should be that of the headteacher and/or the designated teacher. It is sometimes appropriate for non-teaching staff to have knowledge that the young person has current or previous experience of being in care only when directly involved with the young person.

All staff need to respect the confidentiality and sensitivity of such information.

## **Admission Arrangements**

On admission, records (including the PEP) will be requested from the pupil's previous school. An appropriate school induction will take place. A meeting to review the education plan will be held.

## **Involving the Young Person**

For pupil's with current care experience, it is important that a young person is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances and that their contribution is sought. How this is shared with them clearly depends on their age and understanding. The explanation should emphasise that the school, the social worker, and those who care for them are working together to promote their education.

Depending on the child's age and understanding, the young person should have a degree of control about the level of detail that individual staff know about them.

## **Communication with Other Agencies**

For children and young people with *current* care experience, the school will ensure that a copy of all reports (e.g. end of year reports) are forwarded to the young person's social worker in addition to parent(s) and those who are caring for them. The social worker is responsible for advising a school whether reports should be sent to parents.

For children and young people with *previous* care experience, the school will ensure that a copy of all reports (e.g. end of year reports) sent to those who are caring for them. Copies do not need to be shared more widely.

The school will exchange information between formal reviews if there are significant changes in the young person's circumstances, e.g. if school is considering an exclusion, the place where the child lives changes or child or there are significant attendance issues.

When information is shared electronically, it will be sent securely via Anycomms or only using a child's initials or UPN.

## **Assessment, Monitoring and Review Procedures**

Pupils with *current* care experience will have an education plan (PEP).

The plan records

- achievement (academic or otherwise);
- involvement in extra curricular activities;
- use of Pupil Premium Plus
- attendance;
- support needs (if any);
- long term plans and aspirations
- targets to support the pupil to make good progress and work towards their long term aspirations

The plan will be updated at least every term.

The Governing Body will receive a report annually on the progress of all care-experienced children and young people against the key indicators outlined above.

Pupils with *previous* care experience do not need to have a PEP. However, when appropriate the school will draw up a support plan for the pupil which details how the pupil is supported to overcome any barriers they may face, (including use of Pupil Premium Plus). This plan will be shared only with those who care for the child or young person and does not need to be shared with the Virtual School.