



HARMONIZE ACADEMY

EDUCATION OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC) and PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (PLAC) POLICY

POLICY WRITTEN BY:	PRINCIPAL
DATE POLICY PREPARED:	MARCH 2013
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Trust, Respect, Compassion, Forgiveness

Education of Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)

Nationally, Looked After Children (*hereafter referred to as LAC*) and Previously Looked After Children (*hereafter referred to as PLAC*) significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that LAC and PLAC are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being.

Helping LAC and PLAC succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority for Harmonize Academy.

This policy takes account of:

- The Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006.
- Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children, DfE guidance, 2018
- Relevant DfE guidance to Governing Bodies (Supporting Looked After Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors).

Harmonize Academy's approach to supporting the educational achievement of LAC and PLAC is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education.
- Promoting attendance.
- Targeting support.
- Having high expectations.
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes.
- Achieving stability and continuity.
- Early intervention and priority action.
- Listening to children.
- Promoting health and wellbeing.
- Reducing exclusions and promoting stability.
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals.

Implications

As for all our students, Harmonize Academy is committed to helping every LAC and PLAC to achieve the highest standards they can, including supporting aspirations to achieve in further and higher education. This can be measured by improvement in their achievements and attendance.

The Governing Body of Harmonize Academy is committed to providing quality education for all students and will:

- Ensure LAC and PLAC are prioritised in the school's oversubscription criteria, in line with the Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006.
- Ensure a Designated Teacher for LAC and PLAC is identified and enabled to carry out the responsibilities set out below. Mr Gerard Tiernan, Assistant Principal and SENCo is the designated teacher for LAC and PLAC.
- Ensure a Personal Education Plan is put in place, implemented and regularly reviewed for every LAC and PLAC.
- Identify a governor as Designated Governor for LAC and PLAC.

This policy links with a number of other school policies and it is important that Governors have regard to the needs of LAC and PLAC when reviewing them:

- Oversubscription criteria.
- The Academy Code of Conduct.
- Behaviour Policy.
- Discipline Policy.
- Home-Academy Agreement.
- Anti-bullying Policy.
- Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Policy on Racial Harassment.
- Child Protection Policy.
- Special Educational Needs Policy.

Harmonize Academy will champion the needs of LAC and PLAC, raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them, in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible.

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC) AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (PLAC) SCHOOL POLICY ATTACHMENTS

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PRINCIPAL

- Identify a Designated Teacher for LAC and PLAC, whose role is set out below. It is essential that another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take sick leave.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusions of LAC and PLAC and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of LAC and PLAC.
- Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNING BODY

- Identify a nominated Governor for LAC and PLAC. *To be agreed*
- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of LAC and PLAC.
- Ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of LAC and PLAC.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of LAC and PLAC.
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.

Procedures: the Governing Body will:

- Monitor the academic progress of LAC and PLAC, through an annual report (see below).
- Ensure that LAC and PLAC are given the correct priority when applying for places in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria.
- Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school, by ensuring the school implements policies and procedures to ensure LAC and PLAC achieve and enjoy their time at the school, by recognising the extra problems caused by excluding them and by not excluding them except as a last resort.
- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Support the Principal, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of LAC and PLAC are recognised and met.
- Receive a report once a year setting out:
 1. The number of LAC and PLAC on the school's roll (if any).
 2. Their attendance, as a discrete group, compared to other students.
 3. Their GCSE results and other qualifications achieved, as a discrete group, compared to other students.
 4. The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any).
 5. The destinations of students who leave the school.
 6. The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the students concerned.

THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

Government Guidance says that the Designated Teacher should be “someone with sufficient authority to make things happen...[who] should be an advocate for Looked After Children, assessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them.”

Governors should be aware that all schools are already required to have a designated teacher for LAC. It is strongly recommended that this person should be a member of the Senior Management Team. Training for Designated Teachers will be sought through the LEA’s Looked After Children Education Adviser Team. Governors should also be aware that OFSTED will focus on LAC and PLAC, monitoring how the School has promoted their inclusion and attainment and the effectiveness of joint working with other services involved with them.

Our Designated Teacher will:

- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan to plan for that transition in consultation with the child’s social worker.
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people, at least two weeks before the Care Plan reviews.
- Ensure that each LAC and PLAC has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher, but should be based on the child’s own wishes. Members of staff who take on this role may need to be supported by someone from the school’s pastoral staff. They should also be alert to any child protection issues, any disclosures that students may make, and know what action to take. They should link closely therefore with the school’s Designated Teacher for Child Protection.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately
- Co-ordinate any support for the LAC and PLAC that is necessary within school.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual students, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
- Encourage LAC and PLAC to join in extra-curricular activities and out of school learning.
- Ensure, as far as possible, attendance at planning and review meetings.
- Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of LAC and PLAC.
- Set up timely meetings with relevant parties where the student is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion.
- Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and – if the student changes school – to a new school.
- Be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately.
- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life.
- Be aware that a large number of LAC and PLAC say they are bullied, so will actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school’s anti-bullying policy.
- Ensure that the audit on attendance and numbers is returned to the LAC Education Adviser every Term.
- Raise awareness that LAC and PLAC are automatically entitled to an allowance if they go into the sixth form.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF

All our staff will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of LAC and PLAC, as for all students.
- Maintain LAC's and PLAC's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond positively to a student's request to be the named member of staff whom they can talk to when they feel it is necessary.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- Work to enable LAC and PLAC to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all LAC and PLAC.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of LAC and PLAC.
- Be aware that a large number of LAC and PLAC say they are bullied so work to prevent bullying in line with the School's policy.

The Principal and the Designated Teacher will ensure that all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.