



# **Looked After Children Policy**

**Falconhurst School**

**Reported to TLS Governors: March 2022**

**Review due: March 2025**

## Designated Teacher – Louise Aird

### Working Definitions:

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

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority.

They fall into four main groups:

1. children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (Regulation 24)
2. children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order
3. children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection
4. children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement.

The term ‘in care’ refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 - they may live with foster carers, in a Children’s home, in a residential school, with relatives or with parents under supervision.

Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are ‘accommodated’ by the local authority and they may live in foster care, in a Children’s home or in a residential school.

All these groups are said to be ‘Children who are Looked After (CLA). They may be under the care of Milton Keynes Council or any other local authority but residing in Milton Keynes.

CLA reviews, involving the school, will take place up until an adoption order has been granted.

CLA are supported through **Pupil Premium Plus** funding until they are 16 years old and this is paid to school from either Milton Keynes Council or any other local authority with responsibility for a child. The school has a responsibility to ensure this funding is used to provide resources over and above other children to ensure CLA have every opportunity to achieve academically and socially at the same rate and level as their peers. Reporting on this is required annually in the CLA Report to Governors and submitted to MKC’s Head of Virtual School.

## **Falconhurst's Principles:**

At school, we will work with the Virtual School, carers and professionals from the relevant Local Authority to ensure that everyone is kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment.

Falconhurst's approach to supporting the educational achievement of CLA is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education and aspirational expectations for outcomes
- Promoting attendance to minimise absence and secure stability
- Targeting support for Early Intervention
- Having high expectations for each child to be supported in securing strong levels of positive mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Promoting inclusion and assertively tackling any incidents of bias or targeted behaviour within school
- Listening to children in order to understand their point of view, concerns and strengths when considering how to tailor their education
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals to secure the best outcomes.

The Designated teacher for CLA will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them or delegate this as appropriate but monitor and evaluate all process and outcomes.

The Safeguarding and Inclusion Governors will ensure that the needs of CLA in the school are taken into account and support the Designated Teacher to ensure all statutory and non-statutory policies and practice are secure.

The Designated teacher will ensure all staff receive regular training on the needs of CLA and resources are effectively deployed. The Designated teacher will also maintain their own training needs to ensure any legislative changes are implemented and exemplary practice remains a priority for all staff.

## **Personal Education Plans (PEPs) at Falconhurst:**

A PEP will be set up within 10 days of the child starting at Falconhurst School, if this has not been set up prior to starting. This is the responsibility of the child's social worker in liaison with the school.

There is a shared requirement and responsibility for developing and implementing the PEP within school. Within Milton Keynes, the Social Worker is responsible for initiating the PEP process completing the front page of the PEP form and setting dates for regular reviews; however this varies across Local Authorities and we will respond accordingly.

The purpose of the review is to

- Monitor the child's progress against the targets on any previous PEP and extending these targets if they have been achieved
- Quantify the impact that Pupil Premium funding has made to their progress and levels of need in school

- Ensure the child makes a smooth transition to the new school and that the child's records are transferred without delay.
- Liaise with the Virtual School in all aspects of the CLA progress and support. •
- Convene urgent multi-agency meetings if a CLA is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion.
- Ensure the child is supported emotionally and socially in school through either a key worker or Learning Mentor
- Promote good home-school links and the importance of education as a way of improving life chances for CLA.

### **Annual Report to Governors:**

A separate annual report to Governor for CLA is required. This is completed by the Designated Teacher.

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

- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Equality Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Inclusion Policy