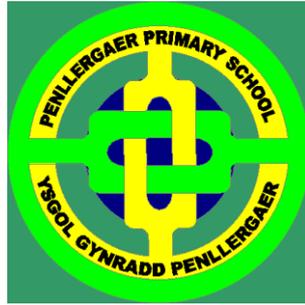


Penllergaer Primary School



POLICY FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

Penllergaer Primary School fully supports 'Making a difference' Welsh Government guidance for LAC: Nov17

'The Welsh Government has a national mission to ensure that all our children and young people have an equal opportunity to reach the highest standards. Underpinning this is a belief that someone's ability to benefit from education should not be determined by their personal circumstances and a drive to reduce inequalities and remove barriers to learning.'

Designated teacher – Helena Griffiths (ALNCo)

Designated link Governor – Helen Roberts

WG identified KEY reasons why LAC under achieve in education. We know that many of these learners will have:

- Disrupted learning and may have missed extended periods of school resulting in gaps in their learning and instability.
- Emotional impact of their experiences and unmet emotional, mental & physical health needs could have become significant barriers to their progress
- Primary carers are not expected / equipped to provide sufficient support & encouragement for learning & development
- Insufficient help with their education if they get behind.

The statement of corporate parenting – Swansea 2017 states that the designated teacher for LAC:

- Has responsibility to ensure that looked after children can have the outcomes every good parent would want for their children.
- To ensure they are safe and providing opportunities to help them achieve their potential.
- Has responsibility for the child's education, training and employment, health, welfare, leisure, housing and cultural opportunities.

The role of the designated teacher

The designated person has a crucial role as a leader and a champion for looked after children. They work with the school governing body to establish school policy and oversee its implementation. This means:

- promoting high aspirations for looked after children
- monitoring learning outcomes

- empowering school staff to contribute to the teaching and wider learning experiences of children in care
- undertaking discussions with the looked after child; and
- having empathy with the complexity of the lives of looked after children.

It is expected that the designated person for looked after children will ensure that:

- the school shares and supports high expectations for looked after children. The school should consider implementing projects that work on increasing aspirations and mentoring schemes (possibly by care experienced people) as a form of support for looked after children
- the well-being of looked after children is monitored effectively and their welfare needs addressed 8 Under the ALN Bill
- the school has access to current and accurate information on the looked after children on roll. This should include social worker and carer details, also, information relating to persons with whom the child should not have contact
- a culture of positive collaboration is fostered and where communication difficulties arise with social workers or carers, contact is made with the LACE Coordinator
- education information is transferred promptly between agencies and individuals
- a looked after child's transition from nursery into school and from school into post-16 education (further/higher education) is coordinated smoothly with all partners concerned
- a home-school agreement is drawn up with the carer
- there is regular dialogue with the child to provide support in the school environment
- the child's educational needs are identified in consultation with his/her teacher(s) to address them by setting realistic challenges and academic targets
- a PEP is drawn up in partnership with the child, parent and/or relevant family member, carer, social worker and any other relevant person. The PEP must be available at the looked after children review meeting although it is considered best practice to conduct the PEP review separately from the overarching looked after children review (PEPs and guidance are available from the LACE Coordinator)
- sufficient time for the school to be represented at the looked after children review
- all meetings for looked after children (for reasons related to their care circumstances) should be held outside of lesson times. If this is not possible an appropriate room should be provided to ensure privacy for the meeting
- all meetings with looked after children only involve members of school staff who are absolutely critical to that meeting
- looked after children are not exposed to disputes over finances and responsibilities in meetings
- any issues arising that might threaten the school placement are addressed without delay
- LAC pupil accesses Catch up arrangements when the gaps in the child's knowledge and education are identified
- LAC pupil is encouragement to engage with after school clubs, the school council etc
- a looked after child being re-integrated to school receives the necessary support they need to ensure the process is successful
- regular liaison on issues, including poor attendance, takes place with the EWO looked after children with learning or behavioural difficulties are assessed to identify and provide for their support needs. All steps should be taken to prevent exclusion,

including the implementation of pastoral support, referral for behaviour support and involvement of the Education Welfare Service. -Pastoral-Support-Programme.

- referrals are made to support services e.g. school based counselling service are made as appropriate
- working with the headteacher - the educational progress of looked after children is reported to the governing body on a termly basis
- the register of the looked after children in school is up to date
- training is undertaken to carry out the full duties of the role effectively.

The role of the link Governor and designated teacher is to work closely and ensure there is a policy for looked after children.

The designated person should:

- Keep the governing body/management committee up to date with the number of LAC and advise of their progress
- Provide an annual report on implementation of policies re: LAC & contribute to amendment of policies where appropriate
- Work with local authority in respect of procedures for LAC in danger of exclusion.
- Ensure no LAC is disadvantaged from any arrangements put in place simply because they have care status e.g. in respect of transport, resources, etc.
- Have knowledge of any additional learning needs the pupil has and have a close working relationship with the ALN co-ordinator.
- Every looked after pupil should have a Personal Education Plan. Any individual development plan to be arranged in light of the PEP.
- Governors to ensure if LAC has more than 1 plan that they are effectively integrated and feed into wider care plan.

The Headteacher notifies the local authority's LACE Coordinator, the name of the school's Designated Person. In Penllergaer Primary School it is Mrs Griffiths (ALNCo). She liaises with the class teacher to ensure PEPs are completed and updated and any relevant information is conveyed to the LAC review. She attends LAC review meetings on behalf of the school. When it is considered necessary and appropriate, the class teacher or Headteacher may be asked to attend. The Headteacher works with the local authority to ensure that necessary training is provided to the named designated person and allows sufficient time for her to attend training and statutory looked after children review meetings.

Personal Education Plans

- Social worker to inform school of young person becoming Looked After to initiate PEP
- Social worker to fully share information to contribute to completion of PEP – ideally in PEP meeting with pupil, school, carer & parent
- PEP to be completed by school WITHIN 20 SCHOOL DAYS of pupil becoming Looked After or changing schools
- PEP to be forwarded to IRO who monitors completion.
- PEP is kept by school, amended as needed & updated for forwarding to subsequent LAC reviews.

Penllergaer Primary School will:

- Ensure that relevant staff in schools attend and contribute to LAC reviews
- Be proactive in contacting agencies involved with LAC to ensure:

- Be aware of significant out of school experiences which may impact on LAC pupil's behaviour, attendance and progress.
- Ensure appropriate education and personal support is provided.
- Ensure governors are provided with informative detail on LAC in Headteacher's termly reports to governors and in meetings.
- Review current practice & procedure and implement revised procedures if appropriate.
- Ensure Catch up arrangements when the gaps in the child's knowledge and education are identified
- Encourage the child's engagement with after school clubs, the school council etc

Admissions Procedures for LAC

Penllergaer Primary School will work within the Education (Well-being (Wales) Act 2014).

This means:

- Children who are looked after and previously looked after should be ranked first in the oversubscription criteria for schools where applications for admission exceed the admission number for the school. Social Services and Requires local authorities to have special regard to the education and training needs of a looked after child when making a placement and to ensure that the placement does not disrupt a child's education or training
- Education Psychology Service (EPS) referral Every local authority has an EPS, although there are variations in service delivery to meet local needs. Educational Psychologists (EPs) within this service will work with children and young people (CYP) to support their development, well-being, resilience, learning and achievement. EPS guidance 28- aimed at education professionals and parents/carers, has been published.

We strongly believe that the most important part we can play in supporting the learning of children in public care is:

- To believe in them
- To think the very best of them
- To want the very best for them
- To give the very best to them
- To treat them fairly and equally

Review

This policy will be reviewed by the ALNCo, annually or sooner if guidance or legislation changes.