



# Charles Darwin School Looked After Children (LAC) Policy

Persons Responsible:

Governors: Ethos Committee

SLT: Mrs L Rees

Written by: Mrs L Rees

Formally adopted by the Ethos Committee:

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## **1. Introduction**

Charles Darwin School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

## **2. Equality & Diversity statement**

Charles Darwin School is committed to valuing and celebrating diversity and promoting equality of opportunity for all its staff and students. We are working to create a learning and working environment which is free from prejudice, discrimination, intimidation and all forms of harassment including bullying. Respect for rights is at the heart of our planning, policies, practice and ethos and we expect all members of our school community to model this in their behaviour and relationships.

## **3. Aims/Purposes**

The aim of this policy is to outline how the school promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in care of a local authority (Children Looked After) or those children who have previously been CLA but have been adopted (post adopted CLAs) or placed under a Special Guardianship Order (SGO), within a supportive and inclusive school culture.

## **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The Head Teacher and Designated Teacher for CLA**

The Head Teacher and designated teacher will inform staff of a child's care status and determine the extent to which information is shared with other members of staff.

### **The Designated Teacher for CLA**

All schools are required to have a Designated Teacher for Children who are Looked After (CLA) The designated teacher for Children Looked After at Charles Darwin School is Louise Rees, Deputy Head teacher. The role of the Designated Teacher is to:

- Maintain a register of children in care of a Local Authority (CLA) and those who are Post adoption CLA or have an SGO.
- Ensure that all relevant education and care information is available to school staff and that this information is kept up-to-date.
- Ensure that all staff, both teaching and associate, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by CLA, adopted and SGO children and understand the need for high expectations and positive systems of support to overcome them.
- Present a report to the full governing body on an annual basis regarding progress and outcomes of all CLA, post CLA and RGO. This will include details around attendance, progress vs targets and any interventions, support and extracurricular activities the child has been involved in that academic year. There will also be information shared in this report regarding use of Pupil Premium Plus funding on individuals.
- Act as an advocate for children in care of a local authority, post adopted CLA or SGO.

- Hold a supervisory brief and monitor the educational progress of all children who are identified at CLA.
- Oversee the smooth induction of a new child at Charles Darwin School who is identified as CLA or Post CLA
- Act as a named person for the child unless another member of the pastoral team is designated to do so by the Designated teacher.
- Promote the involvement of these children in extra-curricular activities and intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement, absence from school etc.
- Ensure that each CLA pupil has a Personal Education Plan (PEP) and that school-based access to services and support is in place.
- Help to co-ordinate and lead if required, the educational PEP meetings so that they can inform the child's Care Plan and enable the child to contribute to this.
- Attend, or in rare circumstances, arrange for someone else to attend, LAC meetings for the young person arranged by social care.
- Act as advisor for other staff in the school and for governors on issues relevant to children in care of a local authority, and ensure there is sensitivity to the background of Children Looked After, adopted or who have an SGO especially in work around families, family trees and family values
- Ensure the speedy transfer of information between agencies on individuals and report on the progress of all children in care to social workers and their Virtual School.
- Develop knowledge of Social Care department and Education procedures by attending training events organised by the local authority and cascade training to staff as appropriate

## **5. The Governing Body**

The named Governor with special responsibility for children in public care is Mr Iain Turner . The Governors will assist the school in looking at whether policies and practice on behaviour, admissions, exclusions, attendance and special educational needs adequately address the needs of children in public care.

## **6. Confidentiality**

In order to maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality:

- The Head Teacher and the Designated Teacher for CLA have responsibility for informing all teaching staff who are in contact with the child of this status.
- As the initial contact for carers and other agencies with the school the school office staff will have knowledge of the child's care status.
- It is appropriate for support staff to have knowledge that the child is being looked after when directly involved in the teaching of the child.
- Other staff may need to know if there are particular concerns that require a whole-school approach.
- In each case the Head Teacher and the Designated Teacher will determine the extent of the information shared. In every case, only information which is critical to the working relationship will be passed on.

## **7. Admissions**

On admission to Charles Darwin School, records will be requested from the previous school, where appropriate, and a meeting held to inform the PEP or attend their last PEP at the school that they are leaving before they start at Charles Darwin School. This may be particularly important with Year 6 into 7 transition PEP's.

## **8. Involving the Child**

In line with best practice, the child will be consulted and involved in decisions about themselves according to their age and understanding and will address the following:

- A child will be made aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances.
- How this is shared with them will depend on their age and understanding.
- A Pupils Views form will be completed prior to any PEP meeting.
- It is expected that a CLA attends the PEP meeting in person so their voice can be heard.
- It will always be emphasised to the child that the school, the Social Worker and the carers are working together to support their education.

## **9. Involving the Parent/Carer**

Charles Darwin School recognise that support from home greatly assists a child's educational progress. We therefore aim to involve parents, carers and those with parental responsibility in an open and positive manner.

Charles Darwin School will maintain regular communication with the primary carer and will ensure that copies of reports are forwarded to the Social Worker in addition to the foster carer and any other identified person in accordance with the care plan of the child.

The named teacher will in most circumstances share their work email to communicate effectively with carers

## **10. Involving other agencies**

Charles Darwin School recognises that multi-agency working is crucial to the support and progress of children in care of a Local Authority. Therefore:

- The school will work closely with other agencies involved in supporting the achievements and welfare of the child, particularly the Social Worker and where necessary the Virtual School.
- The school will exchange significant information to appropriate personnel between reviews when necessary.

## **11. Assessment, planning, monitoring and review procedures**

Class teachers will carry out assessment, planning and monitoring in accordance with general school practice. In addition to this:

- Each pupil in care of a Local Authority will have a PEP as part of their Care Plan. This will identify basic information, act as a record of progress, identify specific areas of concern and include achievable targets.
- Each pupil identified as CLA will have a PEP that is reviewed at least every four months.
- The Designated Teacher will maintain an overview of the progress and needs of each child in the care of a Local Authority.
- Expectations will remain high for CLA's. This will be communicated clearly with all relevant teachers