



# THE Lodge AP

— At Sandbach House —

## Cared for Children Policy

2026-2027

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<b>Date of Next Review</b>	June 2027

## **Background**

Cared for Children are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational underachievement when compared to their peers. This may be due to:

- A high level of disruption and change in school placements
- Lack of involvement in extra-curricular activities
- Inconsistent or no attention paid to homework

The governing body is committed to providing quality education for all its students based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes. This policy includes requirements set out in "Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004" (Nov 2005) and associated guidance on the education of LAC.

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

- Children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- Children who are the subject of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- Children who are the subject of emergency orders for the protection of the child (section 44)
- 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 (section 21).

## **Aims**

The policy aims to make clear the steps that the school undertakes in order to make The Lodge AP a safe and secure environment in which cared for children can thrive and their needs are specifically addressed.

This policy sits alongside other policies that reinforce our commitment to Safeguarding of students. (Child Protection, Safeguarding, Use of Restraint, Discipline)

## **Principles**

- To provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children.
- To support our Cared for children and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential and enjoy learning.

## **Implementation**

To support cared for children fully we the school will:

- Provide an entitlement to a balanced, broadly based curriculum. Our cared for children policy reinforces the need for teaching that is fully inclusive and the need to make adjustment at times to the provision for cared for children.
- Allocate resources to support appropriate provision for cared for children, meeting the principles set out in this policy.
- Work with social workers for the cared for children who should initiate a Personal Education Plan (PEP) within 20 days of joining the school, or of entering care, and ensure that the young person is actively involved.
- Monitor and track the achievement and attainment of cared for children to enable their PEP to be reviewed, according to their needs, as initiated by the reviewing office or social worker.
- Ensure that cared for children status is highlighted appropriately in the school's information systems so that information is readily available as required.
- Encourage staff to attend courses that help them to acquire the skills needed to support cared for children. Part of the Designated Teacher's role is to develop awareness of issues associated with cared for children.

- Work in partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable cared for children to achieve their potential.
- Seek and receive assistance from the support services who may be involved with individual cared for children such as cared for children teams, Educational psychologists and others from Local Authority, SEN services, Medical officers, School nurses, CAMHS, Education Welfare Officers, Social care worker/ Community care worker/ Residential childcare worker, Youth Offending Service.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Designated Teacher**

The Lodge AP will nominate a designated teacher (usually a member of the SENDCo) for cared for children whose role as the cared for children designated teacher will be to:

- Be an advocate for cared for children within school
- Give regard to the impact of relevant decisions for cared for children on both the cared for children and the rest of the school community
- Know who are all the cared for children in school, including those in the care of other authorities and ensure the availability of all relevant details from school record-keeping systems as required
- Attend relevant training about cared for children
- Act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to cared for children, seeking advice from the cared for children team when appropriate
- Ensure that cared for children receive a positive welcome on entering school, especially mid-year and, if necessary, offer additional support and a pre-entry visit to help the new student settle
- Ensure that all cared for children have an appropriate PEP that is completed within 20 days of joining the school or of entering care and ensure that the young person contributes to the plan
- Oversee, direct and co-ordinate the work of other staff in managing the provision for CFCs in their care.
- Convene an urgent multi-agency meeting if a cared for children is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion
- Ensure confidentiality on individual children, sharing confidential and personal information on a need to know basis, bearing in mind the wishes of the individual student
- Act as the key adviser for staff and governors on issues relevant to cared for children
- Ensure that care and school liaison is effective including invitations to meetings and other school events
- Actively encourage and promote out of hours learning and extra-curricular activities for cared for children
- Ensure a speedy transfer of information, records and coursework, where appropriate, when a cared for children transfers to another educational placement
- Contribute information to cared for children reviews when required
- Report to the Governing body on cared for children in the school and inform of relevant policy and practice development
- Agree with the social worker the appropriate people to invite to parents' evenings etc
- Prepare reports for Governors' meetings to include:
  - The number of cared for children on roll and the confirmation that they have a Personal Education Plan
  - Attendance of cared for children compared to other students
  - Attainment compared to other students
  - The number, if any, of fixed term and permanent exclusions
  - The destinations of students who leave the school
- Attend governor meetings as appropriate – such as the admission, disciplinary and exclusion of cared for children
- Arrange a mentor or 'befriender' (adult and /or student) to whom the young person can talk, possibly through the learning mentor scheme or through Connexions, particularly when the student is new to school

- Ensure that any Special Educational Needs are addressed in conjunction with the SENCO and in accordance with the Code of Practice for SEN recognising that cared for children are six to eight times more likely to have a statement of Special Educational Needs than the general school population.

### **School Staff**

It is recognised that all staff have a role to play in supporting and addressing the needs of cared for children. At The Lodge AP, staff will:

- Follow school procedures
- Keep the Designated Teacher informed about a cared for child's progress
- Have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of cared for children
- Positively promote the raising of a cared for child's self esteem
- Ensure any cared for child is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained
- Be familiar with the school's policy and guidance on cared for children and respond appropriately to requests for information to support PEPs and review meetings
- Liaise with the Designated Teacher where a cared for child is experiencing difficulties
- When having to discipline cared for children, be mindful that some punishments may create difficulties in the care placement
- Contribute to regular liaison with social care colleagues and other appropriate professionals and keep carers fully informed at all times
- Keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to other professionals/ parents/carers/student as appropriate
- Make extra copies of reports available when required

### **The Governing Body**

At The Lodge AP the Governing Body will:

- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for cared for children
- Ensure there is a Designated Teacher for cared for children
- Liaise with the headteacher, Designated Teacher and all other staff to ensure the needs of cared for children are met
- Nominate a governor with responsibility for cared for children who links with the Designated Teacher
- Request regular reports from the Designated Teacher
- Ensure that the school's policies and procedures give cared for children equal access in respect of:
  - Admission to school
  - National Curriculum and examinations, both academic and vocational out of school learning and extra-curricular activities, work experience and careers guidance.
- Annually review the effective implementation of the school policy for cared for children
- Ensure that the Designated Teacher is invited to the exclusion meetings of cared for children

### **Monitoring and Record Keeping**

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.