

ARENA ACADEMY POLICY ON THE EDUCATION OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC) and Previously LOOKED AFTER CHILD (PLAC)

Arena Academy believes that in partnership with Birmingham City Council and Sandwell Council as Corporate Parents we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of Children in Care.

AIM

- Our vision is for all of our students, regardless of background and circumstance, to make outstanding progress and achieve grades which will open the door to the future of their choice.
- We want our students to be curious and develop a thirst for knowledge; we want them to be resilient and to value effort; we want them to understand that sometimes failure is an essential part of the learning process and to recognise that developing a positive, 'can do' attitude will help them to set and achieve aspirational goals
- We want to provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children.
- We aim to support our Children in Care and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential and enjoy learning.
- We also strive to fulfil our schools' role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our Children in Care, by asking the question, '**Would this be good enough for my child?**'

DEFINITION:

- 'Looked after children' (LAC) 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:
 - children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents
 - children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order
 - children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection 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 under section 20 of the Children Act – they may live in foster care, in a Children's home or in a residential school. All these groups are said to be 'looked after children' - LAC.

IN PURSUIT OF THIS POLICY WE WILL:

- Nominate a Designated teacher for Children in Care, who is part of the Senior Leadership Team, who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them.

The Designated Teacher is Abed Ahmed: ahmed@corearena.academy

- Nominate a school governor to ensure that the needs of Children in Care in the school are taken into account at a school management level and to support the Designated Teacher.

The school governor is: Ali Champness: ac_are_lgb@corearena.academy

- Support the Designated teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend training on Children in Care.

The Designated teacher will:

- The designated teacher will be a central point of initial contact within the school. At times this point of contact may be delegated to a Deputy DSL who will report directly to the Designated Teacher. This will help to make sure that we play our role to the full in making sure arrangements are joined up and minimise any disruption to a child's learning.

- Maintain an up-to-date record of all Children in Care who are on the school roll. This will include:

- Status i.e. care order or accommodated.
- Type of Placement i.e. Foster, respite, residential.
- Name of Social Worker, area office, telephone number.
- Daily contact and numbers e.g. name of parent or carer or key worker in children's home.
- SEND - EHCP
- Baseline information and all test results.
- Attendance figures
- Suspensions

- Ensure that there is a Personal Education Plan for each child/young person to include appropriate targets and above information. This must be compatible with the child's/young person's Care Plan and where applicable include any other school plan, e.g. EHCP and associated plans, Transition Plan, Pastoral Support Programme.

- Ensure that PP+ is spent appropriately to raise educational attainment and an accurate record is kept.

- Ensure that someone attends Child in Care Reviews on each child/young person and/or always prepares a written report which promotes the continuity and stability of their education.

- Liaise with the relevant Virtual School termly with regard to the performance, attendance and attainment of Children in Care.

- Ensure that if/when the child transfers school all relevant information is forwarded to the receiving school as a matter of priority.

- Ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when Children in Care are underachieving and have early interventions to improve this in line with existing school policy.

- Ensure that systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about Children in Care where and when appropriate.
- Ensure that Children in Care, along with all children are listened to and have equal opportunity to pastoral support in school.
- Ensure that they keep the school up to date with current legislation and its implication for the school in respect of Children in Care.
- Report to the Governing body annually on the performance of the Children in Care who are on the roll of the school.
- Attend any relevant CPD provided by Virtual Schools.

All governors and staff will:

- Support the local authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of looked after children.

‘Previously looked after children’ (PLAC)

- The February 2018 guidance stated that:

‘A previously looked after child is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person, or has been adopted from ‘state care’ outside England and Wales’.

Signed: RMann

Date of review: September 2025