



"Opening doors to the future"

CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL MERTHYR TUDFIL  
MERTHYR TYDFIL COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## GREENFIELD SCHOOL

### LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC) POLICY

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Standards  
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**‘ Opening Doors To The Future ’  
‘ Agor drysau i’r dyfodol’**

**Original Completion Date**

June 2015

**Author**

Wayne Murphy, Head Teacher

## MONITORING THE POLICY

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually unless change of circumstances or legislation requires it to be amended earlier.

Signed: ..... Date:  
.....

Head teacher

Signed: ..... Date:  
.....

Chair of Governors

**Review Date**

4/1/17

**Author**

W A Murphy

## **Our Vision**

'To open doors to the future'

## **Our Mission Statement**

That children, staff, parents, carers and all stakeholders work actively in partnership to enable all pupils to realise and reach their full potential.

## **Aims**

- For pupils to operate as independent learners and thinkers
- To inspire a love for learning
- To provide a relevant curriculum for all
- For pupils to value themselves
- To foster a sense of belonging to a community

## **Our Values**

- We create
- We respect each other
- We try our best
- We are a team
- We learn from mistakes
- We celebrate each other's success
- We are polite and considerate
- We produce magic moments

We want every child to be safe and happy in our school. We believe that the key to this is for us all to have self-respect, respect for others and respect for property.

### **Everyone has the right to:**

- Feel safe, cared for and respected.
- Be able to learn to the best of his/her ability and to develop whatever skills he/she possesses.
- Be treated equally irrespective of gender, race, physical characteristics or any other factors.
- Learn and play without disruption.

### **Everyone is expected to:**

- Be responsible for their own behaviour
- Respect the rights of others
- Share our values

## **Greenfield School**

### **Looked After Children**

Greenfield School is an investor in children, and particularly those who are defined as looked after children.

#### **Definition of a Looked After Child (LAC)**

The term 'looked after' in schools encompasses two distinct categories of children: Those provided with accommodation and those who are 'in care'.

#### **Children who are accommodated**

Accommodation is one of the services that local authorities have a duty to provide for children in need under Part III of the Children Act. This may be arranged with friends or relatives, in foster care or somewhere else suitable. Parents retain full parental responsibility and can take their children home at any time.

#### **Children who are under a care order**

One route into the care of the local authority is by a court order, made to safeguard children who are, or likely to be, at risk of significant harm. Where harm can be attributed to a failure in parental care or the child being beyond parental control, the local authority may go to court for a care order. A Care Order provides a local authority with shared parental responsibility for a child. Social Services have a duty to the children that they look after to make sure that they have somewhere suitable to live, the care and the material support that they need to keep them safe, and to promote their welfare. The Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004 place a duty on local authorities to ensure that all the identified needs of the children are met when they are accommodated by the local authority and placed away from their birth family. The local authority must ensure LAC are not only properly care for, but also receive appropriate health care and appropriate education so that they achieve their potential. Once a local authority has taken the profound decision to remove a child short term or long term, from his or her family, it is the duty of the whole authority to 'safeguard and promote his welfare' (Children Act 1989 S22 (3a)). The whole authority includes local education authorities and schools. This is called Corporate Parenting.

#### **The Role of the School**

When pupils are 'accommodated', the school will keep records of where pupils are accommodated, but will treat parents in the same way as if their children were still living with them. The school has a designated person who is responsible for looked after children – the Headteacher, who has overall responsibility for liaison with Social Services and with the named senior officer. Mrs Pauline Lipian, the LAC Co-ordinator for Merthyr Tydfil and Jessica Jones LACES.

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION**

**“Valuing and supporting the education of looked after children is the single most important contribution a corporate parent can make to their lives, because it is about investing in and caring about the future, and recognizing that education is their passport to better life chances.” (WAG)**

The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) is committed to raising standards for all children. Higher expectations of children who are looked after is essential. WAG has provided funding to help authorities to raise educational achievement of LAC.

The principles of corporate parenting in which the school is involved are:

- Prioritising education
- Having high expectations
- Listening to children
- Early intervention and prioritising action
- Inclusion – challenging and changing attitudes to keep children at school.

The school must make every effort to provide each looked after child with the educational opportunities to fulfil his/her potential. Sometimes, LAC have a lot of emotional baggage that disrupts their schooling, but with appropriate support and staff working together to help this vulnerable group, their life chances should be improved. As corporate parents we must invest in these children.

The school is responsible for providing for the educational needs of the child. In order to do this, information needs to be shared by all appropriate agencies. Knowledge about the child's educational background in terms of names of schools, dates and changes of schools, educational attainment and scores, transitional planning and special educational needs will need to be gathered and will form the basis of the Personal Education Plan (PEP) for that child.

The designated teacher's responsibility is to:

- Keep a list of looked after children (LAC) in the school
- Ensure speedy transfer of education information between the agencies and individuals.
- Act as a resource and advocate.
- Ensure pupils' views are sought and opportunities are provided for pupils To discuss their views.
- Attend training on LAC guidance.
- Ensure that staff, have relevant information/training, and positively promote the education of LAC.
- Ensure every LAC has a Personal Education Plan (PEP) which is up to date and presented at each LAC review (usually every 6 months).

### **Personal Education Plans (PEP)**

It is a STATUTORY requirement for all LAC to have a PEP within 20 days of entering care or joining a new school. This is initiated by the social worker in contact with the designated teacher. PEPs ensure access to services and support. They improve communication between agencies and contribute to stability. They detail the respective roles and responsibilities of those involved with the child PEPs minimize the disruption caused through having to move schools. They indicate particular needs and establish clear goals and act as a record of progress. They note academic scores and track progress. Targets are set for the school, child and carer that will assist the child's progress. PEPs are measure by WAG and ESTYN.

The PEP used in Merthyr Tydfil follows the All Wales model. It can include the child's latest school report for parents and the child's IEP or Statement of Special Needs if appropriate.

The PEP is reviewed regularly in preparation for the statutory review, and includes the class teacher and the child's views. The designated LAC teacher will be invited to attend the statutory LAC review and report on the child's educational progress and targets for future study.

***“Children in public care are our children. We hold their future in our hands and education is the key to that future.”  
DfES 2000***

Merthyr Tydfil Personal Education Plan (PEP)

Extra Material: LACES Education Support Plan 2014 -2016

LAC registers can be found in main office