

## **Protocol to secure the school admission of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) of school age within statutory 20 working days of coming into care**

### **These children are exempt from the Fair Access Protocol**

#### **Principles of this Policy**

- Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (“UASCs”) have usually fled their families and country because of terrible and dangerous conditions.
- Their journey to the UK will have been long and traumatic; many children arrive in a state of very poor physical and mental health, suffering from psychological trauma and PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder).
- These children are very vulnerable to traffickers and other predatory adults and find themselves immersed in a strange country in which they usually have very little the language.
- For their own wellbeing and safeguarding, it is imperative that they are educated safely within a school as soon as possible.

#### **Good Practice**

*Where children were admitted in less than 20 days, the following aspects were common factors:*

- Child referred on entry to care to the Orientation and Induction Programme.
- Social worker applied for place within a few days of child coming into care after communication with Virtual School.
- Good understanding by school of what risk constitutes and by social worker of information required.
- Quick responses by school and other parties in terms of communications about meetings.
- PEP occurs between starting OIP and school admission and school present where possible.
- Time between school place being offered and child being admitted is as short as practicable- assessments occur once the child is attending school and not before as this delay’s entry.

#### **Jargon Buster:**

*IYFAP:* In Year Fair Access Panel. This panel allocates vulnerable admissions to schools. LAC are outside of this panel, but the Virtual School works closely with schools in this process.

*ERO:* Exclusion and Reintegration Officer. Run the IYFAP process in the north/west, central and south.

**OIP:** The Orientation and Induction Program. A 4 week course, funded by the Virtual School for UASCs, to teach basic English, and to introduce individuals to life in the UK.

**PEP:** Personal Education Plan. A statutory document for all LAC, held within 20 school days of coming into care, or changing school placement. Thereafter, held three times per year.

**PMO:** Pupils Missing Out. A record of children in Oxfordshire, who are Not On Roll at any school.

**UASC:** Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

**Contact details:**

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**Updated February 2021**