



Policy for Children Looked After

Person responsible: Head teacher
Ratified by the governing body: Autumn 2018
Date for review: Autumn 2020

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Anne-Marie Renshaw'. The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned to the left of the printed name.

Reverend Anne-Marie Renshaw
Chair of Governors

Rationale

Schools are key in helping to raise the educational standards and improving the life chances of looked after children, and in tackling the causes of social exclusion through careful planning, monitoring and evaluation. Schools can also provide a source of continuity and “normality” for children who may have been subject to emotional distress, abuse, and disruption. School can be the place where children maintain friendships and a place where they feel safe and can be themselves.

Raising levels of achievement has been strongly and clearly highlighted as a major part of improving the life chances of looked after children and schools play a pivotal role in this.

Objective

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of Children Looked After (CLA) within a supportive and inclusive school culture.

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. Children Looked After fall into four main groups:

- 1) Children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents;
- 2) Children who are the subject of a care order or interim care order;
- 3) Children who are the subject of emergency orders for the protection of the child;
- 4) Children who are compulsorily accommodated.

As an educationally inclusive school the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of every young person matters. We take into account pupils’ varied life experiences and needs, providing equal opportunities for all pupils, whatever their age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, attainment and background, to ensure that every child really does matter.

The local governing body is committed to ensuring that the following roles and responsibilities are carried out effectively in order to fulfil the school’s duty regarding these pupils.

The Name of the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After

Jackie Halliday (DSL and Headteacher)

The role of the designated teacher for children looked after:

- To ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have an understanding of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by Children Looked After and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them;

- To inform members of staff of the general educational needs of Children Looked After, and to promote the involvement of these children in extracurricular activities, school councils etc;
- To act as an advocate for Children Looked After;
- To develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers and the local authority;
- To hold a supervisory brief for all Children Looked After e.g. to ensure all relevant education and care information is available to school staff and carer(s), and that this information is kept up to date;
- To supervise the smooth induction of a new child in public care into the school;
- To intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement;
- to enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their care plan;
- To help ensure that each pupil has a Personal Education Plan (the PEP should be initiated by the young person's social worker).
- To ensure the assessment monitoring and review procedures are in place.

Liaison:

- To liaise with the member of staff responsible for monitoring children on the Child Protection Register;
- To help co-ordinate education and Children Looked After review meetings, so that the Personal Education Plan can inform the child's Care Plan;
- To attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or to contribute in other ways to Children Looked After care planning meetings;
- To be the named contact for colleagues within the local authority;
- To ensure the speedy transfer of information between agencies and individuals.

Training:

- To develop knowledge of local authority procedures by attending training events organised by the Local Authority;
- To cascade training to school staff as appropriate.

The Name of the Designated Governor for Children Looked After

Robin Field

The role of the designated Governor for Children Looked after

- Attend any specific courses related to CLA in order to provide the requisite level of challenge to the School regarding policy and practice in relation to Children Looked After.
- In conjunction with the Headteacher:

- Ensure that the Designated CLA Teacher has the opportunity to acquire and keep up- to-date the necessary skills, knowledge and training to understand and respond to the specific teaching and learning needs of 'Children Looked After'
- Ensure that the Designated Teacher's role contributes to the deeper understanding of everyone in the school who is likely to be involved in supporting the achievement of 'Children Looked After'
- Meet with staff working with 'Children Looked After' to ensure that staff understand their responsibilities in relation to 'Children Looked After' and pupils are achieving in line with expectations
- Ensure an annual report is brought to governors which meets Statutory Guidance* and that the LGB follows up on any issues that the report raises.
- Review the effectiveness of the CLA policy and practice in meeting the needs of 'Children Looked After'
- 'The roles and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children' – Statutory Guidance for school governing bodies (Ref: DCSF-01046-2009)

Responsibility for Children Looked After in School

- It is important that all teaching staff who are in contact with the child or young person are aware that he/she is being looked-after by the Local Authority. The responsibility for the transfer of this information should be that of the Headteacher and/or the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After.
- It is appropriate for Teaching Assistants to have knowledge that the young person is being looked-after only when directly involved in the teaching of the young person.
- In the absence of the usual class teacher, some information regarding the child's circumstances should be shared with the teacher covering the class. The extent of this sharing should be determined by the Headteacher or the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After.

Admission Arrangements

- On admission, records (including the P.E.P.) will be requested from the pupil's previous school and a meeting will be held with carer/parent/social worker.
- A date will be agreed upon for a new Personal Education Plan.
- An appropriate school induction will take place.

Involving the Young Person

It is important that a young person is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. How this is shared with them clearly depends on their age and understanding. The explanation should emphasize that

the school, the Social Worker, and their carer(s) are working together to promote their education

Communication with Other Agencies

- The school should ensure that a copy of all reports (e.g. annual reports) should be forwarded to the young person's Social Worker in addition to the foster carer or Residential Social Worker.
- The school should endeavour to co-ordinate their review meetings, e.g. to have an Annual Review of a Statement combined with a Statutory Care Review.
- The local authority and the school will need to exchange information between formal reviews if there are significant changes in the young person's circumstances, e.g. if school is considering an exclusion, there is a change of care placement or there are significant attendance issues.
- A Pupil premium for each CLA is a fund that follows the pupil annually and is paid to the school by their LA for the benefit of that pupil.

Assessment, Monitoring and Review Procedures

Each looked-after pupil will have a Care Plan that will include a Personal Education Plan (PEP) that the Social Worker takes a lead in developing. This will identify specific areas of concern and include achievable targets. Areas for consideration will include:

- Attendance;
- Achievement Record (academic or otherwise);
- Behaviour;
- Involvement in Extra Curricular Activities;
- Development needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge or subject areas and experiences); and
- Long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress and aspirations).

The PEP will be updated at least every six months, as part of the Statutory Reviewing process carried out by the social worker.

The designated teacher will report annually to the Governing Board on the progress of all Children Looked After against the key indicators outlined above

