



Courthouse Green Primary School

Children who are Looked After Policy

March 2022

Courthouse Green Primary School Policy for Looked After Children

Introduction

“An educationally inclusive school is one in which the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of every young person matter. Effective schools are educationally inclusive schools. This shows, not only in their performance, but also in their ethos and their willingness to offer new opportunities to pupils who may have experienced previous difficulties. This does not mean treating all pupils in the same way. Rather it involves taking account of pupils' varied life experiences and needs.”

The above quote is taken from ‘Evaluating Educational Inclusion – Guidance for Inspectors and Schools’ (DfES 2000) and forms the rationale for this policy.

Our school is also aware that children who are ‘Looked After’, are ‘vulnerable’ both socially and emotionally, which can also impact on their long term academic achievements and therefore life chances. They constitute a group in the sense that they may share common experiences as a result of having been taken into Public Care, but that they are also individuals and members of other groups. We will take this into account when planning to meet their needs and avoid any action that may lead to stigmatization.

This policy and the school will have regard to The Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked Children- A Statutory guidance from the Department of Education 2017.

In this policy the term ‘children who are looked after’ will also include children who were previously looked after.

Our aim

The aim of this policy is to promote educational inclusion for Children who are Looked After and children who were previously looked after to enable them to access the full range of educational opportunities available to them and to reach their potential, both academically and personally.

Our objectives

Children who are Looked After in this school will

- Be taught a broad and balanced curriculum, with appropriate challenge and/or differentiation to meet individual needs
- Receive an appropriate level of monitoring and support
- Have access to the full range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Be seen as individuals and will not be treated differently from their peers.

Teachers and other staff in this school will

- Receive an appropriate level of training on the issues affecting the educational achievement and psychological well-being of Children who are Looked After and use this to guide their interactions with them
- Plan for and meet the individual needs of Children who are Looked After
- Liaise with parents, foster carers, Social workers to ensure they are aware of and involved in the child/children’s learning
- Have high expectations and high aspirations for Children who are Looked After.

The Designated teacher (for children who are looked after) and Senior Management will

- Identify, arrange and/or deliver training to staff to enable the above to take place
- Ensure the development of effective and inclusive strategies to address the needs of Looked After Children
- Ensure the smooth transfer of information within school and between school, carers and other agencies

- Prepare for and be part of Personal Education Plans (PEP) meetings three times a year for each 'Looked After' child. The meetings will be led by the Designated teacher.
- Share relevant information and work in partnership with all relevant agencies
- The Designated teacher at Courthouse Green is Mrs. C Jones

Children who are Looked After

1. Induction - To ensure a supportive and sympathetic induction for Children who are Looked After admitted to our school, the Head teacher will share relevant information with Designated teacher and class teacher prior to entry. The class teacher will set up a 'Buddy' to help child familiarise themselves with school, routines, etc. The class teacher will monitor child closely particularly in first term in all aspects of school life, whilst also liaising closely with Designated teacher to ensure child is settling and happy.

2. Pastoral Support - To ensure Children who are Looked After continue to receive an appropriate level of support the Learning Mentor will liaise with the class teacher about how the Looked After Child has settled, any concerns. Similarly, the Learning Mentor will talk with the child. If necessary, an intervention to support 'well-being' can be implemented to support the Looked After Child.

3. Information - The Designated teacher will seek and receive information about the academic attainment and other educational issues affecting the learning of newly admitted Children who are Looked After at an early stage and pass this on to relevant staff to avoid unnecessary breaks in learning. The Designated teacher will liaise with the Social Worker to ensure a Personal Education Plan takes place as part of the initial meeting in school.

Information about the circumstances of Children who are Looked After will be shared on a 'need to know' basis. Where no particular (specific) arrangements are in place, only the teaching staff that are in direct contact with a Looked After Child will be informed of these. If there are learning or behaviour needs for a Looked After Child, all staff will be informed by the Designated teacher of strategies in place or if the young person is experiencing particular difficulties. Supply teachers and non-teaching staff will be given an appropriate amount of information, to be determined by the Designated teacher.

Information regarding parental responsibility, arrangements for Parent consultation evenings, consent forms, trips, and transport arrangements will be held in the class folder in the main office.

4. Learning

If a child who is looked after appears to be having difficulties with the curriculum or to be failing to engage with it, this will be addressed as follows:

- The Designated teacher will look at all possible contributory factors and gather a wide range of evidence in conjunction with other relevant staff
- Look for factors which may be masking underlying learning difficulties, including talking to the child and carers
- If appropriate, refer to and initiate SEND procedures (Please refer to SEND Policy for further information)
- Consider and enable an intervention that would support learning

We recognise that there are factors which may prevent Children who are Looked After from achieving as highly as they could, even if there are no apparent learning difficulties. To ensure that under-achievement does not go unrecognised, the attainment of each Looked After Child will be tracked and compared to previous results. If progress is not as could be expected we will:

- Seek further advice, guidance and support from the Virtual School for children who are looked after.
- Use Learning Mentor to support an intervention focusing on area of concern that is inhibiting learning, eg self-esteem

Information about the academic attainment of all Children who are Looked After in school will be collected as follows:

- Class teachers will track Children who are Looked After attainments and progress as part of our school's termly assessment procedures

- Termly Teacher Assessments for Reading, Writing and Maths, and end of year results for each Looked After child, will be submitted to the Designated teacher
- Class teachers of Children who are Looked After will meet with Designated teacher, (prior to PEP meetings) to discuss children's academic progress and attainments.
- Parents and/or Carers will be invited to attend Parents' Evenings where academic attainment is shared and discussed. In addition to this they will receive a Mid Year report and End of Year Report which gives information about attainment and progress.
- Social Workers will receive information about academic progress and attainment at the PEP meetings.
- Designated teacher will share information about academic attainment of Children who are Looked After with designated Looked After Governor annually

Academic information will be analysed by the Designated teacher to measure progress of Children who are Looked After against the school population as a whole.

5. Attendance - If a child who is looked after is identified as having poor attendance or punctuality

- The Social Worker and carers will be contacted by the Designated teacher to gain their support and collect any relevant information
- The School Learning Mentor will be involved fully in planning and delivering strategies to improve attendance
- Information about the attendance of Children who are Looked After will be collected and shared as part of PEP meetings

Please refer to Attendance Policy for further information regarding procedures, etc.

6. Behaviour - We recognise that psychological trauma and lack of continuity in the lives of Children who are Looked After may lead to challenging behaviour in school and that it is especially important to employ positive behaviour strategies in these circumstances. Similarly, we recognise that Children who are Looked After as a group are far more likely to be excluded than the school population as a whole, and that exclusion can place additional pressure on foster placements. The following arrangements are in place to address behaviour problems at an early stage:

- All incidents of behaviour will be recorded as outlined in the Relational Behaviour Policy
- Class teachers will report any concerns regarding behaviour to the Designated teacher, who can then support and advise, seek further guidance from the Virtual School, etc in order to positively manage issues with behaviour
- The Social Worker and carers will be contacted by Designated teacher as soon as behaviour problems are identified or if there are significant changes to the behaviour of a child who is looked after.
- If the problem continues, the Social Worker, carers and staff from support services such as the Educational Psychology Service, SEMH+L and Education Access will be invited to a meeting with appropriate school staff to determine supportive strategies to reduce the problem behaviour. The responsibility for organising such a meeting lies with SENCo.
- If appropriate, refer to and initiate SEND procedures
- Information about the behaviour of Children who are Looked After will be monitored by the Designated teacher to ensure early intervention strategies can be implemented in order that the risk of exclusion is reduced.
- Please refer to the Relational Behaviour Policy for further information.

7. Home learning - Whilst we recognise that Children who are Looked After may not always find it easy to complete home learning, we believe they should be given support and encouragement to do so, through a partnership approach of school, carers and parents all working together. Where appropriate home learning is differentiated to meet the needs of the individual. Please refer to the Home learning Policy for further information.

8. Extra-Curricular Activities - We recognise that Children who are Looked After are often prevented from joining in with after school activities because of transport arrangements and that they may resist taking part in any school-based activities because of poor relationships with their peers, for example. As we believe it is essential that Children who are Looked After are able to play a full part in school life, the following strategies are in place to help them to do this:

- The Designated teacher will monitor the involvement of Children who are Looked After in extra-curricular activities.
- The Designated teacher will liaise with the young person, carers and Social Workers to try to promote involvement in extra-curricular activities through Personal Education Plan meetings
- The Designated teacher will liaise with LA support services such as the Virtual School, to develop strategies for increasing the involvement of Children who are Looked After in extra-curricular activities if their uptake is shown to be low.

The success of all school strategies and use of funded initiative will be monitored and evaluated by

- Collection and analysis of information
- Discussion with school staff, carers, Social Workers and staff from LA Support Services, both informally and during meetings eg those set up to write Personal Education Plans
- Discussions with children who are looked after
- Responsibility for monitoring and evaluation of school strategies lies with Designated teacher

9. Liaison With Outside Agencies - To ensure that all those involved in the education and care of Children who are Looked After work together in their best interests, the Designated teacher will devise and implement effective strategies and procedures for

- Accessing additional support, funding or use of funded initiatives
- Liaising with Social Workers to ensure all Children who are Looked After have a Personal Education Plan
- Participation in and co-ordination of Review and Planning meetings for Looked After Children. Statutory school procedures such as Annual Reviews for children with Education, Health and Care plans will be timed to coincide with these wherever possible and appropriate.

In addition, school management will do everything possible to enable class teachers or other appropriate staff to attend meetings where this would be in the interests of the young person.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Designated teacher:

The role of the Designated teacher is of central importance in enabling Children who are Looked After to achieve their full potential in school. The majority of the roles and responsibilities of the Designated teacher are implicit in the above sections of this policy. In addition, the Designated teacher will

- Be a qualified teacher with appropriate seniority working within the school (as set out in the Designated Teacher Regulations 2009)
- Attend training sessions organised by the LA
- Cascade this training to school staff
- Arrange and/or deliver training to all staff, including those newly appointed, on issues affecting the educational attainment of Children who are Looked After and the ways in which educational disadvantage can be overcome
- Liaise with the Link Designated Safeguarding lead and Head teacher (responsible for monitoring children on the Child Protection Register)
- Work closely with Social Workers to enable the writing of effective Personal Education Plans which will inform Care Plans if a care plan is needed
- Attend, arrange for someone else to attend or contribute in other ways to Social Care planning meetings if the coordinator is unable to attend
- Work with young people at an appropriate level to enable them to contribute to educational aspects of their care plans
- Work with the SEND coordinator and Learning Mentor team if needed to support all aspects of the child's development.
- Support highly effective transitions between year groups and other schools if the child moves on.

The Head Teacher and Senior Management:

The responsibility for the educational and personal well-being of Children who are Looked After rests with the Head teacher, although some of the day-to-day tasks may be delegated to other staff. Working with the Senior Management

Team, the Headteacher will ensure that inclusive strategies are in place for Children who are Looked After and that staff, particularly the Designated teacher, are enabled to carry them out.

The Head teacher along with the Designated teacher will ensure that Pupil Premium Plus is spend in supporting the child in all aspects of their development.

The Governor with special responsibility for Children who are Looked After:

The named governor will report to the Governing Body on an annual basis

The named Governor is Mrs. J McKim

- The number of Looked After pupils in the school
- A comparison of test scores for Children who are Looked After as a group, compared to other pupils
- The attendance of pupils as a discrete group, compared to other pupils
- The level of fixed term/permanent exclusions
- Pupil destinations

The named governor must be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that Children who are Looked After have equal access to

- The National Curriculum
- Statutory assessments
- Additional educational support
- Appropriate pastoral support
- Extra-curricular activities

Policy details

The appropriateness of this policy will be evaluated annually through the monitoring of impact on pupils, staff and parents of different ethnic groups. The results of the evaluation will be passed to the school Governor with responsibility for Children who are Looked After before being presented to the Governing Body.

Date of policy: March 2022

Date of next Review: March 2026