

CASTLE HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL POLICY THE EDUCATION OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Reviewed: October 2021

It is recognised that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of children in residential and foster care when compared with their peers. At Castle Hill Primary School all members of our school community will be listened to, valued, challenged and supported as individuals to recognise and achieve their aspirations, whatever it takes. Castle Hill Primary School believes that in partnership with Hampshire County Council as Corporate Parents we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of Looked After Children.

AIMS

To provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children.

To support our looked after children and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential and enjoy learning.

To fulfil our schools' role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our Looked After Children, by asking the question, **'Would this be good enough for my child?'**

To work with the Virtual School and ensure that carers and social workers of LAC pupils are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment

To ensure we meet the complex emotional needs of our looked after children

Looked After Children may (or may not) have some or all of the following issues

- Low self esteem
- Poor education standards due to time out of school
- Delayed social/emotional/cognitive development
- Be bullied or bully others
- Be prone to mental health issues
- Be isolated with few friends
- Have behaviour issues
- Poor attachments to others
- Have a need to be very private
- Likely to have a higher number of ACES (adverse childhood experiences)

Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance on the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children. It also takes into account section 20 and section 20A of the Child and Young Persons Act 2008.

Definitions

Looked-after children

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 are comprised of four main groups:

- Children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- Children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- Children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
- 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 (section 21)

Previously looked-after children are registered pupils that fall into either of these categories:

- They were looked after by a local authority but ceased to be as a result of any of the following:
 - A child arrangements order, which includes arrangements relating to who the child lives with and when they are to live with them
 - A special guardianship order
 - An adoption order
- They appear to the governing board to have:
 - Been in state care in a place outside of England and Wales because they would not have otherwise been cared for adequately, and
 - Ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted

Personal education plan (PEP) is part of a looked-after child's care plan that is developed with the school. It forms a record of what needs to happen and who will make it happen to ensure the child reaches their full potential.

Virtual school head (VSH) is a local authority officer responsible for promoting the educational achievement of their authority's looked-after children, working across schools to monitor and support these pupils as if they were in a single school. The VSH is also responsible for providing information and advice to schools, parents and guardians in respect of previously looked-after children.

Designated teacher (DT) is a designated teacher (a statutory role) who has the responsibility of promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children.

IN PURSUIT OF THIS POLICY WE WILL

- Nominate a Designated Teacher (DT) for Looked After Children (LAC) and who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them. The Lead Designated Teacher is Ms R Willmouth, Deputies Miss H Cocker (Greenbank) and Mrs J Hartley (Rooksdown).
- Nominate a school governor to ensure that the needs of Looked After Children in the school are taken into account at a school management level and to support the Designated Teacher. Our nominated governor is: Mrs M Rowe
- Support the Designated teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend training on Looked After Children.

Roles and responsibilities

The Designated Teacher will:

- Be an advocate for Looked After Children
- When new to the school, ensure a smooth and welcome introduction for the child and carer, and note any specific requirements, including care status.
- Ensure that there is a Personal Education Plan (PEP) for each child/young person to include appropriate targets. This must be compatible with the child's/young person's Care Plan and where applicable include any other school plan, e.g. Statement of Special Education Need, and associated plans, Transition Plan, Pastoral Support Programme. The PEP should be written as soon as possible for new starters and written in conjunction with carers, the child and the social worker. Once established there should be a termly PEP and once a year the annual PEP review.
- Ensure the child has a key adult that they know they can talk to if or when needed
- Provide a safe space for the child to use if/as required
- Monitor the child's progress against the targets on the PEP and extending these targets if they have been achieved
- Attend CLA meetings, ensuring all the relevant paperwork is in place
- Liaise with the Virtual School for Looked After Children on a regular basis with regard to the performance, attendance and attainment of Looked After Children.
- 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 Looked After Children 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 Looked After Children where and when appropriate.
- Ensure that Looked After Children, 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 Looked After Children.
- Report to the Governing body annually on the performance of the looked after children who are on the roll of the school.
- Encourage Looked After Children to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning, where feasible
- Ensure confidentiality and share information on a need to know basis only
- Coordinate support for the child in school and liaise with other carers and professionals as necessary

Roles and responsibilities of all staff

All staff will:

- Positively promote the self esteem of Looked After Children
- As with all children, have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievements of Looked After Children
- Ensure confidentiality and support sensitively
- Contribute to the Designated Teacher's request for information as appropriate

Roles and responsibilities of the governing body

The governing body of this school will:

- Ensure all governors are aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Looked After Children
- Be aware of whether the school has Looked After Children and how many (non-named)
- Ensure there is a Designated Teacher and they are enabled to meet the requirements of their role with time and training
- Support the local authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of looked after children
- Nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher and receives regular progress reports (without names for confidentiality)

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by Miss R Willmouth at every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Pupil Premium
- Behaviour
- Attendance
- Inclusions
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Exclusions
- SEND

The Hampshire Mission Statement

**Making Hampshire a better place for children and young people,
where all of them, including those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged,
have the best possible start in life and are supported by the whole community
to reach their potential whatever it takes.**