

HIGH GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL
POLICY FOR THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IN CARE

Purpose

To promote the attainment, achievement, progression and welfare of children in local authority care, whether that is Sheffield or from out-of-the authority. The local authority has a statutory role to play for all children in its care.

Rationale

Children who are Looked After are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. The majority of these children have suffered disrupted childhoods and experienced adverse events. It is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational under-achievement, with Children who are looked after, when compared to their peers. Children who are looked after often achieve lower exam success rates in comparison with the general population. Fewer Children who are looked after progress to Higher Education or follow progression pathways that will lead to future economic success and well-being.

Children in Care are classified as vulnerable children.

Definitions of “Looked After” Children or Children in Public Care

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in the care or is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority.

They fall into 4 main groups:

1. Children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20) *
2. Children who are the subject of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
3. Children who are the subject of emergency orders for their protection (section 44 and 46)
4. 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)

*unaccompanied minors can also be accommodated under Section 20 or 17. Section 17 means they are not a Child in Care.

Children can also be classed as a Child in Care if they have more than 8 days respite in a year.

All these groups are said to be Children in Care. They may be looked by our local authority or may be in the care of another authority, but living in ours.

The name of the Designated Teacher for Children who are Looked after is:

Mrs Michele Jones

The Role of the Designated Teacher for the Child in Care:

- Maintain a register of all Children in Care (this includes children both from in and out of the city)
This will include a record of:
 - the contact person in the relevant Children in Care Education Team.
 - status i.e. care order or accommodated.
 - type of Placement e.g. foster, respite, residential.
 - name of Social Worker, area office, telephone number.
 - daily contact and telephone numbers of those who need to be contacted in an emergency or for any other concerns. e.g. name of young person, name of parent or carer or key worker in children's home.
 - share Child Protection / disability information which could be shared, if appropriate.
 - relevant health information
 - baseline information and all test results.
 - Know named officers in the LA with regard to exclusion issues, attendance issues and transition issues.
 - Ensure that someone attends Looked After Children Statutory Reviews on each child and/or always prepares a written report that promotes the continuity and stability of their education. (or ensures a written report is presented from their class teacher)
 - participate in joint training.
 - If there are safeguarding concerns for a Child in Care, contact and advice should be sought from Safeguarding team.

The name of the Governor with special responsibility for Children who are Looked After is:

Sally Green

- Ensure school staff and governors are aware of the DfE Statutory guidance, 'Promoting the education of Children who are Looked After and previously Looked After Children. Statutory guidance for local authorities. February 2018'
- promote the educational achievement of Children in who are Looked After;
- ensure there is a dedicated Governor or committee to champion and monitor the work of the school in supporting its Looked After Children as a part of a larger group of vulnerable children;
- take a proactive approach in co-operating with, and supporting, the relevant Local Authority with regard to the education of Children in Care attending the school.

- ensure designated teachers and staff are aware of and enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively with the full support of the head teacher;

WHOLE SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- The school celebrates the achievements of Children who are Looked After;
- Teachers should have high expectations of the young person, encouraging achievement and ambition;
- The young person will need to have a special, trusted adult in school who is able to take time to listen to them;
- For young Children in Care, there should be clarity in relation to who is and is not allowed to collect the child from school;
- All teachers within the school are made aware of the needs of Children in Care and actively promote their best interests;
- Effective assessment, recording and reporting practices are established in accordance with the school's policy on Children who are Looked After;
- Ensure that systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about Looked After Children.
- Teachers should actively seek training to help them fulfil their roles in relation to Looked After Children;
- The designated teacher ensures that positive messages about behaviour and achievement are shared within the school and between school, carers and outside agencies and that high educational expectations are maintained;
- Support the engagement of Looked After Children in out of school hours learning.
- Staff work in partnership with parents, carers, social workers, The Virtual School and other agencies.
- Support carers to value educational achievement and improve attendance.
- Teachers can help the individual begin to feel that they are fitting in and offer them a safe haven and a sympathetic ear in a crisis.
- Ensure that Looked After Children are listened to, and have access to support and counselling in school if required.
- Staff are aware that being or becoming 'in Care' has a major impact on children's lives and that when considering children's learning and or behaviour, due consideration will be given;
- Teachers can be aware of a variety of issues that may undermine the young person's ability to engage in the learning process including feelings of loss, rejection, isolation, confusion and low self-esteem as well as attachment difficulties;
- Teachers need to be aware of possible unresolved feelings the young person may have about their own families and siblings, in addition to insecurity over their current homes and carers;

SEND

SENCO

Mrs Michele Jones

- Any special educational needs are quickly identified and appropriate provision is made;
- Ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when Children who are Looked After are underachieving and have early interventions to improve this. Contact must be made with the Virtual School as soon as concerns are raised;
- If the child or young person has an EHCP, then the annual review coincides with one of the six monthly LAC reviews.
- SENDco must contribute to the Child's PEP every term.

Admission Arrangements

- Ensure that on admission or transfer all relevant information is obtained at the outset.
- We will forward appropriate documents, in a timely fashion, to any receiving school at point of transition where the receiving school is made known;
- Make every effort to provide continuity of schooling and educational experience
- Prioritise Children in Care within schools own admissions procedures and admit students as quickly as possible recognising the importance of re-establishing school stability for Looked After Children.

ATTENDANCE

- Here attendance is a problem, a first day of absence procedure needs to be established;
- When a child is absent for three consecutive days or more, the social worker needs to be informed via e mail or a phone call.
- Ensure that the schools attendance officer communicates with agencies who contact school for
- LAC attendance data should be shared with the Sheffield Virtual School; Welfare Call obtain attendance data.
- Acknowledge attendance in any education meetings, celebrating success and setting realistic targets if it is a concern.

EXCLUSION

- Identify any Child in Care who is at risk of exclusion and contact the Sheffield Virtual School, Social Worker and relevant professionals to put proactive strategies in place to avoid the Child who is Looked After missing days from school.
- In the case of a fixed term (or permanent) exclusion that the carer (or persons holding parental responsibility) and the Social Worker have been spoken to

and within one day a letter has been sent specifying the period and the reasons for the exclusion, date of return, outline of the rights of carers to make representations to the governing body where appropriate and details of arrangements made to enable the excluded pupil to continue his/her education.

- Make sure in the event of any exclusion to contact the Virtual School with details of the exclusion outlining the reasons why the child has been excluded so that an appropriate response can be made.

MULTI AGENCY WORK:

- A designated teacher will need to liaise closely with carers, natural parents and the pupil's social worker on a variety of issues, including homework, kit and equipment required. It is important that positive messages about behaviour and achievement are shared;
- There should be a well-planned and co-ordinated approach to meeting the young person's educational and social needs, for example, whether potentially disruptive changes in school can be prevented;
- There needs to be clear understanding about the role and responsibility of school staff in relation to the young person and the roles and responsibilities of the other professionals involved;
- School staff will need to share positive perceptions and high expectations of the young person with other professionals but especially with the young person.
- The school should be aware of and sensitive to the appropriate role of the natural parents;
- Designated teachers should ensure that requests from the LA for statistical information held by the school are completed and returned on time to comply with statutory obligations.
- Encourage each child in care to access out of hours learning activities realising the positive impact this could have on their self –esteem and learning.
- Support the young person to have the opportunity to participate fully in planning and decision making;

PERSONAL EDUCATION PLANS

- Ensure that there is a Personal Education Plan for each child to include appropriate targets. This must be compatible with the child's Care Plan held by Social Worker, and form part of any other school plan. e.g. EHCP, Transition Plan, Pastoral Support Programme.
- We contribute to the process whereby all Looked After Children have a high quality Personal Educational Plan (PEP) in place within 20 days of starting our school. This will include SMART educational targets and will be linked to the child's Care Plan and any other plan resulting from the assessment of the child (Support Plan, behaviour plan or EHCP);
- Following the writing of a PEP, any educational recommendations in that PEP will be adhered to by staff in order that any Child who is looked after has the opportunity to achieve his or her targets;

- We will attend Local Authority training regarding the roles and responsibilities involved in the education of Children who are Looked After.

TRANSITION

- We will ensure that extra communication takes place between nursery placements, foster carers, social workers and the Sheffield Virtual School, to ensure that there is a smooth transition from nursery to primary school. High Green School will proactively put any adjustments in place, prior to their transition, wherever possible.
- Preparation for transition to Secondary school will begin in year 4. Consultation between all agencies around the most suitable placement for secondary education will begin this year and visits, by foster carers and social workers, to different schools will take place.
- In year 6, additional transition are promoted, between High Green Primary School and the Secondary placement. The SENCO from the secondary placement are invited to PEP and SEN reviews, to ensure a smooth transition to secondary school.

The Head teacher and Designated teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

Date: March 2021

Review date: March 2021