



Stebbing Primary School

Looked after children Policy (Children in Care)

Created/updated: January 2019

Ratified By School Governing Body: January 2019

Due for Review: January 2021

**The Designated Teacher for Looked After Pupils is:
Mrs Chamberlain**

**The nominated Governor for Looked After Pupils is:
Mr Foot**

Introductory Statement

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all stakeholders know how best to support looked after children (children in care). A designated teacher and nominated governor are appointed to promote the educational achievement and welfare of looked after pupils.

Role of the designated Teacher for Looked-After Children

Within School Systems:

- To ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of the difficulties and potential educational disadvantage faced by children and young people '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 who are looked-after, and to promote the involvement (where possible) of these children in school homework clubs, extra-curricular activities, home reading schemes, school councils, etc.
- To act as an advocate for children and young people in public care;
- To develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers, the Social Services Department (SSD) and the Education Service of the relevant Education Authorities;
- To hold a supervisory brief for all children being 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 monitor the educational progress of all children who are looked-after in order to inform the school's development plan;
- To intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement and/or absence from school.

Work with individual Looked-After Children:

- To work with individual children, possibly through a carer, to arrive at a statement about their circumstances that they would be happy to share with staff and / or pupils;
- To enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their Care Plan;
- To ensure that each pupil has a Personal Education Plan. (NB the PEP should be initiated by the young person's Social Worker, in conjunction with the class teacher and Looked After Child Designated Teacher/SENCo);
- To ensure that a Home-School Agreement is drawn up with the primary carer and signed by the Social Worker;
- To supervise the smooth induction of a new looked-after child into the school.

Liaison

- To liaise with the member of staff responsible for monitoring children on the Child Protection Register/Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- To help co-ordinate education and SSD review meetings, so that the Personal Educational Plan can inform the child's Care Plan;
- To attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or to contribute in other ways to SSD's care planning meetings;
- To be the named contact for colleagues in Education and SSD;
- To ensure the speedy transfer of information between agencies and individuals, and report on the progress of all looked-after children to Education Access.

Training

- To develop knowledge of SSD / Education procedures by attending training events (where suitable) organised by the Local Authority;

- To cascade training to school staff as appropriate.

Role of the designated Governor for Looked-After Children

The named governor/school leadership team will report to the Governing Body on an annual basis:

- The number of looked-after pupils in the school;
- The attendance of pupils as a discrete group, compared to other pupils;
- The level of fixed term / permanent exclusions; and pupil destinations.

The named governor should be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that looked-after pupils have equal access to all areas of the curriculum, including extra-curricular activities, and are given additional educational support, where deemed appropriate.

Responsibility for Looked After Children 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 a member of the leadership team (headteacher) and / or the Designated Teacher for looked after children. It is appropriate for a class support staff member 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 (where appropriate). The extent of this sharing should be determined by a member of the leadership team or the Designated Teacher.

Inclusion

This policy recognises that all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broad curriculum. Our Looked After Children policy reinforces the need for teaching that is fully inclusive. Our teaching underpins the principles of Quality First Teaching.

Admission Arrangements

On admission, records will be requested from the pupil's previous school and a meeting will be held with carer / parent / Social Worker as appropriate – but always involving someone with parental responsibility. This will provide information to inform the 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 emphasise that the school, the Social Worker, and their carer(s) are working together to promote their education.

It is important to establish the child's view of their changed circumstances and what they want others to know. It is also important to ensure that a Social Worker / teacher / carer prepares the child for situations when they may be asked about home, eg by other pupils in the playground.

Partnership with parents/carers and care workers

It is crucial that the school develops a strong partnership with all stakeholders to enable Looked After Children to achieve their potential. Review meetings are an opportunity to further this partnership work.

Communication with Other Agencies

Schools should ensure that a copy of all reports (eg. end of year reports) should be forwarded to the young person's Social Worker in addition to the foster carer or Residential Social Worker. Schools, the Education Service and the Social Services Department should endeavour to co-ordinate their review meetings, e.g. to have an Annual Review of any Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan) combined with a Statutory Care Review.

Social Services, the Education Service and schools will need to exchange information between formal reviews if there are significant changes in the young person's circumstances, eg. if school is considering an exclusion, there is a change of care placement or there are significant attendance issues.

Assessment, Monitoring and Review Procedures

Each looked-after pupil will have 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);

Discipline and Behaviour;

Homework;

Involvement in Extra Curricular Activities;

Special needs (if any);

Development needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge or subject areas and experiences);

Long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations).

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

The named governor will report annually to the Governing Body on the progress of all looked-after children against the key indicators outlined above.

Further reading

Further information can be obtained by contacting Stebbing Primary School.

Supplementary guidance will be retained on file to ensure we keep up-to-date with changes.

