

Waterthorpe
Nursery Infant School



Looked After Children Policy

October 2017

This is a Local Authority adopted Policy

Approved by: Steering Committee

Date: 12/10/17

Next Review Date: Autumn 2018

Looked after children Policy

INTRODUCTION

Who is in Public Care?

Our school sometimes has children who are Looked After by the Local Authority (in Public Care). This means the child is subject to a **care order** or is **accommodated**. The carers of the children are responsible for day-to-day needs but the Local Authority has responsibilities towards each child as corporate parents and (under the Children Act 1989 sec. 22(4)) must work in partnership with parents in order to maintain links with their family, which are as strong as possible. Many children in Public Care return home after long or short periods in care.

Education of Children in Public Care

The DfE/DoH Document on Children in Public Care (April 2000) stated that

“Children in Public Care have an entitlement to full time education in mainstream schools, wherever possible. Pupils in Public Care should have equal access to the National Curriculum and associated tests, and to public examinations and career guidance.”

Research has identified that those involved in corporate parenting have lower expectations of those in Public Care. We believe that challenging negative attitudes about Young People in Public Care is critical to changing their experiences of education and improving outcomes.

Our school is potentially a place where the ‘looked after’ child can be like everyone else and it can provide a source of continuity and stability in an otherwise turbulent life. There is a clear relationship between schooling difficulties and placement breakdown: either may precipitate the other. Repeated changes of school and care placement are damaging, not only because of the disruption they cause, but because each change represents another ending.

With the above in mind we have developed a school policy on looked after children. This Policy should be read together with our Policies on Behaviour, Special Educational Needs, School Visits, Children Protection and Absence and Punctuality.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

In accordance with Government legislation regarding children in Public Care we aim to:

- Raise pupil attainment and achievement, developing positive outcomes for pupils who are in Public Care in Sheffield
- Identify all children on our school roll who are in Public Care, and regularly monitor and update data as is required to maintain a register of Children in Public Care
- Monitor that our school is addressing the needs of the whole child, specifically those needs which arise because the child is in Public Care
- Improve attendance, and reduce exclusions of Children in Public Care and to work together with other agencies to support school placement
- Identify the pupils’ individual needs, monitor and review pupil progress by implementation and review of a Personal Education Plan (PEP)
- Ensure appropriate working practices and systems are in place to work in partnership with all appropriate agencies and individuals

PROCEDURES

Working practices and systems supportive to Children in Public Care

- We will ensure that our staff understand the relevant legislation regarding Children in Public Care. For example, changes of care status should not take place without consultation between education and social services personnel. However, if circumstances arise in which social services take pre-emptive action, education personnel will be informed of any change in care status and the school will ensure an updated PEP is put into place. (Appendix 1)
- School staff will be proactive in communicating information to relevant personnel. If the designated teacher is not already aware of changes in circumstances of a child or changes in care status, information should be passed on and a review meeting will be convened in consultation with all those involved with the child
- As part of our corporate parenting responsibility, issues of confidentiality will be sensibly and sensitively raised. Confidentiality will be balanced sensibly with appropriate information sharing. The designated teacher will collate all relevant background information
- When a child moves from this school copies of all information will, immediately, be forwarded to the receiving school
- In case of absence of a Young Person in Public Care, the school will contact the carer immediately
- If a pupil is discharged from Public Care, information will be added to the pupil files and copies will be forwarded to Social Care personnel as appropriate.

Designated Teacher

- Mrs. Stokes has been assigned the role of designated teacher with responsibility for Children in Public Care, Mrs Moffatt (WNIS) is the designated deputy for this role as specified in the DfEE/DoH document on the Education of Children in Public Care.

Staff Training

- All staff will receive regular information regarding the difficulties encountered by Children in Public Care. On a regular basis, at a staff meeting an opportunity will be taken by the designated teacher to describe the operation and function of their role, and its implications to the teaching group. At this meeting she will update staff on the pupils in Public Care and the teachers' responsibility for collecting and communicating information. Confidentiality issues will be addressed. The designated teacher will lead any training on children in Public Care as appropriate and will take responsibility for organising any INSET on this subject which may include input by the Learning Support service (LSS) or Social Care personnel.
- School is conversant with the Local Authority targets for the Attainments for Children in Public Care

Procedures Regarding Involvement of Parents/Carers

- All parties with parental responsibility have entitlement to details relating to the education of the Young Person in Public Care. The school will therefore ensure that those who have contact with the child (as stated in the Care Plan) are given details regarding:
 - School trips
 - Parent meetings
 - Information from school
 - School reports

- The school will ensure that effective communication takes place with other agencies that are involved with the pupil. These may include health agencies, social services departments, Local Education Authority, Youth Justice Teams and voluntary agencies. This will also include, as appropriate, natural parents, foster or residential carers, responsible officers of the local authority and those known to have parental responsibility for the child.

The Personal Education Plan

A Personal Education Plan (PEP) will be developed for each child in Public Care. Clear targets for academic achievement, personal development, and behaviour, if appropriate will be included. If the pupil is the subject of a Statement of Educational Needs the PEP will relate to the Individual Education Plan (IEP) and Careers action plan. The PEP will be written by the designated teacher in consultation with the class teacher, SENCO and relevant others. The PEP is essential to address issues which arise from frequent school transfer e.g. the child will not be expected to repeat the same curriculum in order to fit into school planning or miss entry to examinations because of school transfer.

The PEP records:

- Achievement
- Developmental needs
- Short term targets and
- Long term plans and aspirations
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Review: This policy will be reviewed Autumn 2018

Useful Guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children>

Promoting the Education of Looked after Children.

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/01046-2009.pdf>

The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children.

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/01047-2009.pdf>

Improving the attainment of looked after children in primary schools

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/01048-2009.pdf>

Improving the attainment of looked after young people in secondary schools

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/publications/documents/laeguidanceonlookedafterchildrenwithsen/>

Guidance on Looked After Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Equality Impact Assessment Template

Name of policy or project being assessed?	Date
Looked After Children	1/10/17

Priority Level	
High	
Medium	
Low	x

Lead Officer: Helen Stokes
Members of the assessment team: Helen Stokes & Suzanne Marriott
Others involved in the assessment (peer review/external challenge): Steering Committee members

<p><u>What are the aims of the policy or project?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise pupil attainment and achievement, developing positive outcomes for pupils who are in Public Care in Sheffield • Identify all children on our school roll who are in Public Care, and regularly monitor and update data as is required to maintain a register of Children in Public Care • Monitor that our school is addressing the needs of the whole child, specifically those needs which arise because the child is in Public Care • Improve attendance, and reduce exclusions of Children in Public Care and to work together with other agencies to support school placement • Identify the pupils' individual needs, monitor and review pupil progress by implementation and review of a Personal Education Plan (PEP) • Ensure appropriate working practices and systems are in place to work in partnership with all appropriate agencies and individuals
<p>Who is the intended customer/service user of this project or policy? Staff, children and parents/carers</p>
<p>What are the desired outcomes from this project or policy? To ensure that government guidelines, for Children in Care, are adhered to</p>
<p>List any other key policies, procedures, projects or strategies that this policy/project has implications on: Child protection, SEN, CPD, educational visits, Equal opportunities, Assessment, recording and reporting, Attendance, behaviour</p>

What are the racial, disability and gender equality implications of the policy or project?	
The policy states that the school will take positive action to address the specific needs of CIC	
Does the policy or project have any significant positive impact for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Different racial groups ▪ Disabled persons ▪ Men and women ▪ Boys and girls 	YES where the child's needs are linked to membership of any of these groups
Does the policy or project have any significant adverse impact for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Different racial groups ▪ Disabled persons ▪ Men and women ▪ Boys and girls 	NO
Do you have any evidence?	
Is there any way that you could reduce or eliminate the adverse impact or increase positive impact?	

Action to take :		
If you have indicated there is a negative impact, can it be justified?	YES	NO
If you have indicated there is a negative impact and it cannot be justified, is it discrimination? N/A	YES	NO
If you have answered YES, please list all the changes that you have made to eliminate this discrimination:		
Please state how will you monitor the policy or project?: Policy review (by staff/governors by dates on policy)		

Signed (Person completing the form): 	Date: 1 st October 2017
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