

All Saints Carshalton, Church of England Primary School

Policy for 'Looked after' children

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Agreed by Staff - May 2018 Agreed by Governors - May 2018 Reviewed - Annual Review The designated teacher for 'Looked after' children at All Saints Carshalton is Mrs Emma Hart Dyke, the Head Teacher and the designated governor for 'Looked after' children is Mrs Helen Smith, the Chair of Governors.

Introduction

The governing body of All Saints Carshalton, Church of England Primary School is committed to providing good quality education for all of its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. This governing body recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of children in residential and foster care, when compared with their peers, and is therefore committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in "Guidance on the Education of 'Looked after' children" (May 2000) and Section 52 of the Children Act 2004.

Definition

Children who are "looked after" may be "Accommodated" "In Care" or "remanded/detained" as follows:

Accommodated (Section 20 of the Children Act 2004)

This is a voluntary arrangement, because parents are ill, missing, unable to cope, or as part of a child protection plan negotiated with the family. The parents retain parental responsibility.

In Care

A child is in care only if a court has granted a Care order which it will issue if it believes a child to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. A care order generally gives parental responsibility to the local authority, or shares this with the parents.

Remanded/Detained

A child can be remanded or detained as in the following:

- an emergency protection order
- removed by police using their powers of protection
- remanded by a court following criminal charges
- a court directing a social services department to accommodate a child (already on a supervision order for criminal behaviour) for up to six months.

Why Support is Needed

'Looked after' children may (or may not) have some or all 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
- have poor attachments to others
- have a need to be very private

This makes them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future lifechances. The governing body of All Saints Carshalton, Church of England Primary School, is committed to ensuring that these children are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following are in place, and are working effectively:

- a Designated Teacher for 'Looked after' children
- a Personal Education Plan for 'Looked after' children
- all staff have a clear understanding of confidentiality and issues that affect 'Looked after' children
- effective strategies that support the education of this vulnerable group.

Role and responsibility of the designated teacher

The Designated Teacher should:

- be an advocate for 'Looked after' children;
- when new to the school, ensure a smooth and welcome induction for the child and carer, and note any specific requirements, including care status;
- ensure that a Personal Education Plan(PEP) is completed prior to each termly PEP review meeting and amended and returned to the Virtual School within 5 working days of the PEP meeting, once any input from the child, carers, social worker and virtual school representative has been included.
- ensure that each child in public care (if they wish) has an identified member of staff that they can talk to (this should be based on the child's request, and may not necessarily be the Designated Teacher);
- co-ordinate support for the child in the school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary;
- ensure staff receive relevant information and training and act as an advisor to staff and governors;
- ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis;
- provide written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible;
- ensure that the child and carer(s) receive early notification of meetings, parents' evenings and other events and that communication remains regular and positive;
- encourage 'Looked after' children to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning, where feasible;
- ensure speedy transfer of information between individuals and other relevant agencies and to a new school if and when the child transfers;
- seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded;
- ensure that any returns on 'Looked after' children are completed as requested by the LA.

Roles and responsibilities of all staff

All staff should ensure that:

- any child in public care is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained;
- they are familiar with and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings;
- they respond positively to a child in public care's request to be the named person that they can talk to when they feel it is necessary;
- they contribute to the Designated Teacher's requests for information on educational attainment and needs, as appropriate;
- as with all children, no child in public care is stigmatised in any way;
- they provide a supportive climate to enable a child in public care to achieve stability within the school setting;

- as with all children, they have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of 'Looked after' children
- they positively promote the self-esteem of 'Looked after' children

Role and responsibility of the governing body

The governing body of this school will:

- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for 'Looked after' children;
- be aware of whether the school has 'Looked after' children and how many (no names);
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for 'Looked after' children identified above:
- liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out her/his responsibilities in relation to 'Looked after' children;
- support the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of 'Looked after' children are met;
- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body, identified above (these reports should not include any names of individual children for child protection and confidentiality reasons);
- review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years.

Confidentiality

Information on 'Looked after' children will be shared with school staff on a "need to know basis". The Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with which school staff at the PEP meeting. Once this has been agreed with the social worker, carer, young person, and other parties, complete confidentiality is to be maintained.

Training

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

Personal Education Plan (PEP)

Completion process:

- the social worker informs school of a child becoming 'Looked after' (or that a child entering the school is 'Looked after');
- a date is set for the completion of a Personal Education Plan (PEP);
- a copy of the form is sent to the school to enable completion of educational data prior to the PEP meeting. The 'Pupil voice' form is also completed in school;
- the PEP meeting takes place within 20 school days, involving the social worker designated teacher (or other appropriate staff), carer, Virtual school and young person if appropriate;
- a date is set for the next PEP meeting;
- following the meeting the PEP is amended and sent back to the Virtual School who finalise details including funding as appropriate;
- the PEP is taken to the child's statutory review (LAC meeting) and discussed within the wider context of the child's life;
- the PEP is sent by SW to the LAC team prior to the meeting.