



STRATFORD RURAL SCHOOLS FEDERATION

LOXLEY C OF E COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

SNITTERFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

WILMCOTE C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Small schools, big ambitions...

FEDERATION POLICY FOR 'CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER' AND 'POST CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER'

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*Children Looked After (CLA) was previously termed Looked After Children (LAC).

Introduction

The Governing Body of the Stratford Rural Schools Federation is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, fundamentally based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. The Governing Body recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of children in residential and foster care when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in *Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children* (February 2018) and Section 52 of the Children Act 2004. Children who are “looked after” may be “accommodated”, “in Care” or “remanded/detained” as follows.

Accommodated: 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.

Aims

- to promote educational inclusion for children who have previously been in care or are in the care of the local authority
- to enable children in care, or who have previously been in care to access the full range of educational opportunities available to them
- to reach their potential, both academically and personally.

This policy incorporates requirements set out in the statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004.

The Governing Body recognises that looked after children may have some of the following issues:

- low self esteem;
- poor educational attainment due to time out of school;
- delayed social/emotional/ cognitive development which might affect relationships with peers and adults;
- be bullied or bully others;
- be prone to mental health issues;
- be isolated with few friend, family contacts or trusted adults;
- have behaviour issues;;

- have poor attachments to others;
- have a need to be very private;
- **be specifically vulnerable to grooming and exploitation due to many of the reasons above.**

These make them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life-chances. The Governing Body and staff are 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;
- Personal Education Plans for all looked after children where advised by the child's social worker;
- 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.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher for the Federation is the Head of School at Snitterfield, Rowena Silk.

The Designated Teacher should:

- be an advocate for looked after children;
- ensure a smooth and welcoming induction for the child and carer/s (and parent/s where possible). Note any specific requirements, including care status;
- ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed (within 20 days of entering care or joining a new school) **where advised by the child's social worker**. This should be prepared with the child and the carer/s (and parent/s if possible), in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies. Where appropriate, the PEP should take account of any Personalised Educational Plan (PEP), Pastoral Support Plan (PSP), Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP) or any other relevant plans. The PEP should inform and be reviewed in accordance with the needs of the child, but at least every three months;
- coordinate support for the child in the school where necessary and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary;
- ensure staff and governors receive relevant information and training;
- 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;
- encourage looked after children to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning;
- seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being suspended or excluded.

Roles and Responsibilities of all staff

All school staff should:

- ensure that any child in public care is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained;

- be familiar with this policy and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings;
- 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;
- contribute to the Designated Teacher’s requests for information on educational attainment and needs, as appropriate;
- as with all children, ensure that no child in public care is stigmatised in any way;
- provide a supportive climate to enable a child in public care to achieve stability within the school setting;
- as with all children, have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of looked after children;
- positively promote the self-esteem of looked after children.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Governing Body

The named Governor for looked after children in the federation (the Safeguarding Governor) is Gemma Land.

The governing body of this federation will:

- ensure that admissions criteria prioritises looked after children, according to the Code of Practice on Admissions;
- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Looked After Children;
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Looked After Children;
- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body;
- for child protection and confidentiality reasons, ensure that information will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity, and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned;
- review the effective implementation of this policy bi-annually;
- ensure that the school's other policies and procedures give Looked After Children equal access in respect of – Admissions Policy, access to the National Curriculum, additional support to make progress and access to extra-curricular activities.

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