



C of E Primary School

## **Policy for Looked After Children**

February 2011

Surrey Hills C of E Primary School:

- Has a designated teacher for Looked After Children and young people (the SENCO on each site)
- Keeps a register of Looked After Children stored in a confidential place
- Gives all foster carers and residential carers information about the school (brochure/prospectus etc) and ensure that new foster carers receive relevant information
- Provides an ethos of acceptance and challenges negative stereotypes
- Ensures appropriately high expectations of looked after children and young people
- Ensures that all looked after children and young people have a personal education plan
- Consults and involves children in the decisions taken about themselves as appropriate taking into account the child's age/level of understanding and maturity
- Is aware that, for many looked after children and young people, bullying is an issue and ensures that it operates an anti-bullying policy
- Considers how it can offer extra academic and pastoral support if this is needed
- Ensures that looked after children and young people have every opportunity to participate fully in the national curriculum, examinations, extra- curricular activities and additional educational support
- Ensures there is sensitivity to the background of looked after children and young people in the range of teaching materials available especially around work on families and family trees
- Ensures there is a sensitivity shown at school events where parents attend, ensuring they do not feel not left out.
- Respects confidentiality of looked after children and ensure that any information is shared strictly on a need to know basis
- Plays an active role in appropriate aspects of care planning for the child/young person
- Contributes to the LAC reviews in person or in report form - written or verbal
- Ensures that behaviour management polices recognise and make suitable provision for the needs and difficulties of looked after children and young people. In some cases these measures may be the same as measures for

all the other pupils, but sometimes looked after children may need additional support.

- Takes appropriate action as soon as there are any problems with behaviour or attendance and ensure that foster carers and social workers are aware of any difficulties as soon as possible
- Has regular liaison and consultation with social services, social workers, foster carers, parents and other professionals involved in the child's life.
- Ensures that children with learning difficulties are assessed and receive appropriate resources to support their learning
- Gives priority to teacher training regarding looked after children
- Monitors the attendance of looked after children
- Keeps records of Looked After Children absences and make these available on a termly or regularly agreed basis to:
  - i) The Education Welfare Officer and other officers in the LEA
  - ii) The Social Worker and other officers in Social Care and Health
- Contacts the foster carer on the first day if a looked after child is absent without notification
- Writes to foster carers/social workers on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of non-attendance if no notification is received
- Convenes a meeting with all relevant corporate parents – Education Welfare Officer, social worker, class teacher, foster carer, others e.g. Placement Support Team, Family Resource Team, if absenteeism continues and plans to support Looked After Children in returning to school as quickly as possible

### **Responsibilities of Head Teachers**

Head Teachers have overall responsibility for ensuring that the school has a policy and practical guidelines relating to Looked After Children and that the ethos is supportive and anti-discriminatory.

The Head Teacher :

- Has identified the SENCO as the designated teacher for Looked after Children
- Ensures that the designated teacher is given training time and administrative time
- Ensures the designated teacher/other appropriate teacher attends LAC reviews
- Ensures that the school has monitoring systems for LAC
- Ensures that confidentiality is maintained for the anonymity of Looked After Children in the school setting and that it is clear who should have access to which part of the file
- Ensures that reports are regularly provided to the governing body outlining the progress and achievements of Looked After Children
- Ensures that anti-bullying strategies are in place
- Ensures this policy is shared with pupils, teachers and parents.

## **Responsibilities of School Governors**

School governors have an important role in supporting schools and in making sure that Looked After Children and young people are not treated differently in schools.

The Who Cares? about education “A Guide for School Governors” is a document which provides details of governors’ roles.

### **School governors will:**

- Appoint a governor for Looked After Children and young people, who will know who these children are.
- Look at all the policies and procedures within the school to ensure that Looked After Children have equal access to all aspects of education, including: the national curriculum; examinations and tests; careers guidance; extra-curricular activities; work experience and additional educational support.
- Ensure the school liaises with social services on a regular basis in regard to Looked After Children and young people within the school.
- Assist the school in looking at whether the policies and practice on behaviour, admissions, exclusions, attendance and special educational needs adequately address the needs of Looked After Children and young people.
- Create an ethos of support and acceptance in the school and an environment where children who do not live with their birth families are equally accepted and valued.
- Ensure that the targets for Looked After Children and young people set in LEA Development Plans, Behaviour Support Plans, or Education Action Zones are realistic, but that aspirations for these children are high. These targets should be monitored regularly.
- Check that the school has a designated teacher for Looked After Children.
- Set up mechanisms in the school so that proper consultation takes place with Looked After Children and that they are listened to.
- Check that all Looked After Children have a PEP (Personal Education Plan) written by the assigned Social Worker.
- Ensure that the staff in school have relevant training about the needs of Looked After Children.
- Foster good relationships with carers, social workers and management in Social Care and Health.

### **School governors will receive:**

- Relevant training about Looked After Children from the LEA.
- Information on the educational circumstances and outcomes of the Looked After Children in the local authority.
- Information about the audit of the education of Looked After Children and should be involved in the process.

- Information on target setting and joint planning and joint policy developments.
- Newsletters concerning the education of Looked After Children and young people.
- Invitations to award ceremonies and other positive events for Looked After Children and young people.

### **The Designated Teacher for looked after children is responsible for**

- Keeping a list of the looked after pupils in the school, with contact telephone numbers and ensuring it is up-dated regularly
- Ensuring all information is stored confidentially and shared on a “need to know” basis
- Liaising with other agencies and individuals in relation to looked after pupils
- Advocating for looked after pupils in school
- Attending relevant training on looked after pupils
- Ensuring that colleagues in school have relevant information/training on looked after pupils to enable them to positively promote educational issues
- Liaising within school making links where necessary with, for example, pastoral support staff and the SENCO.
- Reducing exclusions amongst looked after children
- Acting as an advisor for other staff in school/governors on issues relevant to looked after pupils
- Ensuring that Reviews by Social Care colleagues for looked after pupils are seen as a priority and that the appropriate teacher from the school attends and/or a report is sent to the meeting
- Ensuring that all looked after pupils have a personal education plan and that is prepared within appropriate timescales
- Keeping general circulars, legislation and information on looked after children and young people up to date
- Ensuring that each looked after pupil has a member of staff in school they can talk to
- Ensuring speedy transfer of educational information from the school to all appropriate other colleagues
- Ensuring that the liaison teacher in the primary school passes all information to the designated teacher in the secondary school.
- Ensuring that information is passed on to the new school when a looked after child changes school at any other time.
- Supporting children through transitions
- Reporting to the Governing body on the educational outcomes and circumstances of looked after children

### **Monitoring and Review**

This Looked After Children Policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.

