

# HOLY TRINITY C of E SCHOOL, East Finchley



*High Standards Together*

*'At Holy Trinity School we promise to provide opportunities for every child to be the best that they can be.*

*We aim to create a happy and secure Christian environment in which children can grow in confidence and independence.*

*We strive for excellence in teaching and learning to achieve high standards together.'*

Policy Name: **Looked After Children Policy**

Date: July 2016

Date Ratified by Full Governing Body: **4th July 2016**

To be reviewed by: June 2019 **(every 3 years)**

## POLICY ON CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

### Legislation

- The Children Act 1989 as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014.
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulation 2010 as amended by the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013 and the Adoption and Care planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2014.
- The Children and Young Person Act 2008

### Supporting Documentation

*Promoting the education of looked after children (Statutory guidance for local authorities – July 2014)*

*The Role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children (Statutory guidance for school governing bodies 2009)*

### Definition of “Looked After” (Children in Care) children

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or is subject to a care order (or an interim care order) or is accommodated by the local authority, for instance through a voluntary arrangement or pending the making of an adoption order.

### Introduction

#### Background

Local authorities have a duty under the Children Act 1989 to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child looked after by them. This includes a duty to promote the child’s educational achievement, wherever they live or are educated. The authority must therefore give particular attention to the educational implications of any decision about the welfare of those children.

#### Aims

The school understands the powerful role it must play in significantly improving the quality of life and educational experiences of Looked After Children (CLA).

The school has high expectations for all its children including those who are looked after. A CLA will require greater support and more formal planning processes than their peers, but they will not be treated differently.

The school will ensure that:

- There is an overview of the educational needs and progress of LAC.
- School policies are reviewed from the point of view of CLA.
- Resources are allocated to match priorities for CLA.
- The school, Social Workers, the Virtual School Head (VSH), IROs and SEN work together to provide appropriate provision for CLA.
- All CLA have an effective Personal Education Plan save where the emergency nature of the circumstances have made it impossible to formulate the PEP.
- The school will provide the VSH with details of the number of CLA within the school, information as to how they are performing in comparison with their peers and how resources are being allocated to their needs through the pupil premium.
- The experiences of LAC will be monitored on an individual basis regarding attainment, personal wellbeing, care and support.

- Appropriate training and professional development is offered to all staff in contact with CLA
- Sensitive information concerning individual CLA is shared only as necessary with relevant staff members and is otherwise safeguarded.
- There will be appropriate communication with carers/residential children's homes and social services to ensure that the school has relevant information about a child's care history and can communicate the child's achievements communicated to the carer
- Action will be taken to maximise LAC attendance and avoid exclusions, recognising that continuity is vital for children already suffering disruption in their family life.

### **Admissions**

Under Section 106 of the Education Act 2005, it is a legal requirement (from September 2007) to give top priority to CLA in allocating places when schools are oversubscribed and the local authority has the right to direct an admissions authority to give a place to a CLA even where the school is full.

The school has ensured that CLA have the highest priority in the school's admission policy.

In each case the school's senior leadership team will consider/ensure:

- How applications are handled after the normal admission round
- Arrangements are put in place for welcoming new looked after pupils taking into account that CLA may have additional support needs
- What arrangements are needed to ensure that new admissions are well supported by their peers

### **Designated Teacher and Staff Awareness**

A senior member of staff will be appointed as designated teacher (DT) for CLA. The DT will be given access to appropriate training, support and the resources necessary to fulfil this role.

The designated teacher will:

1. Provide an annual report to the Governors covering
  - any workload issues arising as a result of the number of CLA on roll at the school and the number of local authorities which are involved;
  - levels of progress made by CLA (their details being anonymised) who are currently or have been on roll within the past twelve months in relation to all children at the school (i.e. educational, social and emotional progress);
  - whether the pattern of attendance and exclusions for CLA is different to that of all children;
  - any process or planning issues arising from personal education plans (PEPs);
  - whether any are identified as gifted and talented and how those needs are being met;
  - whether any have special educational needs (SEN) and whether those needs are being met through statements or School Action or School Action Plus;
  - how the teaching and learning needs of CLA are reflected in school development plans and are being met in relation to interventions and resources;
  - what training has been provided for the designated teacher in order to impart knowledge and understanding about the education and well-being of CLA to colleagues;
  - work with virtual school heads or their equivalents in local authorities;
  - the impact of any of the school's policies, for example on charging for educational visits and extended school activities, on CLA.

2. Promote a whole school culture where CLA believe they can succeed, the personalised learning needs of every looked after child matters and their personal, emotional and academic needs are prioritised, assisting all staff to
  - understand the things which can affect how CLA learn and achieve
  - have high expectations of CLA's involvement in learning and educational progress;
  - be aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation from birth families, the reasons for that separation and that some children may find it difficult to build relationships of trust with adults because of their experiences;
  - understand the reasons which may be behind a looked after child's behaviour, and why they may need more support than other children without allowing this to be an excuse for lowering expectations of what a child is capable of achieving;
  - understand how important it is to see CLA as individuals rather than as a homogeneous group and to not publicly treat them differently from their peers;
  - appreciate the importance of showing sensitivity about who else knows about a child's looked after status;
  - appreciate the central importance of the child's PEP in helping to create a shared understanding between teachers, carers, social workers and most importantly, depending on age and understanding, the child him or herself of what everyone needs to do to help them to achieve their potential, so that the child can be involved in setting their own targets, have their views taken seriously and are supported to take responsibility for their own learning;
3. Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies to ensure that they do not unintentionally put CLA at a disadvantage;
4. Be a source of advice for teachers at school about differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual pupils who are looked after;
5. Ensure that the school makes full use of Assessment for Learning (AfL) approaches to improve the short and medium term progress of CLA and help them and their teachers understand where they are in their learning, where they need to go and how to get there;
6. Ensure that CLA are prioritised in any selection of pupils who would benefit from one-to-one tuition and that they have access to academic focused study support;
7. Promote good links with other professionals, including VSHs, social workers, SENCOs and others who can contribute to effective, sensitive information sharing designed to benefit the provision of education and care to CLA.
8. Ensure that there is a central point of contact at the school and there are effective arrangements for communication with their own and the child's Local Authority and other professionals concerning the child. Further that they promote good home-school links through contact with the child's carer about how they can support his or her progress including that carers understand the potential value of one-to-one tuition and are equipped to engage with it at home;
9. Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of the child's PEP within school in partnership with others as necessary, including ensuring that

- it is provided by the Local Authority when a CLA joins the school or a child within the school becomes looked after,
- it is rigorously monitored
- it is up-to-date in advance of the six monthly review of the child's care plan and
- in the event of the child transferring to a new school that it is transferred speedily to a new school and possible new local authority.

10. Have lead responsibility for target setting for individual CLA and rigorously track their attainment progress, acting promptly where necessary if a child is falling behind.

11. Take a part in any discussion concerning the potential exclusion of any CLA and ensure that the relevant local authority and the child's carer become involved in the discussion.

12. Consider what further needs within school a looked after child might have if they cease to be "looked after" and seek to provide for these needs.

### **Personal Education Plans (PEP)**

Every CLA will have a PEP which forms part of their school record and is also part of the wider care planning for the CLA. The designated teacher should be involved in agreeing and reviewing a PEP along with the child, the child's parent and/or carer and the social worker. If a looked after child joins the school without a PEP, the designated teacher should pursue the matter with the child's social worker, who is responsible for initiating it.

The PEP will, as a result of careful and prompt assessment of the child, set high quality expectations of rapid progress and put in place the additional support the child needs in order to succeed.

The PEP will:

- already contain basic information as to the child's age, care status, address, school history, whether SEN or School Action/Action Plus, the identity of child's carers, whether there are restrictions on parent's contact, whom to contact within the local authority that looks after the child (social worker and CLA education team contact), and if the child has been looked after for some time, information about their education progress and how they learn best.
- include the contact details of the VSH for the authority that looks after the child
- details of any statement of special education needs or Educational Health Care plans
- set clear personalised learning objectives relating to academic achievement,
- contain personal and behavioural targets both in and out of school.
- identify who will be responsible for carrying out the actions agreed in the plan, with timescales for action and review,
- record details of specific interventions, including one to one tuition, referrals to CAMHs, SEN, gifted and talented etc,
- cover the child's achievement record, including participation within the school's wider activities
- identify development needs and set short and long term targets
- contain information as to the methods which best suit the child and aid their progress.

### **Home/Local Authority/School Communication**

The school will ensure that:

- there is an agreed process in place for how the school works in partnership with other professionals, such as the child's social worker and the child's carer, in order to review and

develop the child's educational progress and how each person will contribute to driving up the child's educational achievement;

- school policies in relation to, for example, home-school agreements, time-keeping and attendance, homework and parents' evenings are communicated to carers and social workers and, where appropriate, birth parents, so that CLA are not disadvantaged;
- the child's teachers know the most appropriate person to contact where necessary. For example, in some cases authority to sign permission slips or school trips will be delegated to the foster carer by the social worker but for some children permission will be needed from the child's social worker;
- there are positive and effective channels of communication and partnership working between the school and relevant partners to help CLA get the most out of their school experience, such as virtual school heads, and dedicated CLA education teams, SEN and CAMHS services.

### **Pastoral support, behaviour and bullying**

The school will ensure that:

- Anti-bullying and behaviour policies are flexible in their understanding of care issues and support early intervention
- CLA and their carers understand the school's anti-bullying policies and the process for making complaints

### **Special Educational Needs**

The majority of CLA have special educational needs. The school in conjunction with the VSH should ensure that:

- the special educational needs and disability code of practice 0 to 25 years, as it relates to CLA, is followed; and,
- where there are special educational needs the child's statement or EHC plan works in harmony with his or her care plan to tell a coherent and comprehensive story of how the child's needs are being met. Professionals should consider how the statement/EHC plan adds to information about how education, health and care needs will be met without the need to duplicate unnecessarily the information that is already part of the child's care plan.
- Some children may have undiagnosed special needs when they start to be looked-after. As part of the PEP process there should be robust arrangements in place to ensure that any undiagnosed special educational needs are addressed through the SEND framework as soon as possible.

Designated Teacher for CLA:

Governor with responsibility for CLA : Sarah Tyner

Date to be reviewed June 2019