



Royal Cross Primary School

Lancashire's school for deaf children

Policy Title:	Education of children looked after and previously looked after children Policy
Date of Issue:	04/09/2020
Date of Review:	Autumn Term 2021
Author and Role:	Lancashire County Model Policy (April 2018), adopted by Bev Hennefer, Headteacher
Ratified by:	Governors Policy Committee
Responsible Signatory:	Clive Gregory
Date of signature:	
Details:	This Policy: details policies, procedures and guidance in staff & SLT responsibilities for supporting pupils looked after and previously looked after to ensure all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and achieve their full potential.
Cross reference:	Pupil Premium Policy Teaching and Learning Policy Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Teaching & Learning Policy

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Royal Cross School is committed to the fair treatment of all in line with the Equality Act 2010. An equality impact assessment has been completed on this policy to ensure that it can be implemented consistently regardless of any protected characteristics and all will be treated with dignity and respect.

POLICY REVIEW

To ensure that this policy is relevant and up to date, comments and suggestions for additions or amendments are sought from users of this document. To contribute towards the process of review, please contact the author of the policy.

Policy for the Education of Children Looked After and Previously Looked After Children: (CLA)

Definition

A child 'looked-after by a local authority' is one who is looked after within the meaning of section 22 of Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. The Children Act 1989, as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

Children Looked After are those in public care and are either –

- Subject to a Care Order or Interim Care Order, living either at home or away from home. The Local Authority has parental authority which it then shares with the parents in a prescribed way.
- Accommodated with friends or relatives, foster care or residential homes – parents retain full parental responsibility.
- Remanded into care.

A private agreement is not public care - when a child lives with friends or relatives by private arrangement and these children are not designated as Looked After.

A previously looked-after child is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any persons, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales; and

A child is in 'state care' outside England and Wales if s/he is in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.

Aims

The school is committed to the concept of the corporate parent for children looked after and will work tirelessly to support children looked after, and from September 2018, previously looked after children to:

- Offer stability, safety, continuity, positive experiences and individual care and attention.

- Develop an attachment aware school and embed strategies to support the impact of trauma on emotional and mental health.
- Enable all children to make good progress in learning.

The school will take account of all related statutory guidance:

- Promoting the education of looked after and previously looked after children: DFE Feb 2018
- Revised Guidance on the Role of the Designated Teacher for looked after children and previously looked after children Feb 2018.

Rationale

- Nationally, the education outcomes at all stages, for Children Looked After and children previously looked after are of concern with a significant gap compared with outcomes for their peers who are not looked after or previously looked after.
- It follows that children and young people who are looked after or previously looked after, require additional support and positive discrimination in their favour if this situation is to be improved.

Roles and Priorities

Governing Body will:

- Ensure there is a designate a member of staff appointed who is a qualified teacher (the designated teacher) as having the responsibility to promote the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked after children.
- Ensure the designated teacher has appropriate seniority and professional experience to provide leadership, training, information, challenge and advice to others that will influence decisions about the teaching and learning needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- Ensure the designated teacher is able to undertake appropriate training to support their role.
- Ensure looked after children and previously looked after children are the priority group for admission to the school.
- Ensure Pupil Premium Grant+ allocated is used for the benefit of looked after Children and previously looked after children to support progress, attainment, engagement and well-being.
- Ensure school policies and approaches appropriately reflect the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children.

The Headteacher and Leadership team will:

- Provide an annual report on the provision for, and progress of, Children Looked After and previously looked after children, to the Governing Body.
- Ensure staff are aware that the provision to support Children Looked After and previously looked after children is a key school priority.
- Give the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After and previously looked after children, the time and facilities to carry out his / her job description and to support them at all times in their work.
- Ensure the voice of looked-after and previously looked-after children is a vital part of successfully understanding and meeting their needs.
- Ensure Pupil Premium Grant+ allocated is used for the benefit of looked after Children and previously looked after children to support progress, attainment, engagement and well-being.
- Show a personal interest and involvement in Children Looked after and previously looked after children, in the school.
- Challenge negative stereotypes of Children Looked After and previously looked after children, if they exist, and to insist on the highest of expectations and especially in terms these cohorts,
- Provide Continuing Professional Development for staff on issues pertaining to Children Looked After and previously looked after children, such as Attachment and Trauma.
- Work in partnership with the Virtual School, Children Social Care and other relevant services to share information and promote progress and achievement.

Designated Teacher

The school Designated Teacher will

- Be a champion for Children Looked After and previously looked after children within the school and ensure that they are receiving special provision.
- Ensure that the Children Looked After and previously looked after children are aware of who the Designated Teacher is, and that the member of staff's role is to support them at school.
- Ensure that teachers who need to know are aware of who Children Looked After and previously looked after children are and ensure that the staff treat the information confidentially.
- Ensure that any issues regarding a child or young person being in care or previously in care, are treated sensitively by all staff.
- Ensure Children Looked After and children previously looked after receive extra support as necessary and appropriate, with the key aims of helping them achieve their academic potential and further their personal and social development.
- Ensure Pupil Premium Grant+ allocated is used for the benefit of looked after Children and previously looked after children to support progress, attainment, engagement and well-being.

- Ensure Personal Education Plans (PEP) and PEP Reviews occur on time (one review each term) and to play the lead educational role at these PEP meetings. Ensure the pupil, parent and/or carer and Social Worker contribute to, and are involved in, PEP reviews.
- Ensure that all possible is being done to raise the achievement levels of Children Looked After i.e.
 - The pupils are following an appropriate curriculum (and in Year 8 or 9 make the best possible option choices);
 - The pupils know their targets and get feedback at least termly on how they are improving in relation to these targets and how they can improve and do better;
 - The pupils are entered for national assessment tests and public examinations when appropriate.
 - The pupils have access to any booster support that is available in the school;
 - The pupils have all possible individual assistance in developing their basic literacy, reading and numeracy skills;
 - Pupils on the Special Educational Needs register receive all possible support to meet their needs;
 - Able pupils have access to the school's Gifted and Talented provision;
 - All possible support is given at times of transition (KS1 – KS2, KS2 – KS3, KS3- KS4); or when a home placement move is taking place.
- Ensure that Children Looked After receive a smooth induction into the school, with the obtaining of all relevant past history.
- Keep comprehensive and up to date files on each pupil and to ensure that these are passed on should the student move school.
- Meet with the children regularly to discuss progress and any in school or out of school issues.
- Check with staff on a continuous basis how the pupil is doing and to intervene quickly at the first sign of a problem, e.g. behaviour issues, poor effort etc.
- Monitor attendance on a weekly basis.
- In secondary schools to ensure that: -
 - pupils receive all possible guidance and assistance in terms of their post 16 pathways, with the aim of ensuring that they progress to education, employment or training;
 - Pupils are given specific help in developing the social and personal skills that will give them better life chances.
- Draw up strategies for pupils who are not achieving, behaving poorly or not attending and then monitor the success of their implementation.
- To undertake periodic student voice exercises.
- To encourage pupils to be fully involved in extracurricular and extension activities both in and outside school; to help them with the logistics of taking part in school trips and other activities; to encourage them to be fully involved in the school, eg year and school councils.

- To ensure that students know there is someone they can approach if ever they have a problem or just want to talk, (this could be either the Designated Teacher or another member of staff)
- To make provision for specific mentoring or counselling as needed.
- To liaise with carers keeping them informed but also urging them to be partners in the pupils' education and showing them how they can do this.
- To ensure that pupils are getting their fair share of praise and rewards from the school's systems and to intervene when this seems not to be the case.
- To be vigilant for any child protection issues and also to check carefully for any sign of a Child Looked After or previously looked after child who is being bullied.
- To ensure that the School Nurse is aware of the child's medical history and is liaising with the Children Looked After Health Support Team.
- To liaise closely with the Education of Children Looked After (Virtual School) Team
Informing the Virtual School Team of any problems out of school that seem to have been identified;
 - seeking the support of the Virtual School Team if LA or other agency procedures do not seem to be giving necessary support to Children Looked After;
 - keeping the Virtual School Team informed about the general progress of Children Looked After;
 - Informing the Virtual School Team if carers do not seem to be co-operating with the school in helping the student's educational development.

Teachers and Support Staff:

To be aware of Children Looked After and previously looked after children in their classes and to give them all possible support and encouragement as students who need special provision and positive discrimination whilst preserving confidentiality and showing sensitivity and understanding.

Personal education plan (PEP) is part of a looked-after child's care plan that is developed with the school. It forms a record of what needs to happen and who will make it happen to ensure the child reaches their full potential.

Virtual school head (VSH) is a local authority officer responsible for promoting the educational achievement of their authority's looked-after children, working across schools to monitor and support these pupils as if they were in a single school. The VSH is also responsible for providing information and advice to schools, parents and guardians in respect of previously looked-after children.

Supporting both looked-after children and previously looked-after children

The designated teacher will:

- Ensure the specific needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children are understood by staff and reflected in how the school uses pupil premium funding

- Work with VSHs to agree how pupil premium funding for looked-after children can most effectively be used to improve their attainment
- Help raise the awareness of parents and guardians of previously looked-after children about pupil premium funding and other support for these children
- Play a key part in decisions on how pupil premium funding is used to support previously looked-after children
- Encourage parents' and guardians' involvement in deciding how pupil premium funding is used to support their child, and be the main contact for queries about its use
- Ensure teachers have awareness and understanding of the specific needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children in areas like attendance, homework, behaviour and future career planning
- Be aware of the special educational needs (SEN) of looked-after and previously looked-after children, and make sure teachers also have awareness and understanding of this
- Ensure the SEND code of practice, as it relates to looked-after children, is followed
- Make sure PEPs work in harmony with any education, health and care (EHC) plans that a looked-after child may have
- Ensure that, with the help of VSHs, they have the skills to identify signs of potential SEN issues in looked-after and previously looked-after children, and know how to access further assessment and support where necessary
- Ensure that they and other staff can identify signs of potential mental health issues in looked-after and previously looked-after children and understand where the school can draw on specialist services
- Put in place robust arrangements to have strengths and difficulties questionnaires (SDQs) completed for looked-after children, and use the results of these SDQs to inform PEPs
- Put in place mechanisms for understanding the emotional and behavioural needs of previously looked-after children

Relationships beyond the school

The designated teacher will:

- Proactively engage with social workers and other professionals to enable the school to respond effectively to the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Discuss with social workers how the school should engage with birth parents, and ensure the school is clear about who has parental responsibility and what information can be shared with whom
- Be open and accessible to parents and guardians of previously looked-after children and encourage them to be actively involved in their children's education
- Proactively build relationships with local authority professionals, such as VSHs and SEN departments

Consider how the school works with others outside of the school to maximise the stability of education for looked-after children, such as:

- Finding ways of making sure the latest information about educational progress is available to contribute to the statutory review of care plans
- Ensuring mechanisms are in place to inform VSHs when looked-after children are absent without authorisation and work with the responsible authority to take appropriate safeguarding action
- Talking to the child's social worker and/or other relevant parties in the local authority regarding any decisions about changes in care placements which will disrupt the child's education, providing advice about the likely impact and what the local authority should do to minimise disruption
- Making sure that, if a looked-after child moves school, their new designated teacher receives any information needed to help the transition process
- Seek advice from VSHs about meeting the needs of individual previously looked-after children, but only with the agreement of their parents or guardians
- Make sure that for each looked-after child:
- There's an agreed process for how the school works in partnership with the child's carer and other professionals, such as their social worker, in order to review and develop educational progression
- school policies are communicated to their carer and social worker and, where appropriate, birth parents
- Teachers know the most appropriate person to contact where necessary, such as who has the authority to sign permission slips
- Where a looked-after child is at risk of exclusion:
- Contact the VSH as soon as possible so they can help the school decide how to support the child to improve their behaviour and avoid exclusion becoming necessary
- Working with the VSH and child's carers, consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to address the causes of the child's behaviour
- Where a previously looked-after child is at risk of exclusion, talk to the child's parents or guardians before seeking advice from the VSH on avoiding exclusion

Equal Opportunities

All pupil's audiological needs will be met appropriately.

Conclusion

This policy summarises our whole school approach to the education of Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children (CLA) and should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding Policies
- Communication
- Equal Opportunities
- Health and safety