



Broomwood Primary School



Policy for Children Looked After (CLA)

Who are our Children Looked After?

Children and young people become “Looked After” either if they have been taken into care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most Children Looked After will be living with foster parents but a smaller number may be in children’s residential units, living with a relative or even be placed at home with their birth parents.

Since the White Paper ‘Care Matters’ of July 2007 the term “Children in Care” is also in use.

The governing body of Broomwood Primary School is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes. For Children Looked After it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational underachievement when compared with their peers as and this governing body is committed to implementing the principles and practice as outlined in:

- DfEE Circular 0269/2000
- DfEE/DOH Guidance 2000
- A Better Education for Children in Care. Social Exclusion Unit. Sept. 2003
- Children Act 2004, specifically section 52 “The duty to safeguard looked after children, to promote their educational achievements and to ensure they are able to achieve and reach their full potential”

The 2000 Guidance introduced key measures, in order to improve multi-agency coordination and improve educational life chances for Children Looked After including Designated Teachers for Children Looked After and the introduction of a Personal Education Plan for each pupil.

The governing body is committed to ensuring that the following roles and responsibilities are carried out effectively in order to fulfil the school’s duty regarding these pupils.

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 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. Children who are “looked after” may be “Accommodated” “In Care” or “remanded/ detained” as follows: Accommodated (Section 20)

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.

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.
- poor attachments to others.
- have a need to be very private.

This makes them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life-chances. The governing body of Broomwood 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
- Personal Education Plans for all Looked After Children.
- all staff have a clear understanding of confidentiality and issues that affect looked after children.
- effective strategies that supports the education of this vulnerable group.

BROOMWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL POLICY FOR CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Governing Body – Krys Rabin- vice chair- designated CLA governor

- Ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritises children looked after according to the DCSF Admission Code of Practice
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for Children Looked After

- Ensure there is a designated teacher for Children Looked After
- Liaise with the headteacher, designated teacher, and all other staff to ensure the needs of Children Looked After are met
- Nominate a governor with responsibility for CLA who links with the designated teacher
- Receive regular reports from the designated teacher which should include the number of Children Looked After on roll and the confirmation that they have a Personal Education Plan,
- their attendance, compared to other pupils
- their attainment (SATs) compared to other pupils
- the number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any)
- the destinations of pupils who leave the school
- Ensure that the school's policies and procedures give Children Looked After equal access in respect of Admission to school
- National Curriculum and examinations
- Out of school learning and extracurricular activities
- Annually, review the effective implementation of the school policy for Children Looked After

Designated teacher –Allison McCarthy- Deputy Headteacher

- Be an advocate for Children Looked After
- Attend relevant training for Children Looked After
- Act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and individuals in relation to
- Ensure that all Children Looked After receive a positive reintegration on entering the school
- Ensure that all Children Looked After have an appropriate Personal Education Plan
- Keep Personal Education Plans and other records up to date and reviewed appropriately
- Convene an urgent multi professional meeting if a Child Looked After is experiencing difficulties or at risk of exclusion.
- Ensure confidentiality on individual children, sharing confidential/personal information on a need to know basis.
- Act as the key advisor for staff and governors on issues relevant to Children Looked After.
- Ensure that care and school liaison is effective including invitations to meetings and other school events
- Actively encourage and promote out of hours learning and extracurricular activities for Children Looked After
- Ensure speedy transfer of information when a Child Looked After transfers into another educational placement.
- Contribute information to CLA reviews when required.
- Provide regular reports to the Governing Body regarding CLA in the school and relevant policy and practice development.

For more information please see: The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children – Statutory guidance for school governing bodies.

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/01046-2009BKT-EN.PDF>
Improving the Educational Attainment of Children in Care (Looked after Children)

<http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-00523-2009.pdf>

Improving the attainment of looked after children in primary schools – Guidance for Schools

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/01047-2009.pdf>

Improving the attainment of looked after young people in secondary schools – Guidance for Schools

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/01048-2009.pdf>

Whole School Staff

- Have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of Children Looked After
- Positively promote the raising of a Child Looked After's self esteem
- Ensure any Child Looked After is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained
- Be familiar with the Guidance on Children Looked after and respond appropriately to requests for information to support Personal Education Plans, and review meetings
- Respond positively to the request to be a Child Looked After's named person
- Liaise with the designated teachers where a Child Looked After is experiencing difficulties
- Give only official exclusions and only use exclusions as a last resort, in line with statutory regulations and Trafford's exclusion advice
- Contribute to regular liaison with social care colleagues and other appropriate professionals
- Keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to other professionals as appropriate.

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.

This policy links with a number of other school policies and it is important that Governors have regard to the needs of Looked After Children when reviewing them:

- Oversubscription criteria
- The school code of conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Home-school agreement
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Racial Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Managing allegations against staff

This group of children are vulnerable and must be listened to carefully with any concerns they raise. If there are any concerns raised by a child in relation to the foster carers that they are placed with, procedures from the: Managing allegations against staff members must be followed. With any concerns the child's social worker must be informed immediately and the LADO.

Reviewed November 2017