



## School Policy for Looked After Children (Children in Public Care)

### 1. Objective

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in public care/looked after pupils within a supportive and inclusive school culture.

### 2 Roles and responsibilities

Role of the Head Teacher / designated teacher

The Head Teacher as designated teacher will inform staff of a child's care status and determine the extent to which information is shared with other members of staff.

The role of the designated teacher is to:

- maintain a register of children in public care and ensure all relevant education and care information is available to school staff and that this information is kept up to date.
- ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by children in public care and understand the need for high expectations and positive systems of support to overcome them.
- act as an advocate for children in public care.
- hold a supervisory brief and monitor the educational progress of all children who are in public care.
- supervise the smooth induction of a new child in public care into the school.
- act as a named person for the child.
- promote the involvement of these children in extra-curricular activities and intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement, absence from school, etc
- ensure that each pupil has a Personal Education Plan (PEP) and that school-based access to services and support is in place.
- liaise with the designated teacher for Child Protection and the Special Needs Coordinator.
- help coordinate education and Social Services Department review meetings so that the PEP can inform the child's Care Plan and enable the child to make a contribution to their Care Plan.
- attend or arrange for someone else to attend Social Services Department's planning meetings.
- act as advisor for other staff in the school and for governors on issues relevant to children in public care and ensure there is sensitivity to the background of children in public care, especially in work around families, family trees and family values.
- ensure the speedy transfer of information between agencies and individuals and report on the progress of all children in public care to Looked after Children Services.



## **School Policy for Looked After Children (Children in Public Care)**

- develop knowledge of Social Services Department and Education procedures by attending training events organised by the Local Authority and cascade training to staff as appropriate.

### Role of the Governors

The named governors will report to the Governing Body on an annual basis:

- the number of children in public care in the school
- the test scores, attendance and exclusion rates of the discrete group, compared with those of other pupils.

The named governors will have knowledge of the status of the children in public care as well as having an overview of their educational needs and progress.

The Governing Body should be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that children in public care have equal access to:

- the National Curriculum
- additional educational support
- extra-curricular activities

The Governors will assist the school in looking at whether policies and practice on behaviour, admissions, exclusions, attendance and special educational needs adequately address the needs of children in public care.

### 3 Confidentiality

- The Headteacher as the designated teacher has responsibility for informing all teaching staff who are in contact with the child of their care status.
- In the absence of the usual class teacher, the Headteacher will share some basic information with the teacher covering the class.
- As the initial contact of carers and other agencies with the school, the School Office staff will have knowledge of the child's care status.
- It is appropriate for support staff to have knowledge that the child is being looked after when directly involved on the teaching of the child.
- Other staff may need to know if there are particular concerns that require a whole-school approach.
- In each case, the Headteacher will determine the extent of the information shared. In every case, only information that is critical to the working relationship will be passed on.

### 4 Admissions



## **School Policy for Looked After Children (Children in Public Care)**

On admission, records will be requested from the previous school, where appropriate and a meeting held to inform the PEP.

### 5 Involving the child

The child will be consulted and involved in decisions about themselves according to their age and understanding.

A child will be made aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. How this is shared with them will depend on their age and understanding. The explanation will emphasise that the school, the social worker and the carers are working together to support their education.

### 6 Involving the parent(s) and carer(s)

Biggin Hill Primary School recognises that support from home greatly assists a child's educational progress and aims to involve parents, carers and those with parental responsibility in an open and positive manner.

The school will maintain regular communication with the primary carer and will ensure that copies of reports are forwarded to the social worker in addition to the foster carer and parent.

### 7 Involving other agencies

Biggin Hill Primary School recognises that multi-agency working is crucial to the support and progress of children in public care. The school will work closely with other agencies involved in supporting the achievements and welfare of the child, particularly the social worker. The school will exchange significant information to appropriate personnel between reviews when necessary.

### 8 Assessment, planning, monitoring and review procedures

Class teachers will carry out assessment, planning and monitoring in accordance with general school practice.

Each pupil in public care will have a PEP as part of their Care Plan. This will identify basic information, act as a record of progress, identify specific areas of concern and include achievable targets. The PEP will be reviewed at least every six months and will feed into the Care Plan.

The designated teacher will maintain an overview of the progress and needs of each child in public care.

The named governors will report annually to the Governing Body.

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually.



## **School Policy for Looked After Children (Children in Public Care)**

January 2013

Review date September 2015