THE BEACON PRU

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

Date of Policy	Sept 25	Date of Review	Sept 26	Coordinator	Julie Wynne

TERMINOLOGY

The Children Act (1989) introduced changes in terminology. The term 'in care' now refers solely to children who are subject to Care Orders. Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are 'accommodated' by the local authority. Both these groups are said to be 'looked after children' (LAC) or children in care or 'children looked after' (CLA) by the local authority. Accommodated children also include those in receipt of respite care – if it exceeds 20 days in one episode or over 120 days a year. It is important not to confuse a young person's legal status with their living arrangements.

For example, a child on a Care Order can be living with:
- Foster carers
- In a children's home
- In a residential school
- With relatives, or
- Even with parents – under supervision of CSF

Similarly, an 'accommodated' child can be living:
- In foster care
- In a children's home, or
- In a residential school

This policy incorporates requirements set out in the statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The aim of this policy is to promote educational inclusion for Looked After Children, to enable them to access the full range of educational opportunities available to them and to reach their potential, both academically and personally.

Looked After Children in our Unit will:
- receive an appropriate level of monitoring and support
- have access to the full range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities

Teachers and other staff in our Unit will:
- receive an appropriate level of training on the issues affecting the educational achievement and psychological well-being of Looked After Children and use this to guide their interactions with them
- plan for and meet the individual needs of Looked After Children

The Looked After Designated Teacher and Senior Management will:
- identify, arrange and/or deliver training to staff to enable the above to take place

- ensure the development of effective and inclusive strategies to address the needs of Looked After Children
- ensure the smooth transfer of information within the Unit and other educational settings, carers and other agencies

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Designated Teacher for LAC	Julie Wynne
LAC Governor	Annette Hawkesford

Designated Teacher

School Systems:

- To ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by children and young people 'in care' and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them.
- To inform members of staff of the general educational needs of children who are in care.
- To act as an advocate for children and young people in care.
- To develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers and colleagues in Children's Services.
- To coordinate the provision for all children in care, e.g. to ensure all relevant education and care information is available to school staff and carer(s), and that this information is kept up to date.
- To monitor the educational progress of all children who are looked-after in order to inform the school's development plan.
- To intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement or absence from school.
- To ensure that the educational targets within the Personal Education Plan are implemented fully and that all relevant staff are aware of them.
- To advise on the rationale for the allocation of the Pupil Premium Allowance during the Personal Education Planning meeting.
- To be responsible for the appropriate allocation of the Pupil Premium for children looked after and to be accountable for how it is spent.
- To report to the Management Committee, at least on an annual basis, on the outcomes for children looked after.
- To enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their Care Plan.
- To implement the Personal Education Plan for each child and review it, as this will contribute to the educational component of their care plan.
- To supervise the smooth induction of a new looked after child into the Unit and any transitions into future settings.
- To develop in-school strategies to promote and accelerate the achievement of children in care and close the gap between them and their peers.
- To fully support additional learning opportunities that may be available from the Virtual School and partner agencies.

Liaison:

- To liaise with the members of staff responsible for Safeguarding (DSL Lesley Hatton & Julie Wynne)
- To help communication with Children's Services so that the Personal Education Plan can inform the child's Care Plan.
- To attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or to contribute in other ways to care planning meetings and statutory reviews.
- To be named contact for colleagues in Children's Services.
- To ensure the speedy transfer of information between agencies and individuals, and report on the progress of all children in care on the Unit role to the designated agencies/officers.

Training:

- To develop knowledge of Children's Services procedures by attending training events organised by the Local Authority.
- To cascade training to PRU staff as appropriate.
- To attend and participate in area cluster groups for additional training and to share good practice.

Management Committee	The named governor will report to the Management Committee on an annual basis using the report from the Designated Teacher as source information: • The number of looked-after pupils in the PRU • A comparison of attainment as a discrete group, compared with those of other pupils • The attendance of pupils as a discrete group, compared to other pupils • The level of suspensions • Pupil destinations The named governor should be satisfied that the PRU's policies and procedures ensure that looked-after pupils have equal access to: • The National Curriculum • Public examinations • Additional interventions to support educational progress • Additional education support
Headteacher SLT	• Ensuring that inclusive strategies are in place for Looked After Children and that staff, particularly the Designated Teacher, are enabled to carry them out.

INDUCTION & TRANSITION

On admission, records will be requested from the pupil's previous school and a meeting will be held with carer/parent/Social Worker as appropriate, but always involving someone with parental responsibility. This will provide information to inform the Personal Education Plan. An appropriate Unit induction will take place.

When reintegrating or transferring to a new educational setting individualised transition meetings will be set between both education settings, parents/carers, Social Worker and any other appropriate professionals to ensure a cohesive transition plan is in place to support the pupil through this process.

Our PRU has clear approaches to supporting pupils with transitions, particularly related to the beginning and ending of placements.

INFORMATION

The Designated Teacher will seek and receive information about the educational issues affecting the learning for all Looked After Children on placement at our PRU. This will be passed on to relevant staff to avoid unnecessary breaks in learning. This will include the Personal Education Plan if in place. If there is no current PEP, the Designated Teacher will liaise with the Social Worker to ensure this is set up promptly. Information about the circumstances of Looked After Children will be shared on a 'need to know' basis.

Each child will have their own folder containing all essential information and this will be kept in the safeguarding cabinet in the Head Teacher's office.

The Designated Teacher will talk to young people about the information to be recorded about their personal circumstances and make it clear that this is in order to help all the people involved in their lives work together to help them in the Unit. The nature of this conversation will depend upon the age and level of understanding of the young person.

COMMUNICATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES

To ensure that all those involved in the education and care of Looked After Children work together in their best interests, the Designated Teacher will devise and implement effective strategies and procedures for

- Accessing additional support, funding or use of funded initiatives
- Liaising with Social Workers and the Virtual School to ensure all Looked After Children have a Personal Education Plan
- Participation in and co-ordination of Review and Planning meetings for Looked After Children.

ASSESSMENT, MONITORING & REVIEW PROCEDURES

Each pupil in care will have a Care Plan that will include a Personal Education Plan (PEP) that is developed jointly by the Social worker/Virtual School and Designated Teacher. The PEPs are completed electronically using an ePEP system. The ePEPs will identify specific areas of concern and include achievable targets. Areas for consideration will include:

- Attendance
- Attainment
- Behaviour
- Extended learning opportunities
- Involvement in Out of School Hours Activities
- Special needs
- Development needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge or subject areas and experiences)
- Long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations)

The PEP will be updated and reviewed at least annually or at the point of any major change and contribute to the Statutory Reviewing process carried out by the Independent Reviewing Officer. The Designated Teacher is accountable for the implementation of the educational targets within the Plan.

Information about the academic **attainment** of all Looked After Children in school will be collected as follows:

- ½ Termly Pupil Progress Meetings
- ½ Termly Tracking of progress and inclusion of interventions if necessary
- Termly review of Boxall Profile
- ½ termly reviews to discuss progress
- An end of year report or end of placement report will be completed by the class teacher
- Their progress will also be collated and closely monitored with children in receipt of PPG
- All progress will be reported anonymously to governors termly
- Termly meeting will be held with carers and all professionals involved with the child in order to review progress / impact / next steps of individual Personal Education Plan
- All staff will adhere to the assessment policy
- This information will be analysed by the Senior Leadership Team to measure the attainment of Looked After Children against the Unit population as a whole.
- All children in our Unit, including Looked After Children, are tracked on a ½ termly basis. Progress is tracked and interventions are arranged as required.

Information about the **attendance** of Looked After Children will be collected as follows:

- Attendance data is collated on a weekly basis for all children in school including Looked After Children.
- This information is analysed and kept in a securely by the Head teacher.
- Any absence is followed up immediately.

- This information will be analysed by the Head teacher, Mrs Lesley Hatton, to identify individuals or groups of Looked After Children whose attendance is poor so early intervention can take place.
- Daily attendance information on any LAC pupils at the Beacon is collected on behalf of the Virtual School.

Information about the **behaviour** of Looked After Children will be collected as follows:

- All staff will adhere to the behaviour policy and procedures stated within that policy will be followed.
- Regulation Records and Logs will be kept by the class teacher
- All pupils have their IBP reviewed ½ termly
- All pupils have their Boxhall Profile updated termly to identify progress and areas of priority
- This information is analysed by the Designated Teacher to identify individuals or groups of Looked After Children who are at increased risk so early intervention can take place.

STRATEGIES

Curriculum

If a Looked After Child appears to be having difficulties with the curriculum or to be failing to engage with it, this will be addressed as follows:

- The SENCo will look at all possible contributory factors and gather a wide range of evidence in conjunction with other relevant staff
- Look for factors which may be masking underlying learning difficulties
- Talk to the child
- All staff in school will adhere to the Special Educational Needs Policy
- ½ termly staff team meeting to address needs of pupils causing not making expected progress

We recognise that there are factors which may prevent Looked After Children from achieving as highly as they could, even if there are no apparent learning difficulties. To ensure that under-achievement does not go unrecognised, the attainment of each Looked After Child will be tracked and compared to previous results. If progress is not as could be expected:

- Interventions will be completed
- When required, external agency involvement will be sought by the SENCo

We are aware that certain aspects of the curriculum, for example activities to mark Mother's Day or to investigate family history, may cause difficulties for Looked After Children and we will ensure this is handled sensitively by planning alternative but relevant activities.

Attendance

If a Looked After Child is identified as having poor attendance or punctuality

- The Social Worker and carers will be contacted to gain their support and collect any relevant information
- The Virtual School will be alerted
- Attendance and lateness is tracked on a weekly basis and acted upon if required.

Behaviour

We recognise and understand the impact that developmental trauma and lack of continuity in the lives of Looked After Children. Our Unit approaches are firmly embedded in the principles of attachment theory and the strategies for managing the presenting behaviours resulting from trauma are established and consistent in application across the Unit.

The following arrangements are in place where presenting behaviours cause increasing concern

- The Social Worker and carers will be contacted as soon as increasing concern is raised or if there are significant changes to the behaviour of a Looked After Child.
- The staff will follow the school behaviour policy.
- If the problem continues, the SENCo will coordinate a multiagency meeting