



PORTFIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

Date	Review Date	Co-ordinator
June 2022	June 2024	Kelly Rae

Rationale

Nationally, Looked After Children significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that Looked After Children are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being, in line with Every Child Matters.

Helping Looked After Children succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority for Portfields Primary School. Our approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education.
- Promoting attendance.
- Targeting support.
- Having high expectations.
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes.
- Achieving stability and continuity.
- Early intervention and priority action.
- Listening to children.
- Promoting health and well-being.
- Reducing exclusions and promoting stability.
- Working in partnership with parents, carers, social workers and other professionals.

Definition

The term “looked after” was introduced by the Children Act 1989. This refers to a child who is either accommodated (whereby the local authority provides for the child on an agreed basis with the person who has parental responsibility) or is subject to a care order (whereby a court order grants shared parental responsibility to the local authority in order to protect and promote a child’s welfare). Children in both instances could be living with foster carers, in a residential unit, with relatives, or even with parents on a part or full time basis.

Legal Framework

Legislation requires schools to have effective policies for supporting and promoting the education of Looked After Children.

Schools must:

- Ensure access to a balanced and broadly based education to all Looked After Children
- Prioritise recording and improving the academic achievement of all Looked After Children
- Prioritise a reduction in the number of exclusions and trancies for all Looked After Children
- Ensure there is a designated teacher for Looked After Children
- Promote the attendance of Looked After Children

Objectives

We will:

- Work alongside external agencies to ensure that each Looked After Child has a current Personal Education Plan in place.
- Provide a climate of acceptance and challenge negative stereotypes.
- Ensure all children who are looked after have the same opportunities to participate fully in the National Curriculum and extra-curricular activities
- Ensure discretion when addressing a child’s care status and ensure there is sensitivity to the background of children who are looked after.
- Ensure the designated teacher is provided with regular training, and that they cascade this training to school staff as appropriate.
- Ensure that a clear protocol for sharing of information will be followed both within school and with outside agencies.
- Endeavour to support all Looked After Children educated in this school to achieve their best possible potential.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Head Teacher and Designated Teacher, as well as all teaching staff will endeavour to ensure that Looked After Children have equal access to all learning opportunities in line with their peers.

The Governing Body should be satisfied that:

- the school has a coherent policy for Looked After Children
- the designated teacher has received appropriate training
- Looked After Children have equal access to all areas of the curriculum
- the Governing body receives an annual report

The Head Teacher will:

- appoint the designated teacher
- ensure that the designated teacher has received appropriate training
- put procedures in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusions of Looked After Children and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations
- report annually to the Governing Body on the following:
 - the number of looked after pupils in the school
 - an analysis of attainment as a discrete group, compared to other pupils
 - the attendance of pupils, compared to other pupils
 - level of fixed term and permanent exclusions, compared to other pupils

The Designated Teacher

The designated teacher will serve as the contact for external agencies and will maintain responsibility for several key areas to support Looked After Children within the school. The designated teacher will help establish and maintain the ethos regarding Looked After Children of the school by:

- maintaining and respecting confidentiality of all Looked After Children and ensuring information is shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis
- ensuring that all staff, through appropriate training, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantages faced by Looked After Children and understand the need for positive systems to support them, whilst maintaining appropriately high expectations for their educational achievements
- acting as an advocate for Looked After Children in order to allow them equal access to educational opportunities and support with important decisions affecting future life chances

The designated teacher will set up systems to monitor and record the progress of all Looked After Children. They will:

- have an overview and co-ordinating role for gathering and holding all information on children who are looked after, including legal status and information about who should be contacted regarding matters concerning the child
- establish a system for forwarding educational records to new schools to facilitate a smooth and speedy transfer
- monitor the educational progress of all Looked After Children and intervene, in co-operation with other agencies if required, if there is evidence of underachievement, absence from school or other similar concern

The designated teacher will facilitate effective communication by:

- building positive home-school relationships between parents / carers with regular opportunities for dialogue
- being proactive and participating in setting goals for the child's PEP
- playing an active role in care planning by ensuring that the attendance of the most appropriate member of staff and/or written reports are provided to all statutory reviews of Looked After Children
- helping co-ordinate education and PEP meetings
- serving as the named contact for colleagues in social services and education

- inviting the assigned social worker to all meetings, and liaising with this social worker regarding the development of Personal Education Plans (PEP).

The designated teacher will monitor each child's achievement and ensure that they have the support they require within school:

- by ensuring each child has a Personal Education Plan
- by requesting support from outside agencies if a looked after child requires additional academic or behavioural support
- by ensuring all Looked After Children with special educational needs are being assessed and are getting appropriate resources to support their learning
- by having a strategy for key stage or new school transition
- by ensuring all Looked After Children are made to feel a part of the school environment

The Designated Teacher at Portfields Primary School is Kelly Rae.

The responsibilities of all staff

All our staff will:

- have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children
- maintain confidentiality with regards to Looked After Children and ensure they are supported sensitively
- respond promptly to requests from the designated teacher for Looked After Children for information
- work to enable Looked After Children in the school to achieve stability and success
- promote the self-esteem of all Looked After Children

Personal Education Plans

Each child will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP), which their social worker will take the lead in developing. However, the school's role in this plan is crucial and at least one member of staff who knows the child well will attend the meeting to establish and subsequently review this.

The PEP will consider:

- the child's strengths and weaknesses
- interests, both in and out of school
- developmental, educational and pastoral needs
- future plans, and how these can be supported
- issues arising for the child
- It will also identify targets that will be reviewed during the next PEP meeting.

Admission/Induction Arrangements

Looked After Children are a priority for admission and, as such, we will follow the LA's published admission criteria.

On admission, the child will meet with the designated teacher and their named member of staff. They will discuss any relevant issues, academic or pastoral, and ensure the child is made to feel comfortable in our school. Records will be requested from the child's previous school and as

soon as practicable after they are received a meeting will be held with the carer / parent, social worker, and other relevant professionals.