



Platt C.E Primary School Looked After Children Policy

Introduction

Platt C of E Primary School is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. We recognise that, nationally, there is considerable underachievement of children in residential and foster care, when compared with 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's Act 2004. Children who are 'looked after' may be 'Accommodated', 'In care' or 'remanded/detained.'

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 only in care if a court has granted a Care Order which will be issued if they believe a child to be suffering or is 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 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 have some of the following issues:

- Low self esteem
- Poor education standards due to time out of school
- Delayed emotional/social/cognitive development
- Be bullied or bully others
- Be prone to mental health issues
- Be isolated with few friends
- Have behaviour issues
- Poor attachment to others
- Have a need to be very private

This makes them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life-chances. Platt C of E Primary School is committed to ensuring that these children are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following are in place:

Revised 06/21

Agreed FGB Meeting 12/07/21

Next Review 06/22

Source: The Key / SENCO

- A Designated Teacher for Looked After Children (Justine Smith)
- Progress is closely monitored for all Looked After Children
- All staff have a clear understanding of confidentiality and issues that affect Looked After Children
- Effective strategies that support the education of the vulnerable group

Role and responsibility of The Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher should:

- Be an advocate for Looked After Children
- When new to the school, ensure an induction for the child and carer and note any specific requirements including care status
- Ensure a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is completed as soon as possible. This should be prepared with the child and carer, in liaison with the social worker and other relevant workers/agencies and be linked to Care Plan meetings
- Keep PEPs and other records up to date
- Ensure that each child in public care has an identified member of staff that they can talk to (this should be based on the child's request)
- Coordinate support for the child in school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary
- Ensure staff receive relevant information and training and act as an advisor to staff and governors
- Ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis
- Provide written information to inform planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible
- Ensure that the child and carer receive early notification of meetings. Parent's evenings and other events and that communication remains regular and positive
- Encourage Looked After Children to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning where feasible
- Ensure speedy transfer of information between individuals and relevant agencies and to the new school when the child transfers
- Seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded
- Ensure that any paperwork is completed as requested by the LA

Roles and responsibility of all staff

- Ensure that any child in public care is supported sensitively and confidentiality is maintained
- Be familiar with and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings
- Respond positively to a child in public care's request to be the named person that they talk to
- Contribute to the Designated Teacher's requests for information on educational attainment and needs as appropriate
- Ensure that no child in public care is stigmatised in any way
- Provide a supportive climate to enable a child in public care to achieve stability within the school setting
- Have high aspirations for the education and personal achievement of Looked After Children and promote self esteem

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Roles and responsibility of The Governing Body

- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for Looked After Children
- Be aware of whether the school has Looked After Children and how many (no names)
- Ensure there is a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children
- Liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his/her duties in relation to Looked After Children
- Support the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of Looked After Children are met
- Nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, review regular reports and provide feedback to the Governing Body.
- Review the effective implementation of this policy

Confidentiality

- Information is shared on a 'need to know' basis
- The Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with which staff at the PEP meeting. Once this is agreed with the social worker, carer and young person, complete confidentiality is to be maintained.

Training

The Head Teacher or Designated Teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

Personal Education Plan (PEP) completion

- Social worker informs school of a child becoming looked after (or a looked after child entering the school)
- A date is set for the completion of PEP
- A copy of the form is sent to school to enable completion and PEP meeting takes place within 20 days
- A date is set for the next PEP meeting and PEP is taken to the child's statutory review and discussed within the wider context of the child's life
- PEP sent by social worker to the LAC team