



Whitestone Infant School



Children Looked After and Post Looked After Policy

Head Teacher: Mrs N Green

Designated Teacher: Mrs N Green

Responsible Governor: Mr P Johnson

Chair of Governors: Mr D Robinson

Definition

'Looked After' is a term that refers to children for whom the Local Authority is sharing parental responsibility. This can happen either with parental agreement or when a Court makes a Care Order. The child may be living with foster carers, in a residential unit, with family members or sometimes with their parents. These children are therefore subject to corporate parenting. This policy includes requirements set out in "Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004" and associated guidance on the education of Children who are Looked After (CLA).

Rational

Many children and young people who are in care have suffered abuse or neglect. Despite having as broad a range of abilities as their peers, CLA/PCLA are particularly vulnerable to underachievement. Nationally, CLA significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Their academic and social progress is likely to be affected by their experiences, and compounded by instability in their personal circumstances. Helping CLA succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority in our school. Whitestone Infant School recognises that CLA can experience specific and significant disadvantage within a school setting, and is committed to ensuring that they reach their potential in all areas. We are aware that CLA may have specific difficulties with attendance, doing homework, getting parental consent for activities, obtaining funding for extra activities, and obtaining correct uniform and equipment. Whitestone Infant School recognises that CLA may have very specific needs and may be coping with trauma, abuse or rejection, and are likely to experience personal distress and uncertainty. We believe that the educational experience of all children should be positive and enjoyable and aim to provide a learning environment in which every Child Looked After can be successful. We believe that this school has a major part to play in ensuring that CLA can be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic wellbeing.

Whitestone recognises that all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broad-based curriculum and aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in public care. The school and the governing body endorses the Warwickshire Virtual School policy. Whitestone Infant Schools approach to encouraging and supporting the educational achievement of CLA is based on the following principles:

- Ensuring an appropriately trained Designated Teacher is appointed, who will be responsible for all CLA.
- All CLA will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) drawn up between the school, the child, and the child's social worker, which will identify the child's individual needs and the support they require
- Having high expectations for the child and ensuring equal access to a balanced and broadly-based education.

- Recording, monitoring, and improving the academic achievement of the child in addition to their health and wellbeing.
- Achieving stability and continuity
- Prioritising reduction in exclusions and promoting attendance.
- Recording, monitoring, and improving the academic achievement of the child in addition to their health and wellbeing.
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes.
- Promoting good communication between all those involved in the child's life and listening to the child. Maintaining and respecting the child's confidentiality wherever possible.
- Ensuring staff awareness of, and sensitivity to, the difficulties and educational disadvantages of CLA.

Responsibility of the Head teacher

- Identify a Designated Teacher for CLA, whose role is set out below.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusion of CLA and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of CLA to all parties involved.
- Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

Responsibility of the Governing Body

- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of CLA.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of CLA.
- Ensure that the school has an overview of the needs and progress of CLA.
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.
- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out their responsibilities as below.
- Support the Head teacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of CLA are recognised and met.
 - Receive a termly report setting out:
 1. The number of looked-after pupils on the school's roll (if any).
 2. Their attendance
 3. Their teacher assessments.
 4. Any fixed term or permanent exclusions.
 5. The destinations of pupils who leave the school.
 6. The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.

The role of the Designated Teacher

- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan to plan for that transition in consultation with the child's social worker and arrangements are put in place to ensure their needs identified and met.
- This may include providing basic equipment and resources if necessary and providing appropriate support in meeting uniform requirements if needed.
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people, at least two weeks before the Care Plan reviews.
- Maintaining an up-to-date record of the CLA in school, including those in the care of other authorities and ensuring all necessary information is passed to other staff as required
- Ensure that each Child Looked After has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher, but should be based on the child's own wishes.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately
- Co-ordinate any support for the CLA that is necessary within school, liaising with teaching and non-teaching staff in school, including the person responsible for Child Protection as well as pastoral and subject staff to ensure they are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage CLAs may face.
- Establish and maintain regular contact with home, statutory and voluntary agencies.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis. • Promote inclusion in all areas of school life and encourage CLA to join in extracurricular activities and out of school learning.
- Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of CLA.
- Set up meetings with relevant parties where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion.
- Ensure the rapid transfer of information between individuals, agencies and if the pupil changes school – to a new school.
- Be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education.
- Ensure that attendance is monitored.
- Attending training as required to keep fully informed of latest developments and policies regarding CLA.

The responsibility of all staff

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of CLA, as for all pupils.
- Maintain CLA's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- Work to enable CLA to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all CLA.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of CLA.

Confidentiality

Information on CLA 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.

Record keeping and information sharing

The Designated Teacher will keep an up-to-date record of CLA in school and will ensure that relevant information is made known to appropriate staff. A Personal Education Plan will be initiated within 20 school days of the Looked After Child or Young Person starting at the school or being taken into care and will be reviewed regularly and as necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the CLA. The PEP will provide a regular opportunity to review progress and achievements. Copies of reports and appropriate documentation will be sent to authorised carers and agencies involved with the child as well as any receiving school at point of transition.

Exclusions

Whitestone Infant School recognises that CLA can sometimes be particularly vulnerable to suspensions/exclusions. Where a CLA is at risk of exclusion the school will try every practicable means to maintain the child in school. A multi-professional meeting will be arranged, bringing together all those involved with the young person to discuss strategies to minimise the risk of exclusion. The child's PEP will reflect strategies to support the child and where relevant those employed in the Pastoral Support Plan. All relevant measures and resources will be considered to provide support and provide alternative educational packages to prevent an exclusion from happening. Other staff will receive relevant training and support to enable them to work sympathetically and productively with CLA, including those who are underachieving or at risk of underachieving or who have additional needs. These may include EAL, being Gifted and Talented or having learning or physical needs. Teachers with responsibility for Special Educational Needs provision and for children who are Gifted and Talented will be informed of those CLA who have particular gifts, talents or learning needs and will work with them appropriately.

Support and resources

The Governing body will ensure that the school allocates resources, including professional time and expertise, to support appropriate provision for CLA, meeting the objectives set out in this policy.

Home-school liaison

The school recognises the value of a close working relationship between home and school and will work towards developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable CLA to achieve their potential. Carers consultations as well as PEP and Care Plan review meetings provide opportunities to continue to develop this partnership working.

Admission arrangements

We recognise that due to care arrangements CLA may enter school mid-term and that it is important that they are given a positive welcome and where appropriate additional support and pre-entry visits to help them settle.

Links with other agencies

The school recognises the value of working together with other agencies and organisations and will work closely with colleagues from services involved with the Looked After Child such as Social Care teams; Educational Psychologist; Health Services, and CAMHS.

Racial Equality & Equal Opportunities Statement

All children have equal access and inclusive rights to the curriculum regardless of their gender, race, disability or ability. We plan work that is differentiated for the performance of all groups and individuals. Whitestone Infant School is committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment and to achieve their full potential.

Policy Implementation Date: January 2025

To be reviewed: January 2028