



Looked after Children policy

March 2021

Version	Date	Author	Status	Summary
1	22/03/2021	Wendy Southgate		

Reviewed By: Full Governing Body

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Vision Statement

At Southwood we foster a lifelong love of learning through an exciting, inspiring, challenging and motivating curriculum. We firmly believe that every child deserves the very best start in life and have high aspirations for all children.

Our policy aims to support educational achievement through:

- Ensuring smooth transition
- Promoting attendance
- Targeting support
- Having high expectations
- Achieving stability and continuity
- Early intervention and priority action
- Listening to children
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals.

Virtual Schools

The Virtual School for Looked after Children does not exist in real terms, or as a building. Children do not attend it – they remain the responsibility of the School at which they are enrolled. The Virtual School is simply an organisation which has been created for the effective co-ordination of education for looked after children.

The Virtual School operates to collate and track the information about children and young people who are looked after as if they were in a single school so that their progress can be closely tracked and supported and intervention can be targeted strategically.

The Hampshire Virtual School can be located at:

www.hants.gov.uk/cic-virtual-school
virtualschool@hants.gov.uk

The Reading Virtual School can be located at:

<https://brighterfuturesforchildren.org/services/virtual-school/>
virtualschool@brigherfuturesforchildren.org

School Responsibilities.

Head teacher.

- Identify a designated teacher for CLA
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusion of CLA and that appropriate action is taken.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of CLA. Annual report to County and Governors
- Ensure that staff receive training and are aware of their responsibilities.

Governing Body

- Identify a nominated governor for CLA

- Ensure that all Governors are aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of CLA (see appendix 1)
- Ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of CLA
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of CLA
- Ensure that School policies and procedures support the needs of CLA

Designated Teacher (Headteacher)

- Government guidance is that the Designated teacher should be '*someone with sufficient authority to make things happen... who should be an advocate for the CLA. Assessing services and support and ensuring the school shares and supports high expectation for them*'
- At Southwood the Designated teacher will be the Headteacher.

Governors should be aware that OFSTED will focus on CLA, monitoring how the school has promoted the inclusion and attainment of CLA pupils and effectiveness of the joint working with other services involved with them.

Guidelines.

Our designated teacher will:

- Ensure a warm welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan (PEP).
- Ensure regular communication with carers, social worker.
- Ensure that each CLA has an identified member of staff that they can talk to.
- Co-ordinate any support for CLA that is necessary within the school.
- Ensure confidentiality for CLA sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
- Act as an advisor to staff and governors, raising their awareness of the needs of the CLA.
- Be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving within or between key stages.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately.

All staff will:

- Maintain CLA confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Promote the self-esteem of all CLA
- Have high expectations of the educational and personal achievement of CLA, as for all pupils
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of CLA.

Guidance for the Nominated Governor for Children Look After

1) Summary from the statutory guidance for school's governing bodies

a. The role of the governing body

- The governing body must ensure that the designated teacher (for Children Looked After) undertakes appropriate training.
- As a minimum governors must consider an annual report from the designated teacher which contains the information described in section 2.10 of the guidance.
- The governing body and school leadership team should consider the report and act on any issues it raises so as to support the designated teacher and maximise the impact of the role

b. The role of the designated teacher within the school.

To take a lead responsibility for helping school staff understand the things which affect how looked after children learn and achieve.

The designated teacher should:

- Promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how looked after children learn.
- Make sure the young person has a voice in setting learning targets.
- Be a source of advice for staff about differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children and in making full use of Assessment for Learning.
- Make sure that looked after children are prioritised in one-to-one tuition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home.
- Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of the child's personal education plan (PEP) within the school.

2) Keeping the governing body informed.

- The governing body may want to appoint a nominated governor to meet, on a termly basis, with the schools designated teacher for Children Looked After. See overleaf for guidance/ questions to ask at the visit.
- The governing body can also keep up to date on anonymised issues relating to Children Looked After via the head teacher's report to the full governing body where numbers of children in care and related issues can be raised.
- In some cases schools include this information in the Designated Safeguarding Person's / **DSP** report to governors.
- One full governing body meeting a year should consider the Designated Teacher's statutory report to the school governing body and minute any resulting actions.

References

The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children.

Statutory guidance for school governing bodies 2009 ref: 01046-2009BKT-EN ISBN:

(<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/statutory/g00213127/looked-after-children>)

2. Supporting Looked After Learners: A practical guide for school governors 2006 (ref: 1929-2005DOC-EN or ISBN I-84478-638-

(<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20090809172013/dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/ig00029/>)

10 questions to be used by the nominated governor at a visit to the school's Designated Teacher (DT) for Children Looked After (CLA)

1. Has the Designated Teacher (DT) had appropriate training to carry out the role?
E.g. annual Virtual School DT conference / completion of DT ilearn module / other.

2. What arrangements are in place to allow the DT sufficient time and resources to discharge his/her responsibilities *as set out in the statutory guidance?* (e.g. to chair the PEP meetings, attend the Children Looked After (CLA) review meetings, liaise with staff etc)

3. How does the senior leadership team have oversight of this role and the progress of / issues for Children Looked After?

4. How does the DT manage the Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings?

[The DT should chair all PEP meetings, gathering the information ready for the meeting, talking to the child to obtain his/her views and following up of the PEP action plan after meeting]

5. How are staff informed about Children Looked after? And how do they find out about:

- The name of the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After and who else performs elements of this role?
- The children in their class (if any) who are Looked After?
- Personalised strategies to use in class and around school.

6. What training have staff had on Children Looked After? (they could do the ILearn module together or would they like some input from the Virtual School?)

7. How does the school support a child who is in care and new to the school to quickly feel at home?

8. How are additional resources that come into the school for Children Looked After used to raise achievement? i.e CLA funding of just over £1000 per CLA and (from April 2011) the pupil premium (£430 and rising in future years).

9. Are there any school related issues that prevent Children Looked After from achieving?

10. What arrangements are in place that have contributed to successful provision and / or the child / Children Looked After making good or better than expected progress?