



Chesterton Community College

**Policy for Looked After Children
May 2017**

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1. Why we have this policy

A 'Looked After Child' is a child who is in the care of the Local Authority (in our case, Cambridgeshire County Council). This may be as a result of a voluntary agreement with parents, or as a result of a care order. A child will stop being 'looked after' when they are either returned home, adopted or become 18.

The Local Authority is the 'corporate parent' for Looked After Children. This means that in any situations involving such children where Chesterton Community College would usually involve parents, seek parental permission or ask for support and advice from parents, we should approach the Local Authority.

As a school we are committed to supporting the Local Authority in their corporate parenting role and to do all that we can to promote the educational achievement and well-being of looked after children who attend our school. This policy sets out how we will do this. The provisions outlined in this policy will be put in place regardless of whether there are any looked after children currently on the school roll.

2. Key people

Our designated teacher for looked after children is:-
Lynsey Rooker

Our designated governor for looked after children is:-
Shahida Rahman

3. Enhanced support for Looked After Children

3.1 The Governing Body and School will ensure that high quality learning opportunities and education are provided for all our pupils, with equality of access to opportunities and learning outcomes for all.

3.2 We recognise that Looked After Children can be especially vulnerable and are sometimes at risk of failure in the learning context.

3.3 Therefore with specific reference to this cohort of children we will strive to achieve the following aims:-

- To ensure that all Looked After Children have access to a broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum.
- To provide a personalised learning and curriculum appropriate to needs and ability.
- To support and monitor their social progress, ensuring key adults prioritise respectful and responsive relationship building with individual children and provide appropriate support for social development within the peer group.
- To ensure that Looked After Children receive full time and appropriate education each week.

- To ensure that Looked After Children take as full a part as possible in all school activities and strive to reduce and eliminate any barriers that may stop them from taking part.
- To ensure that carers, social workers and parents (as appropriate) of Looked After pupils are involved and kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment.
- To ensure that wherever appropriate Looked After Children are involved in decisions affecting their learning, the plans for progress and future provision.
- To ensure that success is appropriately recognised and reinforced.
- To ensure that any emerging concerns are followed up in a timely way with skill and sensitivity (e.g. changes in patterns of behaviour and attendance).
- To liaise and cooperate with appropriate partners, in particular the Virtual School, to ensure that all plans complement and support the promotion of the educational achievement and well-being of Looked After Children. (The Virtual School is a team of specialists whose role is to support and challenge the professionals involved with Cambridgeshire Looked After Children in order to ensure that these children receive an education that best meets their needs and that they achieve their potential.)
- To ensure all school policies and procedures are followed sensitively for Looked After Children.

4. Admissions to our School

4.1 The Governing Body supports the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 in that 'Children in public care have the highest priority in their admission arrangements.'

4.2 Our school will ensure that Looked After Children are named a first priority within our school written admissions criteria.

4.3 Sometimes care placement changes lead to Looked After Children entering school mid-term or mid-year if this is thought to be in the best interests of the child. We will ensure that in these circumstances Looked After Children are admitted to the school in a timely manner. As necessary, we will give a positive welcome, plan entry, offer additional support and pre-entry visits to help pupils settle into school.

4.4 We will work with the Virtual School when a pupil is leaving to ensure that it is made as positive an event as possible e.g. leaving events, farewells, information transfer etc.

5. Inclusion and Allocation of Resources

5.1 All pupils at our school are entitled to a balanced, broadly based, and stimulating curriculum and learning programme.

5.2 For Looked After Children there can often be a need to develop learning opportunities emphasising personalised planning and planned inclusive approaches.

5.3 The Governing Body will ensure our school makes all appropriate learning provision for Looked After pupils. Resources will be allocated to support Looked After Children in line with this policy and with our wider school teaching and learning policies and good practice.

5.4 The Pupil Premium Plus funding allocated by the Head of the Virtual School for Looked After Children will be used to support the individual learning programmes of the Looked After Children in the school. This will be monitored as part of the Personal Education Plan (PEP) process to show impact on learning.

6. Monitoring the Progress of Looked After Children

6.1 Progress for Looked After pupils in school is identified, monitored and supported and is guided by school policies for teaching and learning.

6.2 We will monitor and track the achievement and attainment of Looked After pupils at least termly. This will be formally reported to the Virtual School.

6.3 We will ensure that an assessment is made of the pupil's needs and attainment on entry, to ensure continuity of learning.

6.4 The PEP is key to the planning and monitoring of education for a Looked After Child and governors are aware that they are statutory school documents.

6.5 The Designated Teacher, working with the Virtual School, will ensure there is a PEP in place for all Looked After Children in school.

6.6 The Designated Teacher will coordinate and lead PEP meetings within statutory timelines and ensure the attendance of appropriate staff.

7. Attendance and Exclusion

7.1 The school will monitor the attendance of Looked After Children and will notify all appropriate partners at an early stage if there is an indication that problems with attendance might occur.

7.2 Cambridgeshire County Council has a contract with Welfare Call Limited. A member of the Welfare Call team will call all schools with Cambridgeshire Looked After Children daily to ascertain attendance. The school will ensure this information is provided promptly and accurately.

7.3 The school will take all reasonable steps to ensure that exclusion is rarely used for looked after children and then is always only as a last resort, after all other avenues have been explored. The school will advise the Virtual School if there is a possibility of exclusion and discuss options with the Cambridgeshire Inclusion manager.

7.4 The school will make arrangements for first day provision for any excluded looked after child as it would for any non Looked After Children pupil after day 6 of exclusion.

8. Record Keeping and Information Sharing

8.1 The Designated Teacher will coordinate record keeping for all looked after children in school. This will involve consultation with the Virtual School who will be able to advise on specific and appropriate contacts.

8.2 Records will include, up to date progress and attainment records, PEP planning records and personalised information relating to care context as appropriate. These records will be maintained in a single place, having regard to the statutory nature of some of these documents and the confidential information that they contain.

8.3 Looked After Child status will be appropriately 'flagged' in school management information systems, ensuring information and planning records are readily available as required.

8.4 The Designated Teacher will ensure there is ready access to information and up to date contact details for carers, parents (where appropriate), social worker and the named contact in the Virtual School.

8.5 All appropriate records will be forwarded to the receiving school promptly if there is a transfer to another school.

8.6 Sensitivity is a priority in sharing information with members of the school staff team. We are guided by best practice and use a 'need to know'. Wherever possible pupils' wishes are taken into account in sharing information within the staff team.

8.7 Any incidents of bullying of the Looked After Child or by the Looked After Child will be formally recorded and noted in the PEP and review processes.

9. Appointments within Staff and Governing Body

9.1 The school will adhere to the statutory requirement to appoint a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children. This person will be a qualified teacher and ideally a senior person within the school.

9.2 All staff and governors have a responsibility for the educational achievement and well being of Looked After Children. The work of the Designated Teacher with responsibility for Looked After Children is to lead in this area, but they do not hold sole responsibility.

10. Staff and Governors' Development and Training

10.1 The Designated Teacher will make particular efforts to develop good awareness and understanding of issues, guidance and developments associated with the Looked After Children context. The Designated Teacher will disseminate knowledge and skills to colleagues in school as appropriate and necessary. Partnership working and collaboration with the Local Authority, the Virtual School and other professionals will be a priority.

10.2 The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children will be released to attend a programme of training each year to maintain and extend their personal expertise.

10.3 The Designated Governor will attend appropriate briefings and relevant development opportunities provided by the Local Authority and the Virtual School.

11. Partnership Working

11.1 The school values the views of carers and parents, corporate parents, residential care workers and other specialists to enable pupils to achieve their potential.

11.2 We will develop close relationships and collaborative work to promote the learning and well being of individual children, both in and out of school. PEP meetings, other school liaison and consultation processes and informal day to day dialogue are all seen as good opportunities to enhance our partnerships.

11.3 We recognise the essential contributions that external support services make in supporting Looked After Children. We commit to developing positive partnerships with all involved. Our partnerships with community partners are extensive; some of our key partners for these children include:

The Virtual School, Social Care, Family Workers, Education Psychologists, SEND teams, CAMH, Education Welfare Officers, youth offending service, locality teams and advocacy services.

Date this Policy was adopted:-

Date of Review:-

Signed: Chair of Governors

Signed: Head Teacher