



Looked After Children Policy

December 2023

We are a Rights Respecting School with No Outsiders.

Morals & Values Framework

Whitley Village Primary School strives to ensure that the culture and ethos is one in which, whatever the heritage and origins of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect.

The Headteacher, Head of School & a Family Liaison Officers (who is based at The Acorns) liaise on a regular basis with our partners in Social Care & other Agencies and makes every effort to attend all Child in Care and PEP meetings. Good relationships with the children's carers are also given high priority.

Background

The 1989 Children Act introduced the concept of Corporate Parenting – central to supporting and improving the education of children in public care.

“Corporate Parenting emphasises the collective responsibility of local authorities to achieve good parenting – the whole authority includes the Education Department as well as Social Services and schools also have a key role to play”.

At Whitley Village Primary School, we recognise our responsibilities towards those members of the school community who fall within the category of 'Looked After Children' (LAC).

Article 20: If a child cannot be looked after by their immediate family, the government must give them special protection and assistance.

This policy sets out the procedures we have, when required, in place to safeguard the educational interests of those children and to achieve the positive outcomes of Every Child Matters.

The school will ensure that all children have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) within 20 days of entering care or joining the school. These are completed by school and updated on a termly basis.

The designated teacher with responsibility for LAC is Russell David (Head of School).

The designated governor with responsibility for LAC is Dawn Gelder, who is also the Safeguarding Governor.

Roles and responsibilities

Designated Teacher

- to familiarise staff and governors of their role as corporate parents
- to ensure that all staff (teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the difficulties faced by Looked After children

- to promote positive support systems for Looked After children
- to maintain a register of Looked After Children
- to keep all relevant education and care information about Looked After children up to date
- to ensure education records are received/passed on if a Looked After child transfers school
- to monitor the educational progress, levels of attainment of Looked After children
- to intervene if there is evidence of individual under-achievement
- to facilitate the child/young person being able to state to whom he/she would like information about his/her care status to be passed on
- to ensure that appropriate levels of confidentiality are maintained for the child/young person
- to enable the child/young person to make a contribution to his/her Personal Education Plan and/or Care Plans
- to facilitate the setting up and updating of Personal Education Plans
- to attend and chair the PEP meetings, or to contribute in other ways, to Social Care Planning Meetings and/or statutory reviews if unable to attend
- to monitor attendance of Looked After Children, recording and reporting absence on a day to day basis.

Designated Governor

The designated governor monitors policy and practice in school to ensure that:

- there is a designated teacher for children in Cheshire West and Chester's Care
- children in care have equal access to all aspects of school life, including the National Curriculum, examinations, careers guidance, extra-curricular activities, work experience and additional educational support
- there is an ethos of support and acceptance in the school for children who do not live with their birth families
- targets for children in care are realistic but aspirations for these pupils shall be high
- where the child/young person is at risk of exclusion, or excluded, they shall be treated in the same way and offered the same support as any other pupil.
- Meets with the EHT / HoS on a termly basis.

All Staff

- to ensure appropriately high expectations of Looked After Children
- to be aware that, for many Looked After Children, bullying is an issue; ensure that the school's Preventing & Tackling Bullying Policy operates
- to consider how extra academic and pastoral support can be provided for Looked After Children if it is needed
- to ensure that Looked After Children have every opportunity to participate fully in school life, if appropriate to use Pupil Premium money. The Team Leader, Nicky Downey, is responsible for the use of funds from 'Pupil Premium Plus'
- to ensure there is sensitivity to the background of Looked After Children in teaching, especially in work on families and/or family trees
- to respect the confidentiality of Looked After Children and ensure that any information is shared strictly on a need-to-know basis

Article 39: Children who have experienced neglect, abuse or exploitation must receive special support to help them recover their health, dignity, self-respect and social life.

This follows the recommendations provided by the 2005 Statutory Guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004.

Staff and governors may access this guidance Online at www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications ref 2083-2005-DOC-EN ISBN 1-84478-639-0 or www.everychildmatters.gov.uk