

Woodmancote School

Children in Care Policy

Designated Member of Staff: Mrs A Greening/Clare Spiller

Context and Principles

Nationally, Children in Care significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. We acknowledge that schools have a major part to play in ensuring that Children in Care are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make positive contribution to society and achieve economic well being.

Helping Children in Care succeed and provide a better future for them is a key priority for Woodmancote This policy takes account of all related legislation and guidance.

Woodmancote School's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Children in Care is based on the following principles:

- Having high expectations
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes
- Promoting attendance
- Early intervention and priority action
- Targeting support
- Minimising exclusions
- Achieving continuity and promoting stability
- Listening to children
- Promoting a wider learning experience
- Promoting health and well being
- Working in Partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals

Actions

As for all our pupils, Woodmancote School is committed to helping every looked after child to achieve the highest standards they can, including out of school activities and supporting career aspirations for further and higher education. This can be measured by improvements in their achievement and attendance.

The Governing Body of Woodmancote School is committed to providing quality education for all pupils and will adhere to the following statutory requirements in respect of looked after children:

Ensure a designated Teacher for Children in Care is identified and enabled to carry out the responsibilities set out below. (Anona Greening)

Ensure a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is put in place, implemented and regularly reviewed in line with statutory and Newham guidance on PEP's for every child. This will be the responsibility of the Designated Teacher.

Identify a Nominated Governor for Children in Care (Clare Spiller)

This policy links with a number of other school policies and it is important that Governors have regard to the needs of looked after children when reviewing them:

- School Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Home School Agreement
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Equalities Policies
- Policy on Racial Harassment
- Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy

Woodmancote School will ensure that the needs of children in care are reflected in all aspects of our provision e.g. through assemblies, PHSCE etc. We will raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them, in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest possible level.

Responsibility of the Head Teacher

1. Identify a designated teacher for Children in Care, whose role is set out below. Cover arrangements will need to be in place should the designated teacher not be available to carry out these legal duties. If this occurs responsibility passes to the Senior Leadership Team.
2. Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor and track the admission progress, attendance and exclusions (if any) of children and that appropriate action is taken where outcomes fall below expectations.
3. Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of children via Premises Committee
4. Ensure that all staff receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance where appropriate.

Responsibility of the Governing Body

1. Identify a Nominated Governor
2. Ensure that all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of children
3. Ensure the school has an overview of the needs of all needs regardless of the originating authority.
4. Allocate resources to meet the needs of children.
5. Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.

<http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/vschool/article/114392/School-Governor-for-Looked-After-Children>

This Governing Body will:

1. Monitor the academic progress of children, through an annual report from the Head Teacher.
2. Ensure, where relevant, that children are given top priority when applying for places in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria.
3. Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school, by ensuring the school implements policies, practices and procedures to ensure children achieve and enjoy their time at the school.
4. Ensure the school has a designated teacher and that they are enabled and supported, along with the Head Teacher and other staff, to carry out their responsibilities as below.

5. Ensure systems are in place to share the above annually in line with current statutory requirements.
6. In addition to the report, to provide information to the Local Authority as and when requested.
7. Receive a report each year setting out:
 - The number of pupils on roll (if any) and dates of joining and/or leaving.
 - Their attendance, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils
 - Their results in SATs, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
 - The number and duration of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any) as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
 - The destination of pupils who leave the school
 - 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

Government guidance says that the designated teacher should be 'someone with sufficient authority to make things happen; who should be an advocate for children in care, accessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them.'

It is strongly recommended that this person should be a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Specialist training advice and support will be given by The Virtual School. It should also be noted that the remit of OFSTED inspectors and School Improvement Partners now includes a specific focus on children in care, monitoring how the school has promoted their inclusion and attainment, and the effectiveness of joint working with other services involved with them.

Our Designated Teacher will:

1. Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan (PEP) to plan that transition with the child's social worker.
2. Ensure the a PEP is completed with child, their social worker(if applicable), carer and other relevant people at least 2 weeks before the statutory reviews.
3. Ensure that each child has an identified member of staff they can talk to: this needs not be the designated teacher, as it will be based on the child's own situation and wishes. It should be noted that members of staff who take on this role may also need to make use of appropriate support from the school's pastoral staff and Designated Safeguarding Lead (GTucker)
4. Track academic and other progress and target support appropriately.
5. Co-ordinate any support for children that is necessary within the school and from outside.
6. Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
7. Facilitate and encourage children to join extra-curricular activities and maximise out of school learning opportunities e.g. 'gifted and talented'
8. Ensure as far as possible attendance at planning and review meetings.
9. Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising awareness of the achievements as well as needs of children in care.
10. Set up timely meetings with relevant parties, (e.g. carer, social worker, birth family, other professionals), where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or at risk of exclusion.

11. Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and where appropriate between schools.
12. Be pro-active in supporting transitions and planning when moving to a new phase in their education.
13. Promote inclusion in all areas of school life.
14. Be aware that 60% of children in care nationally say that they are bullied, so will actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy.

The responsibilities of all Staff

All our staff will:

1. Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of children in care, as for all pupils.
2. Maintain their confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
3. Respond positively to a pupil's request to be the named member of staff whom they can talk to when they feel it necessary.
4. Respond promptly to the designated teacher's requests for information.
5. Work to enable looked after children achieve stability and success within the school.
6. Promote the self-esteem of children in care.
7. Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of children in care
8. Be aware that 60% of children in care say they are bullied, so work to prevent bullying in line with the school's policy.

The Head Teacher will ensure that all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

Date: March 2011

Signed..... (Chair of Premises)

Reviewed: March 2012

Reviewed: November 2014