

BROOKVALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN and PREVIOUSLY CHILDREN in CARE POLICY

OVERVIEW

In Brookvale Primary School we will ensure this policy should be a working document and that is fit for purpose, represents the school ethos, enables consistency and quality across the school and is related to the following legislation:

- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015
- The designated teacher for looked after and previously looked-after children - Statutory Guidance 2018

We understand that children or young people who have been taken into care by the local authority or who have a voluntary care arrangement are known as 'Looked After'. This is because of either family breakdown, abuse, neglect or social need. Looked After Children will either be living in foster homes, children's residential homes, living with a relative or with their natural parent(s).

We are committed to providing quality education for all our pupils including Looked After Children. It is nationally recognised that Looked After Children significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion when compared with their peers. Therefore, we believe we have a duty 'to safeguard Looked After Children, to promote their educational achievements and to ensure they are able to achieve and reach their full potential'. (Children Act 2004)

OBJECTIVES

- To promote the educational achievements of Looked After Children by ensuring they are able to achieve and reach their full potential.
- To help children who are looked after make positive life choices.
- To ensure children in care are 'given priority access to mental health assessments.
- To give priority consideration to Looked After Children in the school's oversubscription criteria.
- To protect children from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.
- To work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

STRATEGIES

The Governing Body and Headteacher will ensure that:

- the Looked After Children policy is implemented;
- a designated teacher is in place who is an advocate for Looked After Children;
- appropriate support and training is provided for the Looked After Children teacher;
- ensure all school personnel and parents/ carers are aware of and comply with this policy;
- all staff receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities;
- in the event of oversubscription priority is given to Looked After Children;
- effective practice is provided for Looked After Children by:

doing the things we do for all children but more so;

- utilising the support of our Learning Mentor and Behaviour Support
- balancing high levels of support with real challenge; SEAL Programmes/ Support Plans
- skilfully linking each child to a key person they relate well to;
- making it a priority to know the children well and to build strong relationships;
- developing strong partnerships with carers, local authorities and specialist agencies ;
- making things happen and seeing things through;
- ensuring consistency as well as discrete flexibility;
- actively extending the horizons of each child;
- planning for future transitions.

- effective tracking procedures are in place to monitor, admissions, attendance, exclusions, progress, behaviour and support;
- data (Highlighted on Vulnerable Tracking) and other pupil information is in place to create an accurate record that can be handed on to the next school;
- effective behaviour management systems and measures are in place to support pupil well-being;
- a PEP (Personal Education Plan) is in place for all Looked After Children drawn up in consultation with the local authority;
- any issues as highlighted in the annual report from the designated teacher are acted on;
- children in care are given priority access to mental health assessments and are never refused care based on their placement or severity of their condition;
- there are good links with local support agencies especially Social Services;
- Looked After Children are involved in planning and decision making in regard to their education and their personal development;
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- work closely with the link governor, the Designated Teacher and Learning Mentor;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy;

The Governing Body receives an annual report that outlines the following:

- the number of Looked After Children in the school
- an analysis of test scores, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils
- attendance figures compared to other pupils
- the level of fixed term and permanent exclusions compared to other pupils
- the number of complaints
- the destinations of Looked After Children pupils when they leave the school

ROLE OF DESIGNATED TEACHER

- will be responsible for helping school personnel understand how Looked After Children learn and achieve;
- promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how Looked After Children learn;
- provide advice for school personnel about differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children and in making full use of Assessment for Learning;
- ensure Looked After Children are prioritised in one-to-one tuition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home;
- ensure all Looked After Children and their carers receive a positive and smooth induction into the school;
- be responsible for the development and implementation of the child's personal education plan (PEP) within the school;
- ensure an appropriate Personal Education Plan is completed within 20 days of Looked After Children joining the school or entering care;
- ensure each Looked After Child has an identified fully trained member of staff, other than the Designated Teacher, that they can talk to;
- ensure strong and positive home/school relationships are in place;

- ensure Looked After Children are included in all areas of school life;
- ensure Looked After Children are not bullied in any form by actively monitoring and preventing bullying by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy;
- ensure all school personnel and governors are kept up to date on all issues relevant to Looked After Children and receive the necessary training;
- ensure all Looked After Children receive the necessary support within the school;
- ensure strong links are in place with all agencies dealing with Looked After Children;

PARENTS/ CARERS WILL:

- be aware of and comply with this policy;
- work in partnership with the school;
- comply with this policy for the benefit of their children;
- be asked to take part periodic surveys conducted by the school;
- support the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure smooth running of the school.

PUPILS WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO:

- be confident about themselves and to understand that they are able to achieve and reach their full potential;
- participate in discussions concerning their progress and attainment;
- work in partnership with the school by making decisions and exercising choice in relation to their educational programme;
- discuss improvements to this policy during the school year;
- review the effectiveness of this policy with the Governing Body.

TRAINING

All school personnel:

- have equal chances of training, career development and promotion
- receive training on induction which specifically covers:
 - All aspects of this policy
 - Special Educational Needs
 - Safeguarding and Child Protection
 - Inclusion
 - Equal opportunities
 - Inclusion
- receive periodic training so that they are kept up to date with new information
- receive equal opportunities training on induction in order to improve their understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and its implications.

MONITORING EFFECTIVENESS OF THE POLICY

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the coordinator, the Headteacher and the nominated governor. A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Governing Body for further discussion and endorsement.

LINKED POLICIES

- Inclusion
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Special Educational Needs

Revised and adopted by the Governing Body March 2018

