

Education of Children Looked After

Who are our Looked After Children?

Children and young people become ‘Looked After’ either if they have been taken into Care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). The Government terminology for these children is “CLA”: “Children Looked After”. Children Looked After will be living in foster homes, a children’s home, living with a relative or even be placed back at home with their natural parent(s). Children Looked After will have a Social Worker who arranges their care plan.

The governing body of Kenmore Park Infant & Nursery School is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. This governing body recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of Looked After Children, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in DCFS guidance for ‘Improving the attainment of Looked After Children in Primary Schools’ (2009) which states:-

- Doing the things they do for all children but more so;
- Balancing high levels of support with real challenge;
- 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.

(UNCRC Article 28: Every Child has a right to an education).

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

The Designated Teacher for CLA is the Inclusion manager Mr. Snowden.

The Designated Teacher should:

- Be an advocate for Looked After Children, helping school staff to understand the things which affect how Children Looked After learn and achieve;
- Liaise with the Virtual School Manager in Harrow to ensure best practice and specific resources are targeted at specific children. (Virtual School information <https://www.harrow.gov.uk/www2/documents/s127716/8%20-%20Corporate%20Parenting%20Strategy.pdf>)
- Plan carefully for any transitions, arranging additional visits to the new school and considering creating ‘Hello/Goodbye scrapbooks’ when pupils are moving schools;
- Ensure a smooth and welcoming induction for the child and carer/s (and parent/s where possible). Note any specific requirements, including care status;
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed (within 20 days of entering care or joining a new school). This should be prepared with the child and the carer/s (and parent/s if possible), in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies.

Where appropriate, the PEP should take account of any Individual Educational Plan (IEP), Pastoral Support Plan (PSP), or other relevant plans. The PEP should inform and be reviewed. The child should have a voice in setting learning targets;

- Ensure that each Looked After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to;
- Track progress of CLA, ensuring they are on track to achieving their targets, and, if not, work with staff and the pupil to devise the best strategy to secure progress;
- Ensure entry to examinations for all CLA;
- Co-ordinate support for the child in the school, ensuring that a range of intervention strategies are used to address both social and academic needs;
- Encourage Children Looked After to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning;
- Make sure that Children Looked After are prioritised in one-to-one tuition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home;
- Liaise with Family Liaison Officer to ensure the needs of the child are met and carers have full information about the children in their care.
- Ensure staff and governors receive relevant information and training. Be a source of advice for staff about differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual teaching strategies and in making full use of Assessment for Learning;
- Ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis;
- Develop strong partnerships with carers, local authorities and other specialist agencies, particularly during challenging periods;
- Link with the HISP coordinator to ensure best practise is maintained
- Provide written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible;
- Seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded;

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SENCO

The SENCo should:

- Ensure regular assessments are carried out on LAC and results available for all PEP/LAC meetings;
- Prioritise LAC for Educational Psychologist visits, if expected progress is not being made.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF

All staff should:

- Have high aspirations and celebrate the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children;
- Signal changes in daily routine to pupils, at least a day in advance, informing carers so this can be reinforced at home;
- Be perceptive of situations which could prove difficult for Children Looked After and take time to prepare them on an individual basis;

- Be familiar with the Guidance on Children Looked After and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings;
- Develop strong relationships with carers, particularly during challenging periods;
- Liaise with the Designated Teacher where a Looked After Child is experiencing difficulty;
- Ensure entry to examinations for CLA

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNING BODY

The governing body should:

- Ensure that admission criteria prioritise Looked After Children, according to the Code of Practice on Admissions;
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Looked After Children;
- Ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Children Looked After who undertakes appropriate training;
- Nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives at least yearly progress reports, and provides feedback to the governing body. Currently this is R Goel. (For child protection and confidentiality reasons, ensure that information will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity, and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned);
- Consider the report and act on any issues it raises so as to support the Designated Teacher;
- Ensure that the school's other policies and procedures give CLA equal access, or priority to: the National Curriculum and public examinations; additional academic or social/emotional support, where this is needed; and extra-curricular activities;
- Find viable alternatives to fixed-term and permanent exclusion.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HEAD TEACHER

The Head Teacher should:

- Ensure that all staff prioritise the personal, emotional and academic needs of Looked After Children;
- Ensure that all staff understand the things which affect how Children Looked After learn and achieve, and receive appropriate training to ensure that CLA achieve their full potential;
- Find viable alternatives to fixed-term and permanent exclusions.

Original date of policy: October 2013

Person Responsible: Inclusion Manager

Date approved by Governing Body: 12th October 2016

Review date: October 2018