

Cape Primary School Child in Care Policy



Approved by: Outcomes **Date:** 26/11/24

Last reviewed on: November 2023

Next review due by: November 2025

Change Log:

Date	By Who	Comment
November 24	S. Baker	Date change – KCSiE September 2024, Working Together To Safeguard Children 2023

INTRODUCTION

The governing body of Cape Primary 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 children in residential and foster care, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in 'Promoting the education of Children in Care and previously Children in Care Statutory guidance for local authorities February 2018' and Section 52 of the Children Act 2004. Children who are "looked after" may be "Accommodated" "In Care" or "remanded/ detained" DCSF Guidance for Children in Care 2018, as follows:

Accommodated (Section 20)

This is a voluntary arrangement, because parents are ill, missing, unable to cope, or as part of a child protection plan negotiated with the family. The parents retain parental responsibility.

In Care

A child is in care only if a court has granted a Care Order which it will issue if it believes a child to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. A care order generally gives parental responsibility to the local authority, or shares this with the parents.

Remanded/Detained

A child can be remanded or detained as in the following:

- an emergency protection order
- removed by police using their powers of protection
- remanded by a court following criminal charges
- a court directing a social services department to accommodate a child (already on a supervision order for criminal behaviour) for up to six months.

Children in Care may (or may not) have some or all the following issues:

- low self esteem
- poor education standards due to time out of school
- delayed social/emotional/ cognitive development
- be bullied or bully others
- be prone to mental health issues
- be isolated with few friends
- have behaviour issues
- poor attachments to others
- have a need to be very private.

This makes them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life-chances. The governing body of Cape Primary School, is committed to ensuring that these children are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following are in place, and are working effectively:

- a Designated Teacher for Children in Care
- Personal Education Plans for all Children in Care
- all staff have a clear understanding of confidentiality and issues that affect Children in Care and previously Children in Care
- effective strategies that supports the education of this vulnerable group.

Please see DFE guidance:

'Promoting the education of Children in Care and previously Children in Care Statutory guidance for local authorities February 2018'

'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023'

'Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2024'

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

The Designated Teacher should:

- be an advocate for Children in Care (and children previously Looked After);
- when new to the school, ensure a smooth and welcome induction for the child and carer, and note any specific requirements, including care status;
- ensure that a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is completed, as soon as possible. This should be prepared with the child and the carer, in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies, and be linked to the Care Plan meetings, within 28 days, 3 months and 6 months and, at least, every 6 months;
- keep PEPs and other records up to date, particularly in time to inform review meetings;
- ensure that each child in public care (if they wish) has an identified member of staff that they can talk to (this should be based on the child's request, and may not necessarily be the Designated Teacher);
- co-ordinate support for the child in the school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary;
- request support from the SENCO and/or outside agencies, including the LACE Service/Virtual Head Teacher, if a looked after child requires additional academic or behavioural support
- ensure staff receive relevant information and training and act as an advisor to staff and governors;
- ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis;
- provide written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible;
- ensure that the child and carer(s) receive early notification of meetings, parents evenings and other events and that communication remains regular and positive;
- encourage Children in Care to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning, where feasible;
- ensure speedy transfer of information between individuals and other relevant agencies and to a new school if and when the child transfers;
- seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded.

The named Designated Teacher for Cape Primary School is Miss W Richmond.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF

- ensure that any child in public care is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained;
- be familiar with the and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings;
- respond positively to a child in public care's request to be the named person that they can talk to when they feel it is necessary;
- contribute to the Designated Teacher's requests for information on educational attainment and needs, as appropriate;
- as with all children, ensure that no child in public care is stigmatised in any way;
- provide a supportive climate to enable a child in public care to achieve stability within the school setting;
- as with all children, have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Children in Care and previously Looked After
- positively promote the self-esteem of Children in Care and previously Looked After.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNING BODY

The governing body of this school will:

- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Children in Care;
- be aware of whether the school has Children in Care and how many (no names);
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Children in Care;
- liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out her/his responsibilities in relation to Children in Care;
- support the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of Children in Care are met;
- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body (These reports should not include any names of individual children for child protection, GDPR and confidentiality reasons)
- review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- information on Children in Care will be shared with school staff on a “need to know basis”
- the Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with which school staff at the PEP meeting.
- Once this has been agreed with the social worker, carer, young person, and other parties, complete confidentiality is to be maintained.

TRAINING:

The Head Teacher or the Designated Teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

PERSONAL EDUCATION PLAN (PEP) COMPLETION

- Social worker informs school of a child becoming looked after (or a Children in Care entering the school)
- Date is set for the completion of a Personal Education Plan (PEP).
- At Cape Primary we follow the guidance of the Local Authority in which the child is placed for completing the relevant paperwork in preparation of the meeting. Key information reported is; attendance, academic achievement, pastoral development, the child’s voice, the voice of the carer and professionals. Targets are set for the child and actions put in place.
- A date is set for the next pep meeting
- Personal Education Plan is taken to the child’s statutory review and discussed within the wider context of the child’s life
- The child’s voice must be captured at each meeting

It will also identify targets that will be reviewed during the next PEP meeting

Admission/Induction Arrangements

Children in Care are a priority for admission and, as such, we will follow the LA’s published Admissions Policy (prior to admission the social worker will contact/meet with the Designated Teacher to put into place any considerations for a smoother transition).

On admission, the child will meet with the designated teacher and their named member of staff. They will discuss any relevant issues, academic or pastoral, and ensure the child is made to feel comfortable in our school. Records will be requested from the child’s previous school and as soon as

practicable after they are received a meeting will be held with the carer / parent, social worker, and other relevant professionals, and child as appropriate. This will provide information to inform the child's new Personal Education Plan, and ensure that communication systems are established early. In the first PEP meeting, we will seek clarification from the social worker as to who requires school reports and who may give permission for school trips or other such activities. At this meeting any means of communication to aid the fluid exchange of information between statutory meetings will be discussed and agreed (such as a home/school book to detail any sudden significant changes in a child's circumstances.)

School Trips and Special Activities

Given the delays that Children in Care experience in getting parental consent for school trips and activities, we will aim to ensure that Children in Care enjoy the same extra-curricular opportunities as other children by reserving placements for them on trips or on activities.

Complaints

If a young person, Parent, Carer or Social Worker wishes to complain about the provision or policy, they should in the first instance raise it with the Designated Teacher, who will try to resolve the situation.

If the issue cannot be resolved within 10 days, the young person, Parent, Carer or Social Worker can submit a formal complaint in writing to the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher will investigate the complaint and respond within 10 working days.

Any issue that remains unresolved at this stage should be addressed through a meeting in order to assess the impact of any such complaint upon the young person's education. This meeting may include the named Governor and any other outside agency that both parties deem necessary to attend. This meeting should normally be held within 10 working days of the Head Teacher's response. The School's complaints policy will be followed.