

Policy for Young People in Care

Looked After Children

a) The Objective

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of children in Care

b) The Name of the Designated Teacher

KRIS STALLMAN

c) The Role of the Designated Teacher

Within school Systems:

- To ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by children and young people 'looked –after' and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them.
- To inform members of staff of the general educational needs of children who are looked-after and to promote the involvement of these children in school homework clubs, extra curricular activities home reading schemes, school councils, etc.
- To act as an advocate for children and young people in Care
- To develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers, and the Children and Young People's Service
- To hold a supervisory brief for all children in Care, e.g. to ensure all relevant education and care information is available to school staff and carer's and that this information is kept up to date.
- To monitor the educational progress of all children in Care to inform the school's development plan.
- To intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement, absence from school or truancy.
- To ensure the involvement of the Connexions Service.

Work with Individual Children in Care:

- To work with individual children, possibly through a carer, to arrive at a statement about their circumstances that they would be happy to share with staff and/or pupils.
- To enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their Care Plan.
- To help ensure that each pupil has a Personal Education Plan. [The PEP should be initiated by the young person's Social Worker].
- To ensure that a Home-School Agreement is drawn up with the primary carer and signed by the Social Worker.
- To supervise the smooth induction of a new looked-after child into the school.

Liaison:

- To liaise with the member of staff responsible for monitoring children subject to a Child Protection Plan
- To help co-ordinate education and PEP review meetings, so that the Personal Education Plan (PEP) can inform the child's Care Plan.
- To attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or contribute in other ways to Statutory Review meetings
- To be the named contact for colleagues in the Children and Young People's Service.
- To ensure the speedy transfer of information between agencies and individuals, and report on the progress of children in Care

Training:

- To develop knowledge of Education of children in care procedures by attending training events.
- To cascade training to school staff as appropriate.

d) The Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body should receive reports on an annual basis

- The number of looked after pupils in the school
- A comparison of test scores as a discrete group, compared with those of other pupils;
- The attendance of pupils as a discrete group, compared to other pupils;
- The level of fixed term/permanent exclusions
- Pupil destinations.

The Governing Body should be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that looked after pupils have equal access to:

- The National Curriculum
- Public examinations
- Connexions
- Additional educational support
- Extra curricular activities
- Work experience.

The Governing Body may carry out their functions:

- a) As a whole Governing Body by receiving information in the Head Teacher's Report.
- b) By having a named Governor, who links with the school on children in public care and reports back to the Governing Body; named Governor: **Allan Humphris**
- c) A committee is given the function and reports back to the Governing Body via it's committee minutes

e) Responsibility for Children in Care in School

It is important that all teaching staff who are in contact with the child or young person are aware that he/she is being looked after by the Local Authority. The responsibility for the transfer of this information should be that of the Head Teacher and/or Designated Teacher for Looked- After Children.

It is appropriate for a classroom support assistant to have knowledge that the young person is being looked after only when directly involved in the teaching of the young person.

In the absence of the usual class teacher, some information regarding the child's circumstances should be shared with the teacher covering the class. The extent of this sharing should be determined by the Head Teacher or the Designated Teacher

f) Admission Arrangements

On admission records will be requested from the pupil's previous school and a meeting will be held with carer/parent/Social Worker as appropriate – but always involving someone with parental responsibility. This will provide information to inform the Personal Education Plan. An appropriate school induction will take place.

g) Involving the young person

It is important that a young person is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. How this is shared with them clearly depends

on their age and understanding. The explanation should emphasise that the school, Social Worker, and their carer(s) are working together to promote their education.

It is important to establish the child's view of their changed circumstances and what they want others to know. It is also important to ensure that a Social Worker/Teacher/Carer prepares the child for situations when they may be asked about home, e.g. by other pupils in the playground.

h) Communication with other Agencies

Schools should ensure that a copy of all reports [e.g. end of year reports] should be forwarded to the young person's Social Worker in addition to the Foster Carer or Residential Child Care Officer. It is good practice to discuss with the Social Worker who should receive information about the child.

Schools, and the Children and Young People's Service should endeavour to co-ordinate their review meetings, e.g. to have an Annual Review of a Statement combined with a Statutory Care Review.

The Children and Young People's Service and Schools will need to exchange information between formal reviews if there are significant changes in the young person's circumstances, e.g. if school is considering an exclusion, there is a change of care placement or there are significant attendance issues.

i) Assessment, Monitoring and Review Procedures

Each looked after pupil will have a Care Plan that will include a Personal Education Plan (PEP) or Learning and Development Plan (Early Years 0-5yrs) that the Social Worker takes a lead in initiating. This will identify specific areas of concern and include achievable targets. Areas for consideration will include:

- Attendance
- Achievement Record (academic or otherwise)
- Behaviour
- Homework
- Involvement in Extra Curricular Activities
- Special Needs
- Development needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge of subject areas and experiences)
- Long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations).

The PEP will be updated at least every six months, as part of the Statutory Reviewing process carried out by the Social Services Department.

References

- Guidance on Education of Children and young People in Public Care (DfES 2000)
- A Better Education for children in Care (Social Exclusion Units Report 2003)
- Who does what? How Social workers and Carers can support the education of children in Care
- Every Child Matters: Change for Children (DfES 2004)
- Every Child Matters: the Outcomes Framework (DfES 2004)
- S 52 Children Act 2004
- Promoting the educational achievement of Looked After Children Statutory guidance for Local Authorities (March 2010)
- The Roles and Responsibilities of The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children. Statutory guidance for School Governors (2009)
- Supporting Looked After Learners-A practical guide for school governors(DfES 2006)
- Improving the Attainment of Looked After Children in Primary Schools: Guidance for schools (2009)
- Improving the Attainment of Looked After Children in Secondary schools: Guidance for schools (2009)