



CHANGE SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

Children in Care (CiC) Policy

Date of Policy: Spring 2017

Date Adopted: Spring 2017

Date for Review: Spring 2019

Definition

Children in Care is a term that refers to children for whom the Local Authority is sharing parental responsibility. This can happen either with parental agreement or when a Court makes a Care Order. The child may be living with foster carers, in a residential unit, with family members or sometimes with their parents. These children are therefore subject to corporate parenting.

The CHANGE Schools Partnership recognises that Children in Care may have very specific needs and may be coping with trauma, abuse or rejection, and are likely to experience personal distress and uncertainty.

The CHANGE Schools Partnership's commitment to Children in Care

Nationally, Children in Care (CiC) significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Their academic and social progress is likely to be affected by their experiences, and compounded by instability in their personal circumstances.

In 2015, 52% of children in care achieved Level 4 or above in reading, writing and maths 5, compared with 80% of children not in care. (*Outcomes for children looked after by local authorities in England, 31 March 2015*) Helping Children in Care succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority in our schools.

The CHANGE Schools Partnership recognises that Children in Care can experience specific and significant disadvantage within a school setting, and is committed to ensuring they reach their potential in all areas. We are aware that Children in Care may have specific difficulties in transport and attendance, doing homework, getting parental consent for activities, obtaining funding for extra activities, obtaining correct uniform and equipment, as well as stigma about their circumstances.

Children in Care are now supported through the government initiative of pupil premium and this money is used within the partnership to help remove some of the barriers which affects their daily lives.

The CHANGE Schools Partnership is committed to enhancing the achievement and welfare of Children in Care in the following ways:

- Having high expectations for the child and ensuring equal access to a balanced and broadly based education.
- Recording, monitoring, and improving the academic achievement of the child in addition to their health and wellbeing.
- Achieving stability and continuity.
- Prioritising reduction in exclusions and promoting attendance.
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes.
- Promoting good communication between all those involved in the child's life and listening to the child.

- Maintaining and respecting the child's confidentiality wherever possible.
- Ensuring staff awareness of, and sensitivity to, the difficulties and educational disadvantages of Children in Care.
- Ensuring an appropriately trained Designated Teacher is appointed, who will be responsible for all Children in Care.
- All Children in Care will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) drawn up between the school, the child, and the child's social worker, which will identify the child's individual needs and the support they require

Responsibility of the Head Teacher / Head of School (under guidance from the governing body)

The Governors Handbook, 2017 states that:

Governing bodies of all maintained schools are required to appoint a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of looked after children who are on the school roll. Academies are under an obligation to do this through their funding agreements.

Governing bodies must ensure, as a minimum, that:

- a designated teacher is appointed;
- the teacher undertakes appropriate training;
- it considers an annual report from the designated teacher; and
- acts on issues that the report raises.

Regulations specify that the role should be carried out by:

- a qualified teacher, within the meaning of section 132 of the Education Act 2002, who has completed the appropriate induction period (if required); or
- the Headteacher or Head of School at the school.

Responsibility of the Governing Body / Trustees

- Ensure that all Governors / Trustees are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Children in Care (formally known as Looked After Children – LAC).

The latest guidance - The Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006 states that Governors / Directors should:

- Ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Children in Care.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of Children in Care.
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.
- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Support the Lead Head / Headteacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of Children in Care are recognised and met.

- Receive a report once a year setting out:
 1. The number of looked-after pupils on the school's roll (if any).
 2. Their attendance, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils.
 3. Their Teacher Assessment, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils.
 4. The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any).
 5. The destinations 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.

Relevant DfES guidance to Governing Bodies: Supporting Looked After Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors, 2006

The following trustee / governors have the responsibility for CiC within the academy:

- Beth Gask – Inclusion Lead Director for CHANGE Schools Partnership
- Emma Kirby – Governor at Cann Hall Primary School
- Frances Khatcherian – Governor at Notley Green Primary School
- Chris Irvine – Governor at Shalford Primary School

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 Looked After Children, assessing 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.

Our Designated Teacher will:

- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan to plan for that transition in consultation with the child's social worker
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people, at least two weeks before the Care Plan reviews.
- Ensure that the Personal Education Plan meetings are effective and impact positively on a child's education at school and are recorded on the CLA tracker – www.clatracker.net [Achievement Service for Children in Care training, 2014]
- Ensure that each Child in Care has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher, but should be based on the child's own wishes.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately
- Co-ordinate any support for the Children in Care that is necessary within school.

- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
- Encourage Children in Care to join in extra-curricular activities and out of school learning.
- Ensure, as far as possible, attendance at planning and review meetings.
- Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of Children in Care.
- Set up timely meetings with relevant parties where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion.
- Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and – if the pupil changes school – to a new school.
- Be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education.
- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life.
- Actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by following the Schools Code of Conduct
- Ensure that attendance is monitored

The following members of staff have the role of designated teacher for CiC within the academy:

- Jane Fisher – Assistant head (Inclusion) and SENCO at Cann Hall Primary School
- Sue Edwards – Assistant head (Inclusion) and SENCO at Notley Green Primary School
- Lauren Whyte – SENCO at Shalford Primary School
- Vicky Childs - Assistant head (Inclusion) and SENCO at John Ray Junior School

The Responsibilities of All Staff

All our staff will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Children in Care, as for all pupils.
- Maintain Children in Care’s confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher’s requests for information.
- Work to enable Children in Care to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all Children in Care.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of Children in Care.
- Work to prevent bullying in line with the School’s Code of Conduct policy.

Policy Written by:

- Jane Fisher – Assistant head (Inclusion) and SENCO at Cann Hall Primary School
- Sue Edwards – Assistant head (Inclusion) and SENCO at Notley Green Primary School
- Lauren Whyte – SENCO at Shalford Primary School
- Vicky Childs - Assistant head (Inclusion) and SENCO at John Ray Junior School

In consultation with:

Stuart Ellis (CEO CHANGE Schools Partnership)