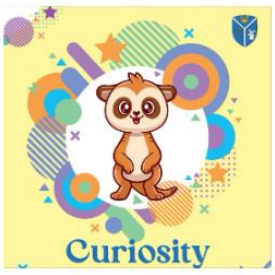
BURSTOW
PRIMARY SCHOOL

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN & PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

POLICY

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School Safety AWARD 2015
Healthy Schools
Living the Olympic and Paralympic Values
International School Award
ACTIVEMARK 2008 REWARDING COMMITMENT

Nationally, Looked After Children significantly under-achieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. We believe that Burstow Primary School has a part to play in ensuring that Looked After Children are exceptionally well prepared for the next steps in their lives. We aim to provide them with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful, enthusiastic learners and responsible individuals by providing a safe, positive and stimulating environment where all are included and achievements are celebrated.

We believe that in partnership with Surrey County Council as corporate parents, we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of Looked After Children.

Definitions

Looked After Children (LAC/ CLA) are defined as:

- Children or young people who are the subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989.
- Children who are placed in foster care, children's residential homes, with relatives or friends, in semi-independent or supported independent accommodation.
- Children subject to a Care or Interim Care Order whilst placed with a parent, where the LA has parental responsibility.
- Children who are not subject to an order, but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents or respite care or for a continuous period of more than 24 hours.
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Previously - Looked After Children (PLAC) are defined as:

- Children who are no longer looked after by an LA in England and Wales because they have either been adopted or are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship order (SGO) or child arrangements order (who they are to live with and when they are to live with them).
- Children who were adopted outside England and Wales from 'state care' (care that is provided by a public authority, religious organisation, or other organisation whose main purpose is to benefit society).

LAC reviews, involving the school, will take place up until an adoption order has been granted. However, Pupil Premium Plus funding will continue for LAC until they are 16 years old.

Aims

To provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children.

To support our looked after children and give them access to every opportunity to achieve their potential, enjoy learning and take as full a part as possible in all school activities.

To ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for LAC as for all children.

To work with the Virtual School and ensure that carers and social workers of LAC pupils are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment.

To fulfil our schools' role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our Looked After Children, by asking the question, 'Would this be good enough for my child?'

Our school's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education
- Promoting attendance
- Targeting support
- Having high expectations
- Promoting inclusion
- Raising aspiration
- Achieving stability and continuity
- Early intervention and priority action
- Listening to children
- Promoting health and well-being
- Reducing exclusions and promoting stability
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals

The roles and responsibilities of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children

The Designated Teacher at Burstow is Katrina Turvey.

The role became statutory in September 2009 under the Children and Young persons' Act 2008 (the 2008 Act). This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance on the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children. It also takes into account section 2E of the Academies Act 2010.
The Designated Teacher must be a qualified teacher or a member of staff. Ideally s/he should be a senior member of staff who has enough status and experience to advise and provide training to

school staff on issues relating to LAC. They need to be able to influence decisions about the teaching and learning of these children.

- Act as a central point of initial contact within the school for any matters involving looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- Knowing who all the LAC are in school and ensuring the availability of all relevant details from school record-keeping systems as required.
- Ensure that all staff, parents, carers and guardians are aware of the identity of the designated teacher, how to contact them and what they are responsible for.
- Attending relevant training about LAC and acting as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to LAC.
- Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how LAC should learn.
- Helping school staff understand the issues that affect the learning of LAC such as differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children and in making full use of AfL.
- Making sure that LAC are prioritised in one-to-one tuition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home.
- Removing the barriers to learning for LAC.
- Ensuring any LAC new to the school are welcomed positively and assessed when they start at the school to identify strengths and weaknesses in their learning. This will be used to inform planning and teaching.
- Developing personalised learning packages for LAC in conjunction with the relevant teaching staff.
- Ensuring that the LAC in their school have a voice in setting learning targets for themselves.
- Championing for LAC.
- Leading on developing and implementing the PEP within the school. The social worker is responsible for initiating the PEP process, completing the relevant pages of the ePEP form for education and the child's voice.
- Monitoring the child's progress against the targets on the PEP and extending these targets if they have been achieved.
- Ensuring the child makes a smooth transition to the new school and that the child's records are transferred without delay.
- Liaising with the Virtual School in all aspects of the LAC progress and support.
- Ensuring confidentiality for individual children and only sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
- Communicate with the Virtual School to manage allocation of PP+ for the benefit of LAC.
- Manage PP+ for Previously Looked After Children to support educational attainment and personal development.
- Convening urgent multi-agency meetings if a LAC is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion.
- Arranging for a mentor or key worker to whom the young person can talk to.
- Arranging for the LAC to be supported by their peers.

- Producing at least one annual report to the governing body which should include: current progress, attendance and exclusions (if any), any concerns regarding behaviour, how the PEP has been implemented and whether the actions put in place are effective in addressing the learning needs of LAC, how the DT works in partnership with the LA, training undertaken for carrying out the role effectively. The report must not mention the children's names for confidentiality reasons.
- Promoting good home-school links and the importance of education as a way of improving life chances for LAC.
- Ensuring that, where the school has concerns about a child's behaviour, the Virtual School is informed at the earliest opportunity and additional support is provided to prevent exclusion, which would only be used as absolute last resort.
- Considering the needs of LAC and PLAC when designing and implementing the school's Behaviour Policy.

Roles and responsibilities of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

- We will promote a culture in which children in care believe they can succeed and aspire to further and higher education, without being labelled or singled out
- We will appoint a Designated Teacher for LAC. *(Designated Teachers must have Qualified Teacher Status and ideally be a member of the SLT in school, or have direct access to the team).*
- We will empower the Designated Teacher to fulfil their role and responsibilities *(This will include the provision of time to undertake the role; supporting training needs and providing opportunities for the cascade of training to all staff and governors in the school)*
- We will ensure all staff, both teaching and non-teaching have an understanding of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by children in care and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them

  (a young person's ability to engage in learning can be undermined by feelings of loss, rejection, confusion, insecurity and low self-esteem – being or becoming LAC has a major impact on children's lives)
- We will recognise the particular circumstances of LAC and provide for these in all other School Policies and the school's Development Plan

  (For example, in Admission, Inclusion, Extended School and Visits, and Staffing and Partnership working. Behaviour Management is another area where prevention and measures may be the same as those for all other pupils, but sometimes those in care may need additional support. It is particularly important to ensure any child at risk of exclusion is identified to the Virtual School)
- We will ensure the day-to-day management of information provides sufficient access to promote an understanding of, and provide safeguards for individual children

  (Sufficient access to ensure staff who are in contact with the child are aware of their care status on a need to know basis, including staff cover where appropriate and day-to-day arrangements such as the collection of younger children from school and automated texting to carers from school information systems)
- We are committed to working with local authority Virtual Headteachers to promote the achievement of children in care *(Surrey's Virtual School can be contacted at any time, about any pupil to aid communications with other local authorities. The Surrey VS website contains all contact details – see www.surreyvirtualschool.org.uk)*

The role and responsibility of the Local Governing Body

- Support the local authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of looked after children.
- Ensure that the DT is given the appropriate level of support in order to fulfil their role.
- In partnership with the Headteacher, ensure that, through their training and development, the DT has the opportunity to acquire and keep up-to-date the necessary skills, knowledge and training to understand and respond to the specific teaching and learning needs of LAC.
- Governing bodies and the SLT should make sure that the DT role contributes to the deeper understanding of everyone in the school who is likely to be involved in supporting LAC to achieve.
- The Local Governing Body, in partnership with the head teacher, is responsible for monitoring how well the role is working.

3. Transfer out of care

When children cease to be looked-after the designated teacher will maintain links with Virtual School for the purposes of promoting the educational achievement of this group of previously looked-after children to ensure continuity. The Designated teacher will ensure that family members and carers are aware that they must pass on information about previous care status to any education settings. This information cannot be passed from school to school as it will be protected information under GDPR.

4. Voice of the child

We will listen to the voice of looked-after and previously looked-after children as a vital part of successfully understanding and meeting their needs.

5. Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)

Looked-after children and children adopted from care, on a special guardianship or child arrangements order are eligible for PP+ funding. This is additional funding is provided to help improve the attainment of looked-after and previously looked-after children and close the attainment gap between this group and their peers. -All pupil premium spending will take account of the specific needs of eligible pupils -PP+ reflects the significant additional barriers faced by looked-after and previously looked-after children -PP+ is allocated according to need rather than a personal budget -Our school will use pupil premium to address need in social, academic and mental health needs. This will be in agreement with the Virtual School Head from the child's home authority

6. Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Looked-after children and previously looked-after children are significantly more likely to have SEN than their peers. Of those with SEN, a significant proportion will have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC plans).

The designated teacher will ensure that:

- They work closely with the SENCO and local authority support team where applicable and follow the DfE Code of Practice https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

- Children's PEPs work in harmony with their EHC plan

7. Meeting Mental Health needs

Looked-after children and previously looked-after children are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues than their peers - The designated teacher has an important role in ensuring they and other school staff can identify signs of potential issues and understand where the school can draw on specialist services - Our school will utilise the CAMHS education link to support understanding mental health needs for looked-after and previously looked –after children - This will enable us to improve a whole school understanding of attachment and trauma and the impact on learning and behaviour for vulnerable children - We also recognise the impact on staff when working with traumatised children. We will ensure all staff feel supported to address their own needs as well as those of the vulnerable children they are caring for

8. Working with local authorities

The E-PEP system allows us to work with various local authorities. Communication is also carried out via telephone and email when any child/ren join our school from any authority. The DT will meet with social workers and other local authority personnel through: - Termly PEPs meetings - Termly LAC meetings - Communicate with authorities formally and informally

9. Working with carers and parents

We work closely with carers and parents under the direction of the Virtual School in the following ways: The Designated Teacher will meet with parents and carers at termly PEP meetings, termly LAC meetings and carer meetings. The class teacher will meet parents and carers for SEND meetings and Family Learning Conferences. Informal communication (by telephone and email) with carers will take place on a needs basis.

10. Exclusions

The past experiences of looked-after and previously looked-after children can impact on their behaviour Where a looked-after child is at risk of either fixed term or permanent exclusion, the designated teacher will contact the relevant authority's Virtual School Head as soon as possible so they can help the school decide how to support the child to improve their behaviour and avoid exclusion becoming necessary.

This policy links with a number of other school policies/procedures and it is important that Governors have regard to the needs of Looked After Children when reviewing them:

- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Home-school agreement
- Equality Policy
- Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding Statement
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

The school will champion the needs of Looked After Children, raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them, in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible.

For more information please see

Promoting the education of Looked After Children gov doc

NSPCC Looked After Children

The Virtual School Surrey

Previously Looked After Children