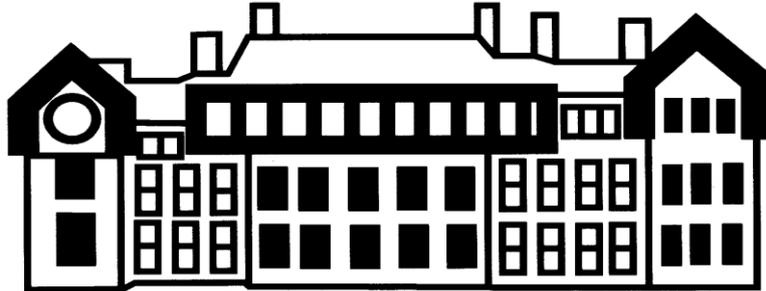


GORDON



SCHOOL

Policy for Supporting Children who are or have been Looked-After

Ratification date: November 2018

Review date: November 2021

Signed _____ Headteacher

Signed _____ Chair of Governors

Policy for supporting Children who are or have been Looked-After

See also: Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
Photography & Recording of Images Policy
Inclusion Policy

1. Introduction

The governing body of Gordon 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 Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children, when compared with their peers. The governing body is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in the statutory guidance “The designated teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children” (DfE February 2018).

Recent changes to statutory guidance mean that previously Looked-After Children are now included together with Looked-After Children within statutory guidance. This means that designated teachers need to satisfy themselves that the child is eligible for support by asking the child’s parents for evidence of their previously Looked-After status. For children adopted outside England and Wales, the child must have been the responsibility of a public authority, a religious organisation or other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society. Where parents are unable to provide clear evidence of their child’s status, designated teachers will need to use their discretion.

2. Terminology

A child is Looked-After by a local authority if a court has granted a care order to place a child in care, or a council's children's services department has cared for the child for more than 24 hours. (Section 22 of Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014).

The general term for this, which most people understand, is that the child is in foster care.

A child is Previously Looked-After if:

- there has been an adoption order;
- there has been a special guardianship (SGO) or Care Arrangements order;
- they have been adopted from ‘state care’ outside England and Wales – this includes: section 20 - children removed from care of parents who then achieve permanence through an adoption or SGO/child arrangements order.

3. Why Looked-After Children need Support

Many Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children have suffered disrupted learning, may have missed extended periods of school, and many of them have special educational needs (SEN). The gaps in their learning and, in many cases the emotional impact of their experiences, are likely to have become significant barriers

to their progress. The complexity of this fragmented educational experience with high incidence of SEN, needs careful assessment and planning. Attainment data for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After children shows that they do not perform as well at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 when compared to non-Looked-After children.

The above factors make Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life-chances. The governing body of Gordon Primary School is committed to ensuring that these children are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following are in place:

- A Designated Teacher for Looked-After Children and Previously Looked-After Children is in place in the school;
- The Designated Teacher undertakes regular training;
- Regard to statutory guidance is adhered to.

2. The Role and Responsibility of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children in Gordon Primary School is Hannah Cuesta

The Role of the Designated Teacher:

- To be a central point of initial contact within the school. This helps to make sure that the school plays its role to the full in making sure arrangements are joined up and minimise any disruption to a child's learning.
- To have a leadership role in promoting the educational achievement of every Looked-After Child on the school's roll. This involves, working with the Virtual School' Headteacher to promote the education of Looked-After children and promoting a whole school culture where the personalised learning needs of every Looked-After child matters and their personal, emotional and academic needs are prioritised.
- To take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand the things which can affect how Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children learn and achieve and how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils. This means making sure that all staff:
 - i. have high expectations of Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children's learning and set targets to accelerate educational progress;
 - ii. are aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation (attachment awareness) from birth families and that some children may find it difficult to build relationships of trust with adults because of their experiences, and how this might affect the child's behaviour;
 - iii. understand how important it is to see Looked-After and Previously Looked-After children as individuals rather than as a homogeneous group, not

publicly treat them differently from their peers, and show sensitivity about who else knows about their Looked-After or Previously Looked-After status;

- To appreciate the central importance of the Looked-After Child's Personal Education Plan (PEP) in helping to create a shared understanding between teachers, carers, social workers and, most importantly, the child's own understanding of how they are being supported;
 - To have the level of understanding they need of the role of social workers, VSHs and carers, and how the function of the PEP fits into the wider care planning duties of the authority which looks after the child; and for previously looked-after children, understand the importance of involving the child's parents or guardians in decisions affecting their child's education, and be a contact for parents or guardians who want advice or have concerns about their child's progress at school.
 - To have a more direct and day-to-day role in promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, either directly or through appropriate delegation by:
- Contributing to the development and review of whole school policies and procedures to ensure that:
 - i. they do not unintentionally put looked-after and previously looked-after children at a disadvantage;
 - ii. there is effective induction for looked-after and previously looked-after children starting school, new to the school and new to care;
 - iii. there are effective procedures in place to support a looked-after child's learning;
 - iv. particular account is taken of the child's needs when joining the school and of the importance of promoting an ethos of high expectations about what s/he can achieve;
 - v. transitions to the next phase of a child's education are supported effectively to avoid children losing ground – e.g. moving schools from primary to secondary school or because of a change in placement or exclusion;
 - vi. when enrolling at the school, parents and guardians of previously looked-after children are reminded that they need to inform the school if their child is eligible to attract PP+; and
 - vii. there are no barriers to looked-after children accessing the general activities and experiences the school offers to all its pupils (e.g. taking into account possible transport difficulties and the arrangements for looked-after children to attend meetings).
 - To promote a culture in which looked-after and previously looked-after children; are able to discuss their progress and be involved in setting their own targets, have their views taken seriously, and are supported to take responsibility for their own learning;

- i. are prioritised in any selection of pupils who would benefit from one-to-one tuition, and that they have access to academic focused study support;
 - ii. are encouraged to participate in school activities and in decision making within the school and the care system;
 - iii. believe they can succeed and aspire to further and higher education or highly skilled jobs; and
 - iv. can discuss difficult issues (such as SEN, bullying, attendance) in a frank manner with a sympathetic and empathetic adult.
 - i. Being a source of advice for teachers about:
 - o differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual pupils who
 - ii. are looked-after or previously looked-after children; and
 - iii. the use of Assessment for Learning (AfL) approaches to improve the short and medium term progress of looked-after and previously looked-after children, and help them and their teachers understand where they are in their learning (including any knowledge gaps), where they need to go, and how to get there.
- To work directly with looked-after and previously looked-after children and their carers, parents or guardians to:
 - i. promote good home-school links;
 - ii. support progress by paying particular attention to effective communication with carers, parents or guardians;
 - iii. ensure carers, parents or guardians understand the potential value of one-to-one tuition and are equipped to engage with it at home;
 - iv. ensure carers, parents or guardians are aware of how the school teaches key skills such as reading and numeracy; and
 - v. encourage high aspirations and working with the child to plan for their future success and fulfilment.
 - To have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of looked-after children's PEP within school in partnership with others as necessary
 - To work closely with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to.

3. Roles and Responsibilities of All Staff

- To ensure that looked after and previously looked after children are supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained;

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

4. The Role and Responsibility of the Governing Body

The governing body of this school will:

- To ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Looked After Children;
- To be aware of whether the school has looked after and previously looked after children and how many (no names);
- To ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Looked After Children;
- To liaise with the Headteacher to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out her/his responsibilities in relation to looked after and previously looked after children;
- To support the Headteacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of looked after and previously looked after children are met;
- To 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 and confidentiality reasons)
- To review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years.

The Governor with special responsibility for Children who are Looked After in the school: Anita Sheen

The role of that governor:

The named governor will report to the Governing Body on an annual basis using the report from the Designated Teacher as source information:

- 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; and
- Pupil destinations.

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

- The National Curriculum;
- Public examinations;
- Additional interventions to support educational progress;
- Careers and Youth Connexions guidance;
- Additional education support;
- Extra-curricular activities.

5. Confidentiality

It is important that all teaching staff that 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 the Designated Teacher for Children in Care.

It is appropriate for a classroom support assistant to have knowledge that the young person is in care 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 Headteacher or the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children.

6. Training

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

7. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if there is legislative change or if deemed necessary by the Governing Body.