

St Bertelines C of E Primary School

Looked After Children Policy

Overview

'Looked after children' (LAC) are those pupils for whom the Local Authority is sharing parental responsibility. This may be with parental agreement or it may be when a court makes a care order. The child could be living with foster carers, in a residential unit, with other family members or with their parents. These children are therefore subject to corporate parenting. This school recognises that 'Looked after Children' have very specific needs which arise from their situation and they frequently suffer from distress and uncertainty. In some cases, elements of this policy may relate to Previously Looked after Children.

Objectives

1. To ensure that LAC thrive and reach their potential in all areas of their education, social, personal, emotional and physical development.
2. To ensure that pastoral care and support is in place and effective to meet the particular needs of LAC.
3. To ensure that teachers and other staff understand and take account of the evidence that LAC are more likely than others to underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers.
4. To ensure that teachers and staff are aware and take account of the evidence that LAC's academic and social progress is likely to be affected by their experiences, and compounded by instability in their personal circumstances.
5. To ensure that any additional funding received (Pupil Premium) is used effectively to support and address the particular needs of a LAC.
6. To ensure that all in this school are committed to helping LAC succeed by working with other relevant agencies to provide a better future for them. This will be a key priority for all in our school.

Key Strategies

1. The school will provide an appropriately trained senior member of staff, as a Designated Teacher who will be responsible for all LAC. This designated teacher will:
 - Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer;
 - Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed in consultation with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people;
 - Track academic progress and target support appropriately;
 - Use the Personal Education Plan to plan for any transition;
 - Ensure that each LAC has an identified member of staff that they can talk to and
 - Ensure that the LAC is not subjected to any bullying or unacceptable treatment because of their circumstances.
2. All LAC 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.
3. The school will ensure that high expectations are set for each LAC and will ensure that each LAC has equal access to the same rich, balanced and broadly based education that every child in this school receives.
4. Any specific difficulties in transport to school, attendance, doing homework, getting parental consent for activities, obtaining funding for extra activities, or for uniform and equipment, as well as stigma about their circumstances will be recognised early and dealt with sensitively, discreetly, efficiently and effectively.
5. Monitoring the attendance of LAC will be a priority. Swift, appropriate action will be taken where there are concerns.
6. The school will establish good communication between all those involved in the child's life.
7. The school will maintain and respect the child's confidentiality wherever possible by ensuring that all staff are aware of and sensitive to the circumstances of the child.
8. Each term, the Governors will be updated on the number of LAC in the school and any significant issues which need to be addressed. This will be done via the Headteacher's Report to Governors and will be done in a manner which maintains the anonymity of the children

Outcomes

The provision we make will ensure the LAC will thrive in this school. The guidance and regulations for the care and education of LAC's will be met in full. We will take particular account of The Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006 and the most recent relevant DfES guidance to Governing Bodies (Supporting Looked After Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors).