

CIRENCESTER KINGSHILL SCHOOL

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

Cirencester Kingshill School has a key role to play in improving the life chances of our children on roll who are Looked After. So that we improve the educational attainment and achievement of all our Looked After Children, also known as Children in Care (CiC), and give them the greatest chance of success, we aim to be a place where they can learn, be themselves and make lasting friendships. The lead teacher for Looked After Children is Gill Cannon, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCO).

What does the term ‘looked after’ or ‘Children In Care’ mean?

‘Looked after Child’ is the legal term on statutory paperwork which applies to children who are in the care of the local authority. The term ‘Child/Children in Care’ was requested to be used by the children’s council in Gloucestershire for their meetings and paperwork they may see in school.

There are two main types of being looked after:

- *The child’s parents may agree that the child goes into care. This is often referred to as a ‘section 20’.*
- *The child may be legally removed from their parents without parental consent; this is when the court concludes that a child could be harmed if they stay at home. This is referred to as a care order.*

The local authority has a statutory duty to look after the child – this includes ensuring they receive the best education possible. The local authority assumes the role of ‘corporate parent’. This responsibility is held by every adult employed by the local authority including those who work in schools.

What are the responsibilities of the school for children in care?

These are set out in two key government documents:

The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for Looked After Children: statutory guidance for school governing bodies.

Ref: DCSF-01046-2009 this is on the DFE website but then use the original DCSF code to link in. The document was recently reviewed and seen as meeting all statutory guidelines December 2014.

Promoting the education of looked-after children

Ref: DFE – 00520-2014

As a school working with Looked After Children we must:

- Ensure access to a balanced and broadly-based education
- Prioritise recording and improving the academic achievement
- Prioritise a reduction in the number of exclusions and trancies
- Ensure there is a designated teacher to promote the educational achievement of all
- Develop effective systems of communications and protocols
- Promote the attendance of children in care

We need to be guided by the following principles:

- Prioritising education
- Having high expectations

- Inclusion – changing and challenging attitudes
- Achieving continuity and stability
- Early intervention – priority action
- Listening to children

What must the designated teacher do?

- Promote a culture of high expectation
- Make sure the young person has a voice in setting targets
- Ensure pupils receive a positive reintegration when entering school
- Be a source of advice for staff
- Support and communicate with carers and social workers
- Lead on the development and implementation of the (Personal Education Plan) PEP – reviews three times a year. All children will have a learning mentor through the Virtual School.
- Lead on the development and implementation of each child’s Pupil Premium funding. Pupil Premium is additional to any other funding that may be received by school. It should be used in a manner which will help to improve the educational outcomes for young people in terms of their attainment, aspiration or participation. The Pupil Premium should be used to minimise barriers to learning and achievement in a creative manner which takes into account the unique context of each young person’s life circumstances, to enable students to be able to access learning activities, with a clear purpose, which take place outside of the school context.
- Actively promote out of hours learning and extra -curricular activities
- Coordinate support for the child in school liaising with other professionals where necessary
- Monitor the progress of children if they leave care
- Produce a report for governors at least once a year
- Make sure that everyone contributes to promoting the child’s educational achievements
- Ensures the school does everything possible to maximise educational stability for the child, especially by finding ways of sharing information.

What must the governing body do?

- Ensure the admissions criteria and practices prioritise Looked After Children (DFE Code)
- Make sure that the designated teacher receives appropriate training
- Consider an annual report from the designated teacher on children in care
- Work with the Leadership Team to act on issues raised in the report

The report to the governors should include levels of progress made by children in care, attainment, attendance and exclusion patterns, process and planning issues arising from the PEP, any whole school planning and training needed and work with the LA.

Implementation

Governors and staff at Cirencester Kingshill School are committed to ensuring improved educational life chances for Looked After Children through the implementation of this policy.

Looked After Children are a vulnerable group in school and staff are committed to narrowing any gap between these pupils and their peers. Their progress and attainment will be carefully tracked, with appropriate interventions and resources directed to ensure best possible outcomes.

The governing body is committed to ensuring that there is a Whole School approach to supporting the educational achievement of our Looked After Children.

If appropriate: you may want to read the following policies in conjunction with this policy. The Accessibility Plan, Anti-bullying Policy, School Discipline and Behaviour Policy, Child Protection Policy, Equality Policy, E-safety Policy, Exclusion Policy, Offensive Weapons Policy and the Substance Misuse Policy.

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Reviewed by G. Cannon (Designated Teacher for Looked After Children) October 2020 (Date)

Adopted by Governors _____ (Sign) _____ (Date)

Review date November 2021