

'learning together, aiming high, proud to be ourselves'

John Ray Infant School

CLA Policy



March 2019

John Ray Infant School Policy for Looked After Children (CLA)

This policy should be read in conjunction with John Ray Infant school Child Protection Policy. Our school is a welcoming community where everyone feels happy, safe and valued. We aspire to be the best that we can be and believe that learning should be fun, purposeful and challenging. We promote a creative, stimulating curriculum that focuses on skills for life-long learning.

At our school everybody is somebody.

At our school everybody has a voice and feels like they belong.

At our school Every Child Matters.

Definition

'Looked After' 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.

This policy includes requirements set out in "Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004" and associated guidance on the education of Looked After Children.

Designated Teacher for CLA: Mrs. Kate Mills, Head teacher

Governor with responsibility for CLA: Mrs Penny Smith, Chair of Governors

The governing body and staff are committed to providing quality education for all of our children based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes.

The aims of our school are to:

- Ensure that CLA children take as full a part as possible in all school activities
- Ensure that carers and social workers of CLA children are kept fully informed of the child's progress and attainment
- Ensure that CLA children are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision.

Admissions Arrangements

On admission, the child's records will be requested from his/her previous school and a meeting held with the parent/carer/ social worker as appropriate. There should ideally be someone with parental responsibility involved in such a meeting but this, understandably, may not be possible. This meeting will generate information to inform the PEP. In every other aspect, admission and induction should follow the school normal admission procedure and policy.

Role of the Designated Teacher for CLA:

Within the school

- To ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by children and young people who are looked after and to be aware of the need for support structures to overcome these difficulties and disadvantage.
- To ensure that each child's PEP is completed in a timely fashion and to ensure that funds are spent in the best possible way to support the child's individual needs.
- To inform teachers of general educational needs of the children who are looked after.
- To encourage teachers to promote the involvement of these children in extended curricular activities, social events and the work of the School Council.
- To develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers, Social Services and the Virtual School whose role it is to support these children externally.
- To hold a supervisory brief for all children who are looked after by ensuring that all relevant information about their care and education is available to school staff and carers and that this information is kept up to date.
- To monitor the educational progress of all children who are looked.

With individual looked after children:

- To work with individual children, possibly through a carer, in order to arrive at a statement about their circumstances that they would be happy to share with teachers and/or students
- To ensure that each child who is looked after has a Personal Education Plan (PEP) initiated in the first instance by the child's social worker.
- To supervise the smooth induction of a new looked after child into the school.
- To ensure funding received by the school is linked to the PEP and that consultation with the parents/carers/teachers determines how funding is spent to ensure best use of funding in the interest of the child.

Responsibility for CLA in School

It is important that all teaching staff who are in contact with looked after children are aware s/he is being looked after by the Local Authority. The responsibility for the transfer of information should be that of the Head teacher/designated teacher for CLA. It is appropriate for a learning support assistant to have knowledge that a child is being looked after only when s/he is directly involved in the teaching of that child. In the absence of the class teacher, some information regarding the child's circumstances should be shared with the teacher 'covering' the class, wherever practicable.

The responsibility of the all staff

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children, as for all children.
- Maintain Looked After Children's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- Work to enable Looked After Children to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all Looked After Children.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of Looked After Children.
- Be aware that 60% of Looked After Children say they are bullied so work to prevent bullying in line with the School's policy.

Monitoring the progress of CLA

Each looked after child will have a Care Plan, which will include a PEP. The social worker will take the lead in developing the Care Plan. It will identify specific areas of concern and define achievable targets.

Areas to be considered could include:

- Attendance
- Achievement/progress towards targets
- Behaviour
- Home learning
- Adjustment into the new school setting
- Involvement in extra-curricular activity and opportunities to represent the school.
- Special Education Needs (if any)
- Development needs (short or long) in terms of skills, knowledge and/or subject area development.
- Future plans and aspirations

The PEP will be updated in line with Virtual School expectations and will be uploaded onto the Virtual School website by the Designated lead.

The role of the Virtual School

The role of the Virtual School is to promote the educational achievement of children in care, whether educated in Essex or placed out of authority, through having high aspirations and working to close the attainment gap between those children and their peers. This is achieved, similarly to a real school, by maintaining an accurate roll of all children in the care of Essex County Council and monitoring attendance daily along with termly progress and attainment. The Essex Virtual School team also provides advice and information to support children who were previously looked after

and are now subject to adoption orders, special guardianship orders and child arrangement orders.

Other support services may be involved with individual children including:

- educational psychologists and others from Local Authority SEN services
- Health visitors or the school nurse
- EWMHS
- Social care worker/ Community support worker

Home-school liaison

We recognise the value of a close working relationship between home and school and will work towards developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable Looked After Children to achieve their potential.

Termly Learning Reviews (TLRs) as well as PEP and Care Plan review meetings provide opportunities to continue to develop this partnership working.

Good practice suggests that the Governing Body will:

Ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritises CLA according to the DfES Admissions Code of Practice

Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for Looked After Children.

Ensure there is a Designated Lead for CLA

Liaise with the head teacher and all other relevant staff to ensure the needs of the child are met.

Nominate a governor with responsibility for CLA who links with the Designated Lead

Receive regular reports from the Designated Lead setting out:

1. The number of looked-after children on the school's roll (if any).
2. Their attendance, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
3. Their Teacher Assessment, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
4. The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any).
5. The destinations of children who leave the school.
6. The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the children concerned.

Ensure that the school's policies and procedures give CLA equal access in respect of:

- admission to school
- the National Curriculum
- out of school learning and extra-curricular activities
- annually review the effective implementation of the school policy for CLA.

Signed.....
Chair of Governors

Date.....