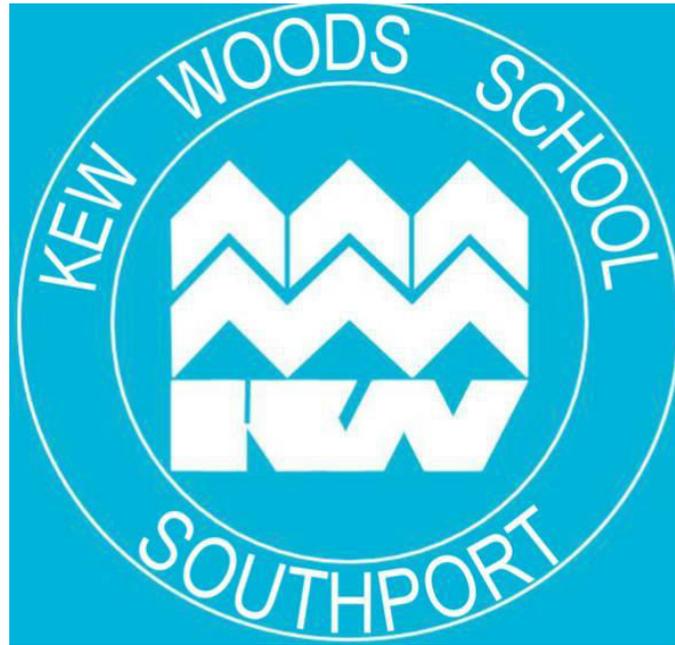


KEW WOODS PRIMARY SCHOOL



Looked After Policy

1. Introduction

The Governing Body is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes.(see also Inclusion Policy)

Many Looked After Children have suffered disrupted learning and may have missed extended periods at school. The gaps in their learning- and in many cases the emotional impacts of their experiences- are likely to have become significant barriers to their progress.

The achievements, attitudes and well being of all our children matter. This policy helps to ensure that Kew Woods promotes the attainment and well being of Looked After Children

2. Who are Looked After Children?

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a Local Authority (LA) if he or she is in their care or is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority.

There are four main groups:

- Children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20);
- Children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38);
- Children who are the subject of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44).

Difference between being “under a Care Order” and “Accommodated”

Some looked after children are the subject of a **Care Order**. If the local authority believes that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer “significant harm” if s/he remains with his or her birth family then they can apply to the courts for a care order to assume parental responsibility for the child. While it is possible that children on care orders will live with their parents or other family members if that is what the courts decide, most will live with foster carers.

Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are “**Accommodated**” by the local authority under section 20 of the Children Act when:

- There is no person who has parental responsibility for them;
- The child is lost or abandoned;
- The person who has been caring for him or her is prevented from providing him or her with suitable accommodation or care.

The local authority is also empowered to provide accommodation for any child if it will safeguard or promote his or her welfare.

The majority of children who are being accommodated by the LA will be doing so with the full agreement of those who have parental responsibility for them. In practice children are accommodated because there are particularly difficult family circumstances which mean they cannot be cared for in their normal family environment. While they are accommodated the children's parents (or guardians) retain full parental responsibility and may at any time remove them from LA provided accommodation.

All these groups are said to be "Looked After Children" - LAC. They may be looked after by Sefton LA or may be in the care of another authority but living in Sefton.

2.1 Corporate Parenting

As corporate parents we all have a part to play, vigorously applying the principles of good parenting by:

- Giving priority to education;
- Listening to children;
- Providing stability and continuity;
- Taking corporate responsibility;
- Promoting inclusion;
- Raising standards;
- Intervening early;
- Promoting early years experiences;
- Celebrating success;

3. Role of Governors

The Children's Act 2004 placed a duty on LAs to ensure the educational achievement of pupils in their care and most recently Section 20 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 places a duty on the governing body of maintained schools to designate a teacher as having responsibility to promote the educational achievement of looked after children who are on roll.

The governing body should:

- Ensure the designated teacher is a member of the teaching staff with appropriate seniority, professional experience and status to provide leadership, training, information and advice to others that will influence decisions about learning and teaching needs of looked after children;
- In partnership with the headteacher ensure the designated teacher undertakes appropriate training, has the relevant support and resources to fulfil the role;

- Consider the annual report from the designated teacher and act on any issues it raises to support the designated teacher and maximise the impact of the roll.

4. The Role of the Designated Teacher

The designated teacher will

- Promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how looked after children learn;
- Make sure the young person has a voice in setting learning targets;
- Be a source of advice to staff about differentiated teaching strategies, making full use of Assessment for Learning (AfL);
- Have a key role in managing work with social workers, carers, virtual school head and the designated governor to minimise disruption to the child's education and ensure implementation of PEP;
- Ensure LAC are prioritised for 1:1 learning and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home (home school agreements, parents evenings etc. will be shared with social workers and carers);
- Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of the child's personal education plan (PEP) within in school;
- Report termly to governors highlighting numbers of LAC and any attendance, planning or provision developments;
- Report annually to enable the governors to make overall judgements and address issues.

4.1 Annual Report to Governors

This will be delivered to governors in the summer term and will include:

- Numbers of LAC and number of LAs which are involved;
- Levels of progress made by looked after children who are currently or have been on roll within the past twelve months in relation to all the children at the school (ie educational, social and emotional progress);
- Whether pattern of attendance and exclusions for LAC is different to that of all children;
- Any gifted and talented LAC and how their needs are being met;
- Any LAC with special educational needs (SEN) and how these are being met through the Code of Practice for SEN;
- Any process or planning issues arising from the personal education plans (PEPs).

To protect a child's need for confidentiality, names will not be used in the report.

4.2 Procedures for Personal Education Planning

PEPs are essential documents in providing a collective memory about a child's education and should be sent on to subsequent schools as part of educational records. When children cease to be looked after (adoption or special guardianship) PEP is no longer required however the designated teacher will give consideration to the implications of continuity for meeting the child's needs.

The PEP is initiated by the social worker, sent to the designated teacher and when completed this forms part of the Care Plan along with the health plan and is used to contribute to the statutory review of the Care Plan.

The designated teacher must ensure that the PEP is reviewed before the review of the Care Plan so that it is up to date and informs whether agreed provision is being delivered.

Each child will have a conversation with the Designated teacher or class teacher based on Sefton's "My Personal Education Plan" proforma.

This conversation will then help to inform target setting and allow the designated teacher to fill in the school section of the PEP

The designated teacher will work closely with teachers to identify the child's strengths, weaknesses and any barriers to learning.

The PEP should set high quality expectations of rapid progress and put in place the additional support the child or young person needs in order to succeed. Short and long term targets will set. Where a child has special educational needs, relevant information from the IEPs and/ or statement may be appended.

The PEP will record any additional resourcing that will be allocated to facilitate the achievement of targets and enhance participation.

The PEP will also include information as to how the progress of the child will be rigorously monitored

5. The Role of Staff

It is expected that all staff will:

- Follow school procedures.;
- Keep the Designated Teacher informed about a LAC's progress;
- Have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of the child;
- Positively promote the raising of a LAC's self esteem;
- Ensure any LAC is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained;
- Be familiar with the school's policy and guidance on LAC and respond appropriately to requests for information to support PEPs and review meetings;
- Liaise with the Designated Teacher where a LAC is experiencing difficulties;
- Contribute to regular liaison with social care colleagues and other appropriate professionals and keep carers fully informed at all times;
- Keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to other professionals/parents/carers/pupil as appropriate.

6. Record Keeping

All LAC documentation is kept in a ring binder for each family stored the SEN office.

References

Children's and Young Persons Act (2008)

The Role and Responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children – statutory guidance for governing bodies (DCSF 2008)

Improving the Attainment of Looked After Children in Primary Schools (DCSF 200)