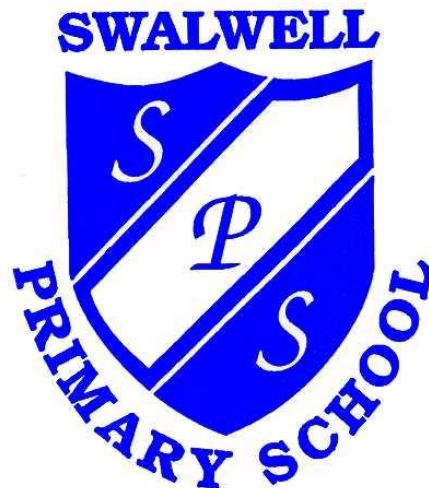


Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Policy



Designated Teacher: Mrs S Leaver

Academic year	Head teacher	Deputy Head teacher	Assistant Heads	School Business Manager	Chair of Governors
2023/2024	Mrs R Hocking	Mr R Warren	Mrs S Leaver & Mrs K McCall	Mrs E Elliot	Mrs L Gray

Review Date	Changes made	By whom	Date Shared
September 2020		S. Leaver	
October 2022	Yes	S Leaver	

INTRODUCTION

Swalwell Primary School recognises that all pupils are entitled to a balanced and broad curriculum and aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in public care. The school and the governing body endorses the Gateshead Council policy and welcomes LAC who may be looked after by our local authority or those who may be in the care of another authority but living in Gateshead.

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. 'Previously Looked After' are children for whom at some time the Local Authority shared parental responsibility. These children may have been returned to parents, have special guardianship orders or have been adopted.

RATIONALE

Nationally, Looked After Children significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion, compared with their peers. 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 and disabilities (SEND). 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 SEND, needs careful assessment and planning. Looked-after children and previously looked-after children are also more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues than their peers. This can impact on their behaviour and education.

This makes them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life-chances. At Swalwell Primary School we are committed to ensuring that these children are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following are in place, and are working effectively:

- a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children
- Personal Education Plans for all Looked After Children
- all staff have a clear understanding of confidentiality and issues that affect looked after children
- effective strategies that supports the education of this vulnerable group

RESPONSIBILITIES

The role of the Designated Teacher:

- be an advocate for Looked After Children, particularly for promoting an ethos of high expectations about what s/he can achieve
- when new to the school, ensure a smooth and welcome induction for the child and carer, and note any specific requirements, including care status
- ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people
- keep PEPs and other records up to date, particularly in time to inform review meetings
- monitor the child's progress against the targets on the PEP and extending these targets if they have been achieved
- ensure that each Looked After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher, but should be based on the child's own wishes.
- track academic progress and target support appropriately
- co-ordinate any support for the Looked After Children that is necessary within school liaising with teaching and non-teaching staff in school
- establish and maintain regular contact with home, statutory and voluntary agencies
- ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis
- promote inclusion in all areas of school life and encourage Looked After Children to join in extracurricular activities and out of school learning
- act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of Looked After Children
- set up meetings with relevant parties where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion
- ensure the rapid transfer of information between individuals, agencies and if the pupil changes school – to a new school
- ensure that attendance is monitored
- attend training as required to keep fully informed of latest developments and policies regarding Looked After Children

The responsibility of all staff:

- have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children, as for all pupils
- 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

The role of the Governing Body:

- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Looked After Children
- be aware of whether the school has Looked After Children and how many (no names)
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Looked After Children
- liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out her responsibilities in relation to Looked After Children
- support the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of Looked After Children are met
- review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually

PUPIL PREMIUM PLUS (PP+) FUNDING

Looked-after children and children adopted from care, on a special guardianship or child arrangements order are eligible for PP+ funding. This is additional funding provided to help improve the attainment of looked-after and previously looked-after children and close the attainment gap between this group and their peers. The extra funding provided by the PP+ reflects the significant additional barriers faced by looked-after and previously looked-after children. The designated teacher has an important role in ensuring the specific needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children are understood by the school's staff and reflected in how the school uses PP+ to support these children. For looked-after children, PP+ funding is managed by the Virtual School Head (VSH) for the purpose of supporting their educational achievement. For previously looked-after children, PP+ funding is managed by the child's school.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Information on looked after children will be shared with school staff on a "need to know basis". The Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with which school staff at the PEP meeting. Once this has been agreed with the social worker, carer, young person, and other parties, complete confidentiality is to be maintained.

PERSONAL EDUCATION PLAN (PEP) COMPLETION

- social worker informs school and virtual school of a child becoming looked after (or a looked after children entering the school)
- child is added to the Welfare Call system
- date is set for the completion of an electronic Personal Education Plan (ePEP)
- the online form is added to the school Welfare call account to enable completion of educational data
- PEP meeting takes place within 20 days involving the social worker, designated teacher (or other appropriate staff), carer and young person if appropriate
- a date is set for the next pep meeting Personal Education Plan is taken to the child's statutory review and discussed within the wider context of the child's life

- ePEP is saved and can be accessed by the social worker, school and virtual school

COMPLAINTS

Parents with a complaint about the provision for looked-after or previously looked-after children should discuss these directly with Mrs S. Leaver (SENCo and Designated Teacher) in the first instance. If she cannot resolve the matter, they will direct parents/carers to the school's complaints procedure.

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

This policy links to the following policies:

- Accessibility plan
- Complaints
- Equality information and objectives
- Health and safety
- Safeguarding