



Hilltop First School and Foundation Stage

Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children Policy

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Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children Policy

Introduction

The governing body of Hilltop First School is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes and recognises that national statistics indicate that there is considerable educational underachievement of children in residential and foster care when compared with their peers. The Governors are committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in "Guidance on the Education of Looked after Children" (2018) and Section 52 of the Children Act 2004.

Definitions

A child 'looked-after by a local authority' is one who is looked after within the meaning of section 22 of Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

A previously looked-after child is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order, which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales

Why looked-after and previously looked-after children need the support of a Designated Teacher

Many looked-after and previously looked-after children have suffered disrupted learning and may have missed extended periods of school. Additionally, many of them have special educational needs (SEN). 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 SEN, needs careful assessment and planning.

Looked After Children may (or may not) demonstrate some or all of the following issues:-

- low self esteem
- poor education standards due to time out of school
- delayed social/emotional/ cognitive development
- be bullied or bully others.
- be prone to mental health issues
- be isolated with few friends
- have behaviour issues.
- demonstrate poor attachments to others.
- have a need to be very private

This makes them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life- chances.

The Designated Teacher role is statutory to help ensure that effective practice becomes universal. The support that schools and Designated Teachers give to children who are looked-after and previously looked-after should not be seen in isolation. All looked-after and previously looked-after children will have a wide range of support mechanisms that will assist in promoting their educational achievement. It is important that the Designated Teacher works closely with social workers, carers/foster parents and the Virtual School.

The governing body of Hilltop First School, is committed to ensuring that these children are supported as fully as possible.

Role and Responsibility of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher for looked after and previously looked after children must be a qualified teacher.

Hilltop's Designated Teacher is Lynn Bima

The Designated Teachers should:

- Be the advocate for Looked After Children
- Ensure a smooth and welcome induction for the child and carer when new to the school, and note any specific requirements, including care status
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is completed, and submitted to the Virtual School within the required timeframe following the PEP meeting.
- Ensure efficient use of the Pupil Premium Plus in coordination with the Virtual School to support pupils learning and development as appropriate
- Co-ordinate support for the child in the school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary
- Ensure staff receive relevant information and training and act as an advisor to staff and governors
- Ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis
- Provide written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible
- Ensure that carers/foster parents receive notification of meetings, parents evenings and other events and that communication remains regular and positive
- Encourage Looked After Children to participate in extra-curricular activities
- Ensure speedy transfer of information between individuals and other relevant agencies and to a new school if and when the child transfers
- Seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded
- Ensure that any returns on looked after children are completed – as requested by the relevant Virtual School.

Roles and Responsibilities of All Staff

All staff should:

- Ensure that any child in public care is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained
- Be familiar with the and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings
- Respond positively to a CLA request to be the named person that they can talk to when they feel it is necessary
- Contribute to the Designated Teacher requests for information on educational attainment and needs
- As with all children, ensure that no child in public care is stigmatised in any way
- Provide a supportive climate to enable a child in public care to achieve stability within the school setting
- As with all children, have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of CLA
- Positively promote the self-esteem of CLA

Role and Responsibility of the Governing Body

The governing body will:

- Ensure that there is a designated member of staff (the Designated Teacher) with the responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked after children,
- Ensure that the Designated Teacher undertakes appropriate training
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Looked After Children
- Be aware of whether the school has CLA and how many (no names)
- Liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out her/his responsibilities in relation to CLA
- Nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body **NB: These reports should not include any names of individual children for child protection and confidentiality reasons**
- Review the effective implementation of this policy.

Confidentiality

Information regarding Looked will be shared with school staff on a “need to know basis”. Designated Teachers 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.

Training

The designated Teacher will attend regular training briefings provided by the RBWM Virtual school across the year. The Head Teacher or the Designated Teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

Links to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Child protection and Safeguarding policy
- Pupil Privacy Notice
- Data Protection Policy
- Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy
- Confidentiality Policy