



Governors' Committee Responsible:	Experience Committee
Nominated Lead Member of Staff:	Assistant Headteacher
Status & Review Cycle:	Tri-annually
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Purpose

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of Children in Care.

Rationale

Children in Care – CIC - are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. The majority of Children in Care have suffered abuse or neglect and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational underachievement when compared to their peers. Poor exam success rates in comparison with the general population are a common feature, with fewer Children in Care progressing to Higher Education and following progression pathways that will lead to future economic success and well-being.

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They fall into 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 subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
- Children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21).

The term 'in care' refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 - they may live with foster carers, in a Children's Home, in a residential school, with relatives or with parents under supervision.

Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are 'accommodated' by the local authority under section 20 of the Children Act – they may live in foster care, in a Children's home or in a residential school.

All these groups are said to be 'Children in Care' (CIC). They may be looked after by our local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

Introduction

Ash Manor School aims to promote the educational attainment and achievement and Welfare of Children in Care.

The Designated Teacher for Children in Care is Mr T Fishwick.

The Governor with special responsibility for Children in Care is Mrs M Wickham.

The governing body is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes.

This policy includes requirements set out in “Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of Children in Care under section 52 of the Children Act 2004” (Nov 2005) and associated guidance on the education of Children in Care.

We aim to contribute towards achieving the five outcomes of Every Child Matters, which is the Government’s aim for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances:

- Stay safe
- Be healthy
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well being

As corporate parents, this school believes in 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

Aims

The aims of the school are to:

- Ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for Children in Care as for all children
- Ensure that all Children in Care have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- Provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual’s needs and ability
- Ensure that Children in Care take as full a part as possible in all school activities
- Ensure that carers and social workers of Children in Care are kept fully informed of their child’s progress and attainment
- Ensure that Children in Care are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision.

Admissions

The Governing Body endorses the Surrey County Council Policy for the admission of Children in Care. Due to care placement changes, Children in Care may enter school mid-term. This school believes that it is vital that we give each Child in Care a positive welcome and full support for their induction and to help them settle and be part of our learning community.

Inclusion

This policy recognises that all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broadly based curriculum. Our Children in Care Policy reinforces the need for teaching that is fully inclusive. The Governing Body will ensure the school makes appropriate provision for all Children in Care.

Allocation of Resources

The Governing Body will ensure that the school allocates resources to support appropriate provision for Children in Care, meeting the objectives set out in this policy.

We will work in partnership with Surrey Virtual School for Children in Care and other Virtual Schools for students who are from other local authorities, to ensure that Children in Care receive the full range of support to which they are entitled to enable them to make progress and achieve.

Monitoring the progress of Children in Care

The social worker for the Child in Care initiates a Personal Education Plan – PEP - within 20 days of the pupil joining the school, or of entering care, and ensure that the child or young person is actively involved.

This school assesses each Child in Care's attainment on entry to ensure continuity of learning. Following the initial PEP, the role of the Designated Teacher is to liaise with other agencies involved to arrange further PEP Review meetings and to provide copies of the PEP to the social worker, specialist teacher from Surrey Virtual School, or other Virtual School where the child is from another Local Authority, and other agencies.

Record Keeping

The Designated Teacher knows all the Children in Care in school and has access to their relevant contact details including parents, carers, Surrey Virtual School specialist staff, or other Virtual School specialists for those looked after students who are from other Local Authorities, teacher/support worker and social worker.

The status of Children in Care is identified within the school's information systems so that information is readily available as required.

Staff Development

Part of the Designated Teacher's role is to raise awareness of issues associated with Children in Care within the school and disseminate information.

Partnership with parents/carers and care workers

We believe in developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable Children in Care to achieve their potential to aid their future economic well-being. Review meetings are an opportunity to further this collaboration and partnership working.

Links with external agencies/organisations

We recognise the important contribution that external support services make in supporting Children in Care. Colleagues from the following support services may be involved with individual Children in Care:

- Social care worker/ Community care worker/ Residential child care worker
- Surrey Virtual School for Children in Care (*Child in Care in Education Team*)
- Other Virtual Schools for Children in Care from other Local Authorities
- Educational psychologists and others from Local Authority SEN services
- Medical officers
- School nurses
- CAMHS
- Education Welfare Officers
- Youth Offending Service
- External Learning Providers

Children in Care Policy Review and Evaluation

We undertake a thorough review of both the Children in Care Policy and practice each year.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Designated Teacher will:

- Be an advocate for Children in Care within school
- Be proactive in identifying ways in which the school can raise attainment of Children in Care
- Work in partnership with Surrey Virtual School, and/or other Virtual Schools for those students who are from other Local Authorities, providing termly progress data on the progress of Children in Care
- Give regard to the impact of relevant decisions for Children in Care on both the Children in Care and the rest of the school community
- Know all the Children in Care in school, including those in the care of other authorities, and ensure the availability of all relevant details from school record-keeping systems as required
- Attend relevant training about Children in Care and disseminate information and good practice to other staff
- Influence school policy and practice for Children in Care
- Act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to Children in Care, seeking advice from Surrey Virtual School, and/or other Virtual Schools for those students from other Local Authorities, when appropriate.
- Ensure that Children in Care receive a positive welcome on entering school, especially mid-year, and offer additional support wherever possible such as a pre-entry visit to help the new pupil settle
- Ensure that all Children in Care have an appropriate PEP that is completed within 20 days of joining the school or of entering care and ensure that the young person contributes to the plan
- Arrange and contribute to PEP Review meetings
- Keep PEPs and other records up to date and review PEPs at transfer and at six monthly intervals
- Monitor the targets set out in the PEP
- Convene an urgent multi-agency meeting if a Child in Care is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion
- Ensure confidentiality on individual children, sharing confidential and personal information on a need to know basis, bearing in mind the wishes of the individual pupil

- Act as the key adviser for staff and governors on issues relevant to Children in Care
- Ensure that care and school liaison is effective including invitations to meetings and other school events
- Actively encourage and promote out of hours learning and extra-curricular activities for Children in Care
- Ensure a speedy transfer of information, records and coursework, where appropriate, when a Child in Care transfers to another educational placement
- Report to the Governing body on Children in Care in the school and inform of relevant policy and practice development
- Agree with the social worker the appropriate people to invite to parents' evenings and other events
- Prepare reports for Governors' meetings to include:
 - the number of Children in Care on roll and the confirmation that they have a Personal Education Plan – PEP.
 - their attendance compared to other pupils.
 - their attainment (SATs and teacher assessments) compared to other pupils.
 - the number, if any, of fixed term and permanent exclusions.
 - the destinations of pupils who leave the school.
- Attend governor meetings as appropriate – such as the admission, disciplinary and exclusion of Children in Care.
- Ensure that any Special Educational Needs are addressed in conjunction with the SENCO and in accordance with the Code of Practice for SEN.

All school staff will:

- Positively promote the raising of a Child in Care's self-esteem.
- Have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of Children in Care.
- Keep the Designated Teacher informed about a Child in Care's progress.
- Ensure any Child in Care is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained.
- Follow school procedures.
- Be familiar with the school's policy and guidance on Children in Care and respond appropriately to requests for information to support PEPs and review meetings.
- Liaise with the Designated Teachers where a Children in Care is experiencing difficulties
- Work in partnership with Surrey Virtual School, and/or Virtual Schools from other Local Authorities, and other agencies to prevent a Child in Care's behaviour leading to an official exclusion and only use exclusions in line with the school's exclusion policy, and relevant national guidance, being mindful to the difficulties this may create in the care placement.
- 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 the Designated Teacher, Surrey Virtual School for Child in Care, and other Virtual Schools for those students who are from other Local Authorities, and professionals/parents/carers/pupil as appropriate
- Make extra copies of reports available when required.

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritises Children in Care according to the DFE Admissions Code of Practice
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for Children in Care
- Ensure there is a Designated Teacher for Children in Care
- Liaise with the Headteacher, Designated Teacher and all other staff to ensure the needs of Children in Care are met
- Identify a governor with special responsibility for Children in Care
- nominate a governor with responsibility for Children in Care who links with the Designated Teacher
- Receive regular reports from the Designated Teacher.
- ensure that the school's policies and procedures give Children in Care equal access in respect of:
 - admission to school
 - National Curriculum and examinations, both academic and vocational
 - out of school learning and extra-curricular activities
 - additional educational support
 - careers guidance
- Annually review the effective implementation of the school policy for Children in Care.
- In the event of an exclusion, ensure that the Designated Teacher is invited to the exclusion meeting of the Child in Care.

Surrey Local Authority will:

- Provide a Virtual Headteacher who has responsibility for championing the education of Children in Care
- Provide a specialist team to provide a wrap-around service for Children in Care as part of Surrey Virtual School
- lead the drive to improve educational and social care standards for Children in Care

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