BROCKSWOOD PRIMARY
& NURSERY SCHOOL
LEARNING TOGETHER - ACHIEVING TOGETHER

Child Looked After (CLA) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) Policy

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1. Definitions

Definitions Looked After Children (LAC) or Children in Care (CiC) refers to a child 'looked-after by a local authority' as outlined by section 22 Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. LAC/CIC are children who are in the care of the Local Authority for more than 24 hours and include children who are:

- living with foster parents/carers
- living in a residential children's home or
- living in residential settings like schools or secure units

Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) refers to children who are

'…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 persons, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales,'

2. Policy Objective

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of Children Looked After (CLA) and Children Previously Looked After (PLA) on the roll of this school.

Name of the **Designated Teacher** for CLA and PLA:

Gemma Dalton

Name of the **Designated School Governor** for CLA and PLA:

Reginald East

At **Brockswood Primary and Nursery School** we will ensure that children looked after (CLA) and children previously looked after (PLA) have access to excellent educational provision and are prioritised for additional support through school-based interventions to achieve as well as possible, in accordance with the '*DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018.*

We recognise that our school plays a vital role in providing a stable base for CLA and in promoting their academic, social and emotional development. We promote whole school staff training in their specific needs, so that all adults at this school are sensitive to the barriers to learning that CLA experience and feel able to support the children discretely and confidentially, as needs arise. We understand the need to work in a 'relationship-based' way so that children looked after and previously looked after are valued and part of our school community.

Our aim is to champion the needs of CLA to ensure they make rapid educational and social progress during their period in care on the roll of this school.

3. Equality and Diversity statement

This policy is intended to be helpful for improvement in the education available for all learners but has a focus on children looked after who, statistically, experience disadvantage in education. The criteria are clear that the expectation is that all learners receive a high-quality, ambitious education; that providers are inclusive of all learners; and that all providers must be meeting their statutory duties, including those under the Equality Act 2010 and all protected characteristics therein.

An inclusive learning environment in which everybody is respected is conducive to a happy and healthy learning environment.

The Virtual School Attachment Aware and Trauma Informed Toolkit training will support a greater understanding of diversity and equality and is relevant to many children particularly those returning to school in September 2021.

4. Coronavirus response

We have delivered the Attachment Aware and Trauma Informed Toolkit training to all school staff and will develop a school response based on the principles within the toolkit. Promoting an inclusive environment is key to the well-being of all pupils as is a commitment to deepening pupils' understanding of "democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law and mutual respect and tolerance" (Ofsted 2019).

5. Our Aims for CLA

- to provide a safe and secure environment where educational progress and stability is always central to the planning and all adults understand the specific needs of CLA and PLA
- to narrow the gap between the attainment of CLA and PLAC and their peers, ensuring accelerated and rapid progress
- that they benefit from school-based interventions, even if they do not meet the criteria for that intervention (DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018) and to use the allocated Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) to ensure effective impact
- for all CLA to have at least termly Personal Education Planning (ePEP) meetings each academic year and for the joint planning and quality first teaching to have measurable impact on each child's learning on a daily basis (DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018)
- for all adults to provide sensitive, child-led support, adopting a relationship-based approach and with at least one key adult with whom the child or young person has a trusted relationship and who will act as an advocate for them and take a special interest in their progress in all school activities
- that school systems facilitate discrete support, that includes a strong relationship between school staff, carers and children looked after on roll
- CLA will be advantaged within school policies and procedures, with their needs explicitly considered and provided for (DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018)
- our Behaviour Policy maintains clear boundaries and expectations about behaviour, but we understand that not all behaviour is a matter of choice. We will not enforce sanctions that shame and ostracise children looked after from their peers, school, community or family. In this school we seek to create an inclusive and positive school ethos for every pupil
- CLA and PLAC and their families will feel part of the school community; they will be actively welcomed, involved and engaged into this school community (DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018).

6. Educational Planning for Children Looked After

Personal Education Plans (ePEP) and Progress Report for Governors (formerly CLASEF):

The school will ensure that every CLA on roll has a Personal Education Planning (ePEP) meeting that is reviewed termly, within the statutory care planning framework, and in collaboration with the social worker, carer and other relevant professionals. In any one school year there will be at least 3 PEP meetings for each CLA. The school will complete both sections of the Progress Report for Governors to share our plan for improvement and development in school for disadvantaged children and also to inform the Hertfordshire Virtual School of the school's policy and practice, to account for the efficient and effective spend of the PP+ funding and to inform the school Governing Body as the annual report.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher and Governing Body are committed to promoting improved educational life chances for CLA and PLA. They will ensure that the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After has qualified teacher status, appropriate seniority in the leadership team and time and experience to fulfil this statutory role and have at least 2 days per year training to remain fully informed. They will monitor the role of the Designated Teacher to ensure that all CLA and PLAC make accelerated and rapid progress and that the whole school staff receive appropriate training.

The Designated Teacher for Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After is a qualified teacher, and will promote improved educational life chances for CLA and PLAC by:

- ensuring that the CLA or PLAC has access to quality first teaching
- tracking the progress of CLA and PLAC across the curriculum using data, teacher reports and book looks
- ensuring that the PP+ is used effectively and efficiently
- performing a coordinating role with school staff and outside agencies
- ensuring effective communication with the school's assigned Education Adviser from the Virtual School
- developing expertise in the field of CLA, including attachment theory and trauma- informed practice
- delivering the Virtual School training: 'An introduction to Attachment Aware and Trauma-Informed Practice' to the whole school
- providing and attending training and offering advice to the whole school staff
- promoting a school culture which is supportive, relationship-based and has high expectations for CLA and PLA
- regularly reporting to the Head and Governing Body on the attainment of CLA and PLAC and school resource and staff training needs for working with this group
- prioritising CLA for school-based additional support, even when the young person does not meet the criteria (DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018)
- ensuring that CLA and PLAC are not overlooked for positions of student responsibility within the school because of their care status
- completing the annual Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) of each CLA as requested, to inform their annual CLA health review.

All staff will promote improved educational life chances for CLA and PLAC by:

- reading this 'school policy' for CLA
- attending relevant training, including the Virtual School toolkit training on 'Attachment Aware and Trauma-Informed Practice' (to be found on the Virtual School website: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/virtualschool)
- providing accurate information and data when asked by the Designated Teacher
- referring to the Designated Teacher for advice
- playing their part in creating an attachment and trauma–informed 'CLA-friendly' culture and securing rapid progress for CLA by ensuring that they benefit from any additional school-based support available

8. Attendance

School attendance procedures reflect the specific needs of CLA and PLAC to ensure good school attendance. Where there is a concern about attendance or punctuality the school will contact the carer, social worker and other professionals including the Virtual School, as an early intervention, as outlined in our attendance policy.

9. Admissions/ Transitions

School procedures to support CLA during admission and transition include:

- prioritising CLA and PLAC at the point of admission
- the swift transfer of information between schools that may include school visits and at times of transition, teaching at the previous school
- early identification of staff mentor and peer buddy
- additional support and planning for CLA and PLAC at times of transition
- structured activities to 'say goodbye', in recognition of the impact of broken attachments and loss

10. Additional Educational Needs

All staff will work creatively to secure accelerated and rapid progress for CLA and PLAC with additional educational needs by:

- having high expectations
- ensuring that they are prioritised for additional school-based support, even if they do not meet the criteria (in line with the DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018)
- ensuring that planning is coordinated, appropriate interventions identified and teaching to the plan is systematic; ensuring that any work undertaken by non-teaching staff has teacher over-sight (in line with the Lamb Report, Dec '09)
- ensuring that progress is regularly monitored and reviewed, against the targets set as agreed in the termly Virtual School visit, ePEP and Progress Report for Governors.

11. Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

All staff will work creatively to secure accelerated and rapid progress for CLA who have special educational needs & disabilities by:

- having high expectation of progress each academic year (in line with the expectation set out in the ePEP and Progress Report for Governors)
- ensuring that they are accessing school-based targeted support which is 'additional to and different from' the universal and additional needs provision (in line with the SEND Code of Practice)
- ensuring that all plans are coordinated, appropriate interventions identified, and teaching to the plan is systematic
- ensuring that progress is regularly monitored and reviewed, in line with the SEND Code of Practice
- ensuring that any work undertaken by non-teaching staff has teacher over-sight
- that with the school SENCO the EHCP review is held in a timely way with all relevant professionals invited and their views obtained.

12. Safeguarding

School staff will be vigilant for any safeguarding issues which can impact particularly on CLA by: familiarising themselves with the '*School Policy Guidance for Children in Care'* and following the school's child protection policy and the '*DfE: Keeping Children Safe in Education' Sept 2025*, if there are any safeguarding concerns.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

13. Alternative Provision

We will make every effort to ensure that any arrangements for provision alternative to daily attendance at school will be:

- a plan that will retain the CLA on the roll of the school or CLArify in writing which educational establishment will be responsible for essential reporting and accountable for the PP+
- an agreed part of the overall ePEP for the student
- full-time (25 hours) or contribute to full-time attendance and be of high quality
- meet the educational needs of the CLA or PLA
- will provide the opportunity to make rapid progress in the course of study provided by the setting
- will be monitored regularly and that ePEPs will include the school and the alternative provider

14. Exclusion

- We have reviewed the school Behaviour Policy in line with the statutory guidance published in February 2018 (DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children (26 February 2018).
- We will make every effort to avoid excluding a CLA, in recognition of the increased risk this poses in terms of them quickly disengaging from the school, due to their early experience of broken attachments and loss. Before acting, we will discuss the rationale for exclusion with the assigned Education Adviser from the Virtual School.
- If there is no option other than exclusion, then we will make every attempt to reduce the number of days of the exclusion.
- We will use the following methods to avoid excluding a child looked after or previously looked after; STEPs approach of a therapeutic behaviour policy.
- School procedures are in place to reduce the risk of exclusion of CLA and PLA. CLA and PLAC with special educational needs should have exclusion as a behaviour management action as a last possible resort (Regulation 4(1)(c) of the Equalities Act 2010 which means that a head teacher could only lawfully exclude a child for a reason relating to their disability, even a disability that results in the child having a tendency to physical abuse, if reasonable adjustments have been made).

15. Multi-Agency Working

School staff will make every effort to develop positive professional relationships with colleagues from other agencies and facilitate their work. This will enable colleagues to successfully perform their roles and positively impact on the education and wider needs of CLA and PLA.

The Headteacher, Designated Teacher and Governing Body will ensure that all staff are briefed on the Statutory Guidance and practice outlined in this policy.

The Hertfordshire Virtual School for Children Looked After:

Website: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/virtualschool

Twitter: @VS_HCCEmail: virtualschool@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Phone: 01992 556956

Urgent queries also directed to their helpdesk at the same email or **01992 556915**