

**Greenmount Primary School**

# **LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY**

**January 2023**

## 1 Document Information

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## 3 Introduction

The governing body of Greenmount Primary School is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. This governing body recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of Looked After Children, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in “Guidance on the Education of Looked After Children” (May 2000) and Section 52 of the Children Act 2004. We aim to provide them with the

knowledge and skills they need to be successful, enthusiastic learners and responsible individuals by providing a positive, safe and stimulating environment where all are included and achievements are celebrated.

## **4 Definitions**

### **4.1 Looked After Children (LAC)**

Looked After Children are defined as:

- Children or young people who are subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989.
- Children who are placed in foster care, children's residential homes, with relatives or friends, in semi-independent or supported independent accommodation.
- Children subject to a Care or Interim Care Order whilst placed with a parent, where the LA has parental responsibility.
- Children who are not subject to an order, but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents or respite care.

### **4.2 Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)**

Previously Looked After Children are defined as

- Children who are no longer looked after by an LA in England and Wales because they have either been adopted or are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order.
- Children who were adopted outside England and Wales from 'state care' (care that is provided by a public authority, religious organisation, or other organisation whose main purpose is to benefit society).

LAC reviews, involving the school, will take place up until an adoption order has been granted. However, Pupil Premium Plus funding will continue for LAC until they are 16 years old.

## **5 Aims**

The governing body of Greenmount Primary School, is committed to ensuring that all looked after children are supported as fully as possible. We aim to:

- provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children.
- Support our looked after children and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential, enjoy learning and take as full a part as possible in all school activities.
- Ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for LAC as for all children
- Work with Virtual School and ensure that carers, parents (when appropriate) and social workers of LAC pupils are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment.

At Greenmount we are fully committed to ensuring we work to identify and remove any barriers to learning to ensure children are happy, thrive and achieve their full potential.

In pursuit of this policy we will:

- Nominate a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children who will act as their advocate and coordinate support for them.
- Nominate a school governor to ensure that the needs of Looked After Children in the school are taken into account at a school management level and to support the Designated Teacher.
- Support the Designated Teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend training on Looked After Children.
- Work closely with the Virtual School and Social Care in the best interests of LAC and in completion of the Personal Education Plan (PEP).

## **6 Roles and Responsibilities**

### **6.1 Designated Teacher**

The role of Designated Teacher became statutory in September 2009 under the Children and Young Persons' Act 2008. The Designated Teacher must be a qualified teacher or a member of staff. Ideally they should be a senior member of staff who has enough status and experience to advise and provide training to school staff on issues relating to LAC. They need to be able to influence decisions about the teaching and learning of these children.

The Designated Teacher should:

- be an advocate for Looked After Children
- 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 (PEP) is completed, as soon as possible. This should be prepared with the child and the carer, in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies, and be linked to the Care Plan meetings, within 28 days, 3 months and 6 months and, at least, every 6 months; A flow chart showing PEP completion is found at the end of this policy
- keep PEPs and other records up to date, particularly in time to inform review meetings
- ensure that each child in public care (if they wish) has an identified member of staff that they can talk to (this should be based on the child's request, and may not necessarily be the Designated Teacher)
- 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 the child and carer(s) receive early 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 and out of hours learning, where feasible
- 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 LA

## **6.2 All Staff**

All school staff will:

- ensure that any child in public care is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained
- be familiar with 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 child in public care's request to be the named person that they can talk to when they feel it is necessary
- contribute to the Designated Teacher's requests for information on educational attainment and needs, as appropriate
- 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 Looked After Children
- positively promote the self-esteem of Looked After Children

## **6.3 Governing Body**

The governing body of this school will:

- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for Looked After Children
- support the LA in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of 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 and they are given the appropriate level of support in order to fulfil their role.
- liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out her/his responsibilities in relation to Looked After Children and through their training

and development, they have the opportunity to acquire and keep-up-to-date the necessary skills, knowledge and training to understand and respond to the specific teaching and learning needs of the LAC.

- support the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of Looked After Children are met
- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body (these reports should not include any names of individual children for child protection and confidentiality reasons)
- review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years.