



Bringing out the Best in Everyone"

## **Buckinghamshire Council / Pebble Brook School**

### **Designated Teacher for Looked After Children Policy**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ dated \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of Governors

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## 1. Introduction

The Children Act 1989 defines a child who is 'looked after' as a child or young person who is accommodated by the Local Authority (Section 20) or a child or young person who is the subject of a Full Care Order (Section 31) or Interim Care Order (Section 38).

Nationally, Looked After Children significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that Looked After Children are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic wellbeing, in line with Every Child Matters.

Helping Looked After Children succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority for Buckinghamshire Council and Buckinghamshire schools. This policy takes account of:

- The Council's duty under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children (LAC).
- The Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006.

Relevant Department for Education guidance:

- Supporting Looked After Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors.
- Roles and responsibilities of the designated teacher for Looked After Children: statutory guidance for school Governing Boards.
- Improving attainment of Looked After Children in secondary schools – guidance for schools.

Pebble Brook School's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education.
- Promoting attendance.
- Targeting support.
- Having high expectations.
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes.
- Achieving stability and continuity.

- Early intervention and priority action.
- Listening to children.
- Promoting health and wellbeing.
- Reducing exclusions and promoting stability.
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals.

## 2. Implications

As for all our pupils, Pebble Brook School is committed to helping every Looked After Child to achieve the highest standards they can, including supporting aspirations to achieve in further and higher education. This can be measured by improvement in their achievements and attendance. Pebble Brook School is committed to working with parents, carers and multi-agency professionals to ensure that the needs of our Looked After Children are fully met.

The Governing Board of Pebble Brook School is committed to providing quality education for all pupils and will:

- Ensure a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children is identified and enabled to carry out the responsibilities set out below - this is David Miller alongside three other DSLs
- Ensure a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is put in place, implemented and regularly reviewed for every Looked After Child, in line with Bucks guidance on Personal Education Plans. As Pebble Brook School is a special school PEP targets will also link closely to the pupils' EHCPs.
- Identify a Governor as Designated Governor for Looked After Children.

This policy links with a number of other school policies and it is important that Governors have regard to the needs of Looked After Children when reviewing them:

Behaviour Policy  
 Anti-bullying Policy.  
 Home School Agreement.  
 Equal Opportunities Policy.  
 Child Protection Policy.  
 Special Educational Needs Policy.

The school will champion the needs of Looked After Children, raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible.

### **3. Devolved School Grant (DSG) and Pupil Premium (PP)**

Through the PEP and IEP process the school uses money from the DSG and Pupil Premium to meet pupils' needs to ensure that they are making good progress. How the money is used for each pupil is noted on the PEP and monitored by the Headteacher. The designated teacher is responsible for ensuring that the money spent meets pupils' needs and impacts positively on progress.

### **4. Responsibility of the Headteacher**

- Identify a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children whose role is set out below. It is essential that another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take sick leave.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusions of Looked After Children and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of Looked After Children.
- Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.
- To monitor the use of PP and DSG monies.

### **5. Responsibility of the Governing Board**

- Identify a nominated Governor for Looked After Children.
- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Looked After Children.
- Ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Looked After Children.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of Looked After Children.
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.

The Governing Board will:

- Monitor the academic progress of Looked After Children through an annual report.

- Ensure that Looked After Children are given top priority when applying for places in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria.
- Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school by ensuring the school implements policies and procedures to ensure Looked After Children achieve and enjoy their time at the school, recognising the extra problems caused by excluding them, except as a last resort.
- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Support the Headteacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of Looked After Children are recognised and met.
- Receive a report once a year setting out:
  - The number of looked-after pupils on the school's roll (if any).
  - Their attendance, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils.
  - Their achievements and accreditation, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils.
  - The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any).
  - The destinations of pupils who leave the school.
  - The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.

## **6. The Role of the Designated Teacher**

Government Guidance says that the Designated Teacher should be:

“Someone with sufficient authority to make things happen who should be an advocate for Looked After Children, assessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them.”

Governors should be aware that all schools are already required to have a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children. It is strongly recommended that this person should be a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Training for Designated Teachers has been, and will continue to be, available from County training providers.

The Designated Teacher will:

- Maintain an up to date record of all Looked After Children who are on the school roll. This will include:
  - Status, i.e. Care Order or accommodated.
  - Type of placement, i.e. foster, respite, residential.
  - Name of Social Worker, area office, telephone number.
  - Daily contact and numbers, e.g. name of parent or carer or key worker in children's home.
  - SEN Code of Practice.
  - Child Protection information when appropriate.
  - Baseline information and all test results.
  - Attendance figures.
  - Exclusions.
- Ensure that there is a Personal Education Plan for each child / young person to include appropriate targets and above information. This must be compatible with the child's / young person's Care Plan and, where applicable, include any other school plan, e.g. Statement of Special Education Need and associated plans, Transition Plan, Pastoral Support Programme.
- Ensure that someone attends Children's Services Reviews on each child / young person and / or always prepares a written report which promotes the continuity and stability of their education.
- Liaise with the Virtual School for Looked After Children on a regular basis with regard to the performance, attendance and attainment of Looked After Children.
- Ensure that if / when the child transfers school all relevant information is forwarded to the receiving school as a matter of priority.
- Ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when Looked After Children are underachieving and have early interventions to improve this in line with existing school policy.
- Ensure that systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about Looked After Children where and when appropriate.
- Ensure that Looked After Children, along with all children, are listened to and have equal opportunity to pastoral support in school.
- Ensure that they keep the school up to date with current legislation and its implication for the school in respect of Looked After Children.

- Report to the Governing Board annually on the performance of the Looked After Children who are on the roll of the school.

## **7. The Responsibilities of all Staff**

All our staff will:

- 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 positively to a pupil's request to be the named member of staff whom they can talk to when they feel it is necessary.
- 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.
- Be aware that 60% of Looked After Children say they are bullied, so work to prevent bullying in line with the school's policy.

Advice and support is available from Buckinghamshire Council Children's Services Department.