The Polesworth School
ENSURING EXCELLENCE

Looked After Children Policy

Member of leadership team with lead responsibility for oversight and update of policy	DOW
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COMMUNITY ACADEMIES TRUST

Education of Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked-After

The Polesworth School is committed to providing high quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. The Polesworth School recognises the need to champion performance, for children looked after (CLA) and children previously looked after (CPLA) and is committed to improving outcomes for them. Many CLA and previously CPLA have suffered disrupted learning, may have missed extended periods of school, and 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

The Polesworth School is committed to ensuring that CLA and CPLA are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following are in place, and are working effectively:

1. A Designated Governor for CLA and CPLA (Safeguarding Governor)
2. A Designated Teacher for CLA and CPLA
3. Personal Education Plans (PEPs) for all CLA
4. The Designated Teacher will attend training and deliver training opportunities to positively impact on the attainment of CLA and CPLA
5. The Designated Teacher will monitor the effective completion of EPEPs by the appropriate Pastoral Support Officer.
6. All staff in school will have a clear understanding of the issues that affect CLA and CPLA; their learning needs; how to support them in school and issues relating to confidentiality
7. Policies, procedures and strategies to promote the achievement and well-being of this vulnerable group

The Role of the Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children

1. The designated teacher is the central point of initial contact at The Polesworth School. Safeguarding Officers work closely with CLA and CPLA and liaise with the designated teacher to ensure that the students are fully supported.

2. The designated teacher has a leadership role in promoting the educational achievement of every CLA and CPLA on the school's roll. This involves, working with the Virtual School to promote the education of CLA and CPLA and promoting a whole school culture where the personalised learning needs of these children matter and their personal, emotional and academic needs are prioritised.

3. The designated teacher takes lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand the barriers that can affect how CLA and CPLA learn and achieve and how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils.

4. The designated teacher and Safeguarding Officers promote a culture in which CLA and CPLA:
   - Can discuss their progress and be involved in setting their own targets, have their views taken seriously, and are supported to take responsibility for their own learning
   - Are prioritised in any selection of pupils who would benefit from one-to-one tuition, and that they have access to academic focused study support
   - Are encouraged to participate in school activities and in decision making within the school
   - Are supported in terms of their social, mental and emotional health
   - Are encouraged to be aspirational
   - Are supported in terms of careers advice and guidance and financial information about further and higher education, training and employment. Discussions about longer term goals should start early. High aspirations are crucial to successful planning for the future. They should focus on the child or young person's strengths and capabilities and the outcomes they want to achieve.

5. The designated teacher and Safeguarding Officers are a source of advice to help CLA and their teachers in understanding their needs.

6. The Safeguarding Officers work directly with CLA and their carers or guardians to promote good home-school links.

7. The designated teacher has lead responsibility for monitoring the PEPs for CLA within school in partnership with others as necessary.

8. The designated teacher is responsible for ensuring that the PEPs are completed within statutory timescales, as outlined in the PEP guidance.

9. The designated teacher ensures that any safeguarding concerns regarding CLA and CPLA are quickly and effectively responded to.

10. The designated teacher will monitor the pattern of attendance and exclusions for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

11. The designated teacher is aware that the Virtual School provides information and advice to parents and designated teachers on meeting the needs of CPLA. The school should fully involve parents and guardians in decisions affecting their child's education, including any requests to the Virtual School for advice on meeting their individual needs.

12. The designated teacher and the Safeguarding Officers will liaise with other staff to ensure that there is effective induction for looked-after and previously looked-after children starting school, new to the school and new to care. The transition coordinator will support movement from primary to secondary school and ensure staff are fully aware of the needs of CLA and CPLA.

Roles and Responsibilities of all Staff

All staff in this school will:

1. Have high expectations of CLA and CPLA's learning and set targets to accelerate educational progress.

2. Be aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation (attachment awareness) from birth families and that some children may find it difficult to build relationships of trust with adults because of their experiences, and how this might affect the child's behaviour.

3. Understand how important it is to see CLA and CPLA as individuals and show sensitivity about who else knows about their looked-after or previously looked-after status.

4. Appreciate the central importance of the PEP in helping to create a shared understanding between teachers, carers, social workers and, most importantly, the child's own understanding of how they are being supported.

5. Have the level of understanding they need of the role of social workers, Virtual School Heads and carers, and how the function of the PEP fits into the wider care planning duties of the authority which looks after the child.

6. For CPLA, understand the importance of involving the child's parents or guardians in decisions affecting their child's education, and be a contact for parents or guardians who want advice or have concerns about their child's progress at school.