

# Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After Procedures



**Approved by:**

Mr C Holmwood

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**Last reviewed on:**

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**Next review due by:**

July 2022

## Important contacts

### **Headteacher:**

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

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### **Designated Safeguarding Lead:**

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### **SENCO**

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### **Nominated Governor for Safeguarding, Safer Recruitment and Children Looked After:**

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## Rationale

Many children and young people who are in care have suffered abuse. Children Looked After (CLA) and Children Previously Looked After (PLAC) are particularly vulnerable to underachievement and are at a significantly higher risk of exclusion compared to their peers. Their academic and social progress is likely to be affected by their experiences and are compounded where there is instability within the personal circumstances (eg multiple placement moves).

### Challenges facing CLA and PLAC include:

- **Employment** – 40% of care leavers between 19-21 are NEET
- **Education** – only 14% of CLA receives 5 GCSE's (grade 4 or above including maths and English compared to 55% of all students)
- **Justice** - CLA are four times more likely to be involved in the Youth Justice System
- **Mental Health** – CLA are four times more likely to have a mental health condition

*Source: Department of Education, Children Looked After in England, 2017; Outcomes for children looked after, 2017; Bazalgette.L et. Al, 2015*

### Definition of a Child Looked After and a Child Previously Looked After

- A Child Looked After is a child that is in care:
- Children that were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after become subject to an adoption, child arrangements or a special guardianship order.

Shenley Brook End School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The following procedures will be followed by all staff:

1. All Governors, teachers and support staff at Shenley Brook End School aim to:
  - Make a real difference in helping to provide the best possible education for Children Looked After (CLA) and Children Previously Looked After as much as any other.
  - Seek to give our young people in care professional help, encouragement and support, so they find our school a welcoming and friendly place.
  - Be fully inclusive and we will challenge negative views and stereotypes.
  - Offer support to and work with their foster carers on how to assist the young person's learning and enhance educational opportunities.
2. We will support the Government's agenda for giving all children looked after the same life chances as any other child, in that we want them to: be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution to society, and achieve economic well-being.
3. The Children Act 2004 and the statutory guidance Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children 2015, place duty on us to work together to

promote the educational achievement of looked after children. We recognise that schools and school staff are at the very heart of this process so that we can provide a good education in order to unlock a bright future and so increase life chances of this vulnerable group. We are highly ambitious for these young people, knowing that securing the best possible progress for them will greatly enhance their life chances.

4. We recognise our responsibilities and we actively want to support the local authority in undertaking its statutory responsibility, under section 52 of the Children Act 2004. This is to help this vulnerable group to succeed in education, champion their needs, raise awareness and challenge negative assumptions at all levels.
5. As a school community we are aware we can make a significant difference. We recognise that we have a key role and major influence to ensure that the needs of children looked after are considered at the improvement planning and policy level through to monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes.
6. Shenley Brook End School prioritise children looked after in our admission policy in line with Milton Keynes Council guidance.
7. We monitor the progress of children looked after in our school and identify if there are barriers to their next steps of learning and progress.
8. We will report at least annually to the governing body and to the local authority on the progress and performance of children looked after, this will be presented to the full governing body by our appointed Designated Teacher during the Summer term of each academic year as a standing agenda item.
9. As a governing body we will require our Designated Teacher to carry out the specific duties below in relation to the looked after children attending this school.
10. We will require our appointed Designated Teacher to undertake the recommendations set down in the statutory guidance entitled The Designated teacher for looked after and previously looked-after children. Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities Feb 2018. In this context the Designated Teacher will:
  - Become the central point of contact at this school for all professionals and agencies working with and supporting the individual children looked after we have on roll.
  - Take the lead role in the professional assessment and preparation of the educational targets and subsequent reviews to be recorded into the relevant sections of the child's Personal Education Plan. The PEP should be established within twenty school working days for any child looked after starting on roll. This to include the gradual addition and updating of further information over time e.g. attendance, attainment and progress results.
  - Attend relevant update training and cascade information for staff development and updating regarding children looked after.
  - Ensure that personal information is handled carefully and sensitively and that the child's wishes and preferences are taken into account.
  - Establish good working relationships and communications with Foster Carers, ensuring information is received and early notification is provided for them to attend meetings and reviews.

- Provide support and sanctuary to help settle a child looked after into the school, and at other times.
  - Ensure that the child looked after feels safe, knows who to trust and who to go to if they feel the need for support.
  - Ensure the transfer of records if a child looked after moves school, where possible to contact the receiving designated teacher and share information to help with the transition.
  - Provide written information to assist planning, reviews and reporting as required.
  - Seek and prioritise meetings with, and referrals to, appropriate external agencies in situations that require external support.
11. In addition, we will require all our school staff to assist in the implementation and support of this policy for children looked after by requiring all staff to:
- Ensure the appropriate sensitivities and confidentiality are maintained.
  - Be familiar with, and respond appropriately to, requests for progress and/or attainment information to compile the PEP and other documentation necessary for reviews.
  - Respond positively to any request by a child to be the person they want to talk with.
  - Ensure that no child in care becomes the victim of stigmatisation at any time and that any such attitudes are swiftly reported and eradicated.
  - Positively promote the self-esteem, emotional wellbeing and mental health of children looked after.
  - Convey high aspirations for their educational and personal achievement.
12. We will endeavour to raise expectations for achievement of children looked after and encourage them to do well by combining high expectation and standards with inclusion.
13. We will consider and set appropriately challenging targets and in so doing facilitate the appropriate resources in order to support the child to reach those targets.
14. We will monitor and evaluate the impact of our school provision, teaching and learning and support for children looked after. The annual reporting cycle informs on the following key aspects of provision:
- The number of children looked after children on roll.
  - Attendance statistics for any authorised and unauthorised absence.
  - The frequency, circumstance, and reasons for any recorded exclusion.
  - How they are performing in core subjects, their progress and any value added measure when compared against initial baseline assessment.
  - The frequency of them taking part in extra-curricular activities.
  - The attainment relative to the targets set in core and foundation subjects.
  - The provision arrangements for additional support identified to include 1:1 tuition both in and out of school.
  - The quality and updating of the educational targets recorded in the PEP.
15. At Shenley Brook End School, the designated teacher will work closely with the designated safeguarding lead as we recognise that children looked after are an extremely vulnerable group, the most common reason for children becoming looked

after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect and the school is aware of the need to monitor the welfare and ensure the support of children in this category.

16. The designated teacher and safeguarding lead have details of the of the legal status of each individual looked after child's care arrangements and what the contact arrangements are with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They will also know the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her.
17. The designated teacher will work with the child, carer, virtual schools and the child's social worker to discuss how funding can be best used to support their progress and meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan and to ensure their safety and security.
18. The designated teacher will work closely with the SENCO to ensure children looked after with additional learning needs are supported appropriately.