Policy for the Education of Children in Care

At Richard Lander School we believe that all Children in Care should have equitable access to excellent educational provision and achieve in line or better than all Cornwall children and children nationally. We, as a school community, aim to be champions and advocates for Children in Care and will take a proactive approach to support their success and achievement, recognising that we have a vital role to play in promoting children and young people's social and emotional development and enhancing life outcomes.

Designated teacher for CiC Mrs Leanne Hawke. Second contact for CiC if DT unavailable Richard Holloway (DSL) or Amy Carr PP Effective Learning Mentor

Our aims to support Children in Care

- Provide a safe and secure environment, which values education and believes in the abilities and potential of all children.
- Close the gap - bring the educational attainments of our Children in Care in line or better to those of their peers.
- Ensure appropriate use of Pupil Premium Plus* to support education
- Make sure that they have access to education appropriate to their age, ability and emotional understanding. This includes access to a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum.
- Identify our schools' role to promote and support the education of our Children in Care.
- To consider engagement outside of the school curriculum to aid our pupils with their mental health, wellbeing, social groups and their sense of belonging within our community.
- All settings are required to have a Designated Teacher (DT) for Children in Care who will act as their advocate and coordinate support for them, liaising with carers, birth parents (as appropriate) and social workers and health on a wide variety of educational and care issues. This person will be required to make financial decisions in the best interest of the child
- All staff and governors are committed to ensuring improved educational life chances for Children in Care by ensuring that the relevant personnel have reasonable support and time to compete tasks and responsibilities. Also, to establish and maintain appropriate reporting and monitoring procedures, both within the school and with other agencies.

DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR CHILDREN IN CARE

(Statutory regulations from September 2009)

The Designated teacher must:

- ***Be a qualified teacher, Headteacher, EY setting manager.***
- Maintain a register of all Children in Care in the school (this includes children from both in and out of Cornwall)

- The register will include a record of: the contact person in the Virtual School for CiC (CiCESS), Care status, type of placement (e.g. foster, respite, residential, adoptive), name of Social Worker, CiC nurse, area social care office and contact number
- Liaise with SENCo / class teacher and other members of staff on a 'need to know' basis
- Ensure statutory documentation is kept up to date and is relevant to the child's needs and ability i.e. Electronic termly Personal Education Plan

The Electronic Personal Education Plan (EPEP)

The EPEP is now in place as of September 2017 – this is through Welfare Call – guidance on the Virtual school webpage

(taken from 'Promoting the education of looked after children', July 2014 DfE)

31. All looked after children must have a care plan, of which the PEP is an integral and legal part.

32. All of those involved in the process of developing the PEP should use it to support the personalised learning of the child.

33. The PEP (pre-school to age 18) is an evolving record of what needs to happen for looked after children to enable them to make expected progress and fulfil their potential. The PEP should reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning that meets the identified educational needs of the child, raises aspirations and builds life chances.

34. The quality of the PEP is the joint responsibility of the local authority that looks after the child and the school and as part of the Corporate parent role. Social workers, carers, VSHs, designated teachers and, as appropriate, other relevant professionals will need to work closely together. All of those involved in the PEP process at all stages should involve the child (according to understanding and ability) and, where appropriate, the child's parent and/or relevant family member.

PEP content

(taken from 'Promoting the education of looked after children', July 2014 DfE)

35. The range of education and development needs that should be covered in a PEP includes:

- access to a nursery or other high quality early years provision that is appropriate to the child's age (e.g. pre-school, playgroups) and that meets their identified developmental needs
- on-going catch-up support for those who have fallen behind with school work (including use of effective intervention strategies)

- provision of immediate suitable education where a child is not in school (e.g. because of temporary (FTEX) exclusion)
- appropriate transition support where needed, such as when a child begins to attend a new school or returns to school (e.g. moving from pre-school, primary to secondary school or following illness or exclusion) or when a child has a plan for gradual reintegration

37. The designated teacher leads on how the PEP is developed and used in school to make sure the child's progress towards education targets is monitored.

Information to be recorded includes:

- Daily contact and telephone numbers of those who need to be contacted in an emergency or for any other concerns. E.g. name of young person, name of parent or carer or key worker in children's home.
- Who holds parental responsibility (PR) for the child
- Share Child Protection / disability information if appropriate (if not appropriate to share, indicate the confidential nature of the information)
- Relevant health information
- Baseline information, attainment, progress and all test/ assessment results.
- Named officers in the LA with regard to exclusion issues, attendance issues and transition issues. **This is Vicky Thornton is in the Virtual school team or Emma Phillips (Virtual school Head)**
- The child is entitled to decide who attends their Children in Care Statutory Reviews (6 monthly); if school do not attend they need to submit a quality written report that promotes the continuity and stability of their personal education plan.
- Participate in appropriate termly DT training or induction training and joint agency training with The Virtual school – *there is a requirement to attend in line with annual safeguarding return the S175/157*
- If there are safeguarding concerns for a Child in Care, contact and advice should be sought from Education Safeguarding team and MARU (Multi-agency referral unit)

GOVERNORS - what every Designated Governor for CIC should know:

- **Number of CIC on school roll**
- **Number of CIC with up to date PEPs**
- **Overall attainment & progress of CIC in the school / performance compared to peers and national**
- **Number of CIC with SEN and statements / EHC Plans- level of support in place**
- **Authorised and unauthorised absence levels of CIC**
- **Number of CIC who have been excluded in previous 12 months**

- **How LA supports educational achievement of CIC**
- **Use of Pupil premium plus spend and impact on attainment**

- The Governing body should ensure the DT has opportunity to attend training.
- School staff and governors are aware of the 'Promoting the education of looked after children', July 2014 DfE

- There is a duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of Children in Care, under Section 52 of the Children's Act 2004 (still remains in place despite Act updates)

- There is a dedicated Governor or committee to champion and monitor the work of the school in supporting its Children in Care as a part of a larger group of vulnerable children
- Take a proactive approach in co-operating with, and supporting, the relevant Local Authority with regard to the education of Children in Care attending their school
- Designated teachers and staff are aware of and enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively with the full support of the head teacher

Whole school approach:

- The school celebrates the achievements of Children in Care.
- Teachers should have high expectations of the young person, encouraging achievement and ambition
- The young person will need to have a special, trusted adult in school that is able to take time to listen to them and have access to support and counselling in school if required.
- For young Children in Care, there should be clarity in relation to who is and is not allowed to collect the child from school
- All teachers within the school are made aware of the needs of Children in Care and actively promote their best interests
- Adults in school will need to be sensitive to the young person's wishes over what is known and by whom regarding their care status
- Effective assessment, recording and reporting practices are established
- Ensure that systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about Children in Care
- The designated teacher ensures that positive messages about behaviour and achievement are shared within the school and between school, carers and outside agencies, and that high educational expectations are maintained
- A nurturing approach and understanding of trauma and attachment will help to support children in care
- Support the engagement of Children in Care in out of school hours learning

- Staff work in partnership with carers and agencies and parents (where appropriate).
- Support carers to value educational achievement and improve attendance
- Teachers can help the individual begin to feel that they are fitting in and offer them a safe haven and a sympathetic ear in a crisis
- Staff are aware that being or becoming 'Child in Care' has a major impact on children's lives and that when considering children's learning and or behaviour, due consideration will be given
- Teachers can be aware of a variety of emotional issues and trauma that may undermine the young person's ability to engage in the learning process, including feelings of loss, rejection, isolation, confusion and low self-esteem
- Teachers need to be aware of possible unresolved feelings the young person may have about their own families and siblings, in addition to insecurity over their current homes and carers
- CIC have access to Pupil premium plus – from September, £300 will be allocated to every child from day one of being in care by the Virtual School head. School will receive this at the end of each term. A bid can be made via the EPEP to top this up by a further £300 if required. See EEF / Sutton trust for guidance on use, good practice and impact of PP+

Special Educational needs: see Cornwall SEND graduated response document – June 2017

- Any special educational needs are quickly identified and appropriate provision is made – early identification and action is key
- Ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when Children in Care are underachieving, and have early interventions to improve this
- Contact needs to be made with the Virtual School for CiC (CiCESS) as soon as concerns are raised
- If the child or young person has a statement of special educational need or EHC Plan, then ensure the annual review coincides with one of the six monthly Statutory Care Reviews / termly PEP meetings; dates can be obtained from the social worker.
- Please refer to SEN Code of Practice for further information

Admissions and transitions:

- CiC have priority on school admission.
- Prioritise Children in Care within schools own admissions procedures and admit students as quickly as possible, recognising the importance of re-establishing school stability for Children in Care.
- Adhere to Cornwall Council School Admission protocol
- Awareness of 'Placement of pupils out of their chronological year group', Cornwall Council guide (2015/16)

- Ensure that on admission or transfer all relevant information is obtained at the outset
- We will forward appropriate documents, in a timely fashion, to any receiving school at point of transition where the receiving school is made known
- Make every effort to provide continuity of schooling and educational experience

Attendance:

- Where attendance is a problem, a first day of absence procedure needs to be established
- Inform Education Welfare Officer / Social Worker / Virtual School if any concerns about attendance
- Acknowledge attendance in any education meetings, celebrating success and setting realistic targets if it is a concern
- If a child is on a protection plan, ensure Social worker and Carer are contacted if child is absent from school
- Children in Care should not be taken out of school for holidays
- There should be no unauthorised absences for CiC
- Safety plans to be put in place where a CiC is on a reduced timetable or CME/CMOE

Exclusion:

- Identify any Child in Care who is at risk of exclusion and contact the Virtual School (CiCESS), Social Worker and relevant professionals to put proactive strategies in place to avoid the Child in Care missing days from school
- Ensure in the case of a fixed term exclusion that the carer (or persons holding parental responsibility) and the Social Worker have been spoken to and within one day a letter has been sent specifying the period and the reasons for the exclusion, date of return, outline of the rights of carers to make representations to the governing body where appropriate and details of arrangements made to enable the excluded pupil to continue his/her education.
- Make sure in the event of any exclusion, contact is made with the Virtual School (CiCESS) with details of the exclusion outlining the reasons why the child has been excluded so that an appropriate response can be made.

Multi-agency liaison:

- The CiC Designated Teacher will need to liaise closely with carers, birth parents (if appropriate) and the pupil's social worker on a variety of

issues including homework, kit and equipment required. It is important that positive messages about behaviour and achievement are shared

- There should be a well planned and co-ordinated approach to meeting the young person's educational and social needs, for example, whether potentially disruptive changes in school can be prevented
- There needs to be clear understanding about the role and responsibility of school staff in relation to the young person and the roles and responsibilities of the other professionals involved
- School staff will need to share positive perceptions and high expectations of the young person with other professionals but especially with the young person
- The school should be aware of and sensitive to the appropriate role of the natural parents
- Designated teachers should ensure that requests from the LA for statistical information held by the school are completed and returned on time to comply with statutory obligations
- Encourage each child in care to access out of hours learning activities realising the positive impact this could have on their self –esteem and learning
- Support the young person to have the opportunity to participate fully in planning and decision making

At risk:

- Schools to be made aware / share information if they feel a CiC is at risk in any way
- Schools to be aware and have a safety plan in place with regards to absconding, going missing and or at risk of exploitation

Related documentation:

See CiCESS website on Cornwall intranet for related documentation and information

***See Cornwall's guidance on Pupil Premium Plus on web page**

www.cornwall.gov.uk/cicess

Raising standards of achievement: www.**education**.gov.uk *(as of May 2010)*

Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities
DFE July 2014

Improving the Educational Attainment of Children in Care (Looked After Children)

DCSF 2009
Improving the Attainment of Looked After Children in primary schools
DCSF 2009
Improving the Attainment of Looked After Children in secondary schools
DCSF 2009

Special Educational Needs
SEN Code of Practice 2015

The head teacher or designated teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

Date: September 2026

Review date: September 2027