

# **Houghton Regis Primary School**

## **SCHOOL POLICY FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN**

### **The Policy**

#### **The Objective:**

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of looked after children on the roll of the school.

#### **The Name of the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After for the school:**

**Mrs Karen Smith (Senco)**

#### **The Role of the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After**

##### *Within School Systems:*

- To ensure that the educational achievement of each child looked after on roll is monitored, tracked and promoted and where relevant, accelerated;
- To advise on most effective use of the Pupil Premium during the Personal Education Planning meeting.
- To ensure that the Pupil Premium funding and additional budget share funding where relevant is used to support the learning objectives for the student and to be accountable for how it is spent with outcome evidenced.
- To ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by children and young people 'in care' and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them.
- To inform members of staff of the general educational needs of children who are in care, and to promote the involvement of these children in school homework clubs, extra curricular activities, home reading schemes, school councils, etc;
- To act as an advocate for children and young people in care;
- To develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers and colleagues in Children's Services, (CS) and birth parents where appropriate
- To hold a supervisory brief for all children in care, e.g. to ensure all relevant education and care information is available to school staff where relevant and carer(s), and that this information is kept up to date, used on a need to know basis to help the student overcome obstacles to learning and progress;
- To track and support the educational progress of all children who are looked after in order to inform the school's development plan;
- To intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement by use of the Pupil Premium funding to accelerate progress,
- To intervene if there is evidence of absence from school or internal truancy;
- To inform the planning and where relevant, transition for children looked after post 16.
- To ensure that the educational targets within the Personal Education Plan are implemented fully, reviewed regularly and that all relevant school staff are aware of them.

- To report to the Governing Body at least on an annual basis on the outcomes for looked after children.
- Designated Teacher to attend training as appropriate
- To support the Quality Assurance Process for PEPs and for schools on the implementation of the role and responsibility of the Designated Teacher working with children looked after

#### *Work with Individual Children Looked After*

- To discuss with individual children, possibly alongside a carer, to arrive at a statement about their care arrangements and circumstances that they would be happy to share with staff and/or pupils;
- To enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their Care Plan;
- To ensure that the Pupil Voice section of the Central Beds Personal Education Plan is completed for each child and is the result of a one to one meeting so that the views of the student are faithfully represented in the PEP;
- To ensure that a Home-School Agreement is drawn up with the primary carer and signed by the Social Worker;
- To supervise the smooth induction of a new child looked after into the school.
- To develop in-school strategies to track, promote and accelerate the achievement of looked after children and close the gap between them and their peers.
- To fully support additional learning opportunities that may be available from the Virtual School and partner agencies

#### *Liaison:*

- To liaise with the member of school staff responsible for monitoring children on the Child Protection plan.
- To develop good communication with Children's Services, (CS) staff so that the Personal Education Plan is supported by the child's Care Plan;
- To attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or to contribute in other ways to care planning meetings and statutory reviews;
- To be named contact for colleagues in Children's Services, (CS)
- To ensure the speedy transfer of information between schools, agencies and individuals, and report on the progress and attendance of all children in care on the school role to the Virtual School as requested – attainment termly and attendance each month.

#### *Training:*

- To cascade training to school staff as appropriate.
- To attend the annual Designated Teachers conference and participate in area cluster groups for additional training and to share good practice.
- To develop knowledge of procedures by attending training events organised by the Children's Services, (CS), the Virtual School or local Designated Teachers cluster groups,
- To keep informed of any updated guidance from DfE or other research or policy.

## **School Responsibility**

It is important that all teaching staff who are in contact with the child or young person are aware that he/she is being looked after by the Local Authority. The responsibility for the transfer of this information should be that of the Head Teacher and/or the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children (LAC).

It is appropriate for a classroom teaching assistant to have knowledge that the young person is in care only when directly involved in the teaching of the young person.

In the absence of the usual class teacher, some information regarding the child's circumstances should be shared with the teacher covering the class. The extent of this sharing should be determined by the Headteacher or the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After.

### **Admission Arrangements**

On admission, records will be requested from the pupil's previous school and a meeting will be held with carer/parent/Social Worker as appropriate – but always involving someone with parental responsibility. This will provide information to inform the Personal Education Plan. An appropriate school induction will take place.

### **Involve the Young Person**

It is important that a young person is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. How this is shared with them clearly depends on their age and understanding. The explanation should emphasise that the school, the Social Worker, and their carer(s) are working together to promote their education.

It is important that the young person is supported to complete the Pupil Voice section of the Personal Education Plan by the Designated Teacher to inform the PEP and Care Plan review meetings

It is important to establish the child's view of their changed circumstances and what they want others to know. It is also important to ensure that a Social Worker/teacher/carer prepares the child for situations when they may be asked about home, e.g. by other pupils in the playground.

### **Communication with Other Agencies**

The school will ensure that a copy of all reports (e.g. End of year reports) will be forwarded to the young person's Social Worker in addition to the foster carer or Residential Social Worker and if appropriate parent/s and the Virtual School.

Schools and education and social work colleagues within Children's Services should endeavour to co-ordinate their review meetings, e.g. to have an Annual or a Statement Review and a Personal Education Plan meeting or review.

It is important to exchange information between formal reviews if there are significant changes in the young person's circumstances, e.g. if school is considering an

change of course, there is a change of care placement or there are significant issues that will affect educational provision eg; behaviour or attendance.

### **Assessment, Monitoring and Review Procedures**

Each pupil in care will have a Care Plan that will include a Personal Education Plan (PEP) that is developed jointly by the Social Worker and Designated Teacher. This will identify specific areas of focus and include targets and associated action to improve the student performance or educational achievement. Areas for consideration will include:

- Achievement (academic or otherwise);
- Development needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge or subject areas and experiences); and
- Long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations).
- Educational Data so that progress may be easily tracked between Key Stages
- Extended learning opportunities;
- Involvement in Out of School Hours Activities;
- Special needs (if any);
- Attendance;
- Behaviour.

The PEP will be updated and reviewed at least bi-annually or at the point of any major change and contribute to the Statutory Reviewing process carried out by the Independent Reviewing Officer. The Designated Teacher is accountable for the implementation and review of the educational action to meet the targets within the Plan.