



Castlethorpe First School – Newton Blossomville CE School – North Crawley CE School  
Sherington CE School – Stoke Goldington CE School

*The Village Schools Federation aspires to nurture and inspire every child to experience life in all its fullness. Our schools are rooted in inclusive Christian values to enable all to flourish by building knowledge, confidence and resilience for the future. We strive to be the best we can be.*

*“Whatever we do, we work at it with all our heart”*

*Colossians 3:23*

## **Looked After Children Policy**

The Governing Body of the Village Schools Federation is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. This Governing Body recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of children in residential and foster care, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles of practice, as outlined in ‘Guidance on the Education of Looked After Children’ (May 2000) and Section 52 of the Children Act 2004. Children who are ‘looked after’ may be ‘accommodated’ ‘in care’ or ‘remanded/detained’ as follows:

### **Accommodated (Section 20)**

This is a voluntary arrangement, because parents are ill, missing, unable to cope, or as part of a child protection plan negotiated with the family. The parents retain parental responsibility.

### **In Care**

A child is in care only if a court has granted a Care Order which it will issue if it believes a child to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. A care order generally gives parental responsibility to the local authority, or shares this with the parents.

### **Remanded/Detained**

A child can be remanded or detained as in the following:

- an emergency protection order
- removed by police using their powers of protection
- remanded by a court following criminal charges

- a court directing a social services department to accommodate a child (already on a supervision order for criminal behaviour) for up to six months

**Looked After Children may (or may not) have some or all of the following issues:**

- low self esteem
- poor education standards due to time out of school
- delayed social/emotional/cognitive development
- be bullied or bully others
- be prone to mental health issues
- be isolated with few friends
- have behaviour issues
- poor attachment to others
- have a need to be very private

This makes them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life-chances. The Governing Body of the Village Schools Federation, is committed to ensuring that these children are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following are in place, and are working effectively:

- a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children
- Personal Education Plans for all Looked After Children
- all staff have a clear understanding of confidentiality and issues that affect looked after children
- effective strategies that support the education of this vulnerable group

**Role and responsibility of the Designated Teacher**

The Designated Teacher should:

- be an advocate for Looked After Children
- when new to the school, ensure a smooth and welcome induction for the child and carer, and note any specific requirements, including care status
- ensure that a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is completed, as soon as possible. This should be prepared with the child and the carer, in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies, and be linked to the Care Plan meetings, within 28 days, 3 months and 6 months and, at least, every 6 months; a flow chart showing PEP completion can be found in appendix 1 at the end of this policy
- keep PEP's and other records up to date, particularly in time to inform review meetings
- ensure that each child in public care (if they wish) has an identified member of staff they can talk to (this should be based on the child's request, and may not necessarily be the Designated Teacher)
- co-ordinate support for the child in the school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary
- ensure staff receive relevant information and training and act as an advisor to staff and governors

- ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis
- provide written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible
- ensure that the child and carer(s) receive early notification of meetings, parent's evenings and other events and that communication remains regular and positive
- encourage Looked After Children to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning, where feasible
- ensure speedy transfer of information between individuals and other relevant agencies and to a new school if and when the child transfers
- seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded
- ensure that any returns on looked after children are completed – as requested by the Local Authority

#### **Roles and responsibilities of all staff**

- ensure that any child in public care is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained
- be familiar with and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings
- respond positively to a child in public care's request to be the named person that they can talk to when they feel it is necessary
- contribute to the Designated Teacher's requests for information on educational attainment and needs, as appropriate
- as with all children, ensure that no child in public care is stigmatised in any way
- provide a supportive climate to enable a child in public care to achieve stability within the school setting
- as with all children, have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children
- positively promote the self-esteem of Looked After Children

#### **Role and responsibility of the governing body**

The Governing Body of the Village Schools Federation will:

- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for Looked After Children
- be aware of whether the Federation has Looked After Children and how many (without names)
- ensure that there is a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children
- liaise with the Executive Headteacher to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his/her responsibilities in relation to Looked After Children
- support the Executive Headteacher, Designated Teacher and other staff ensuring that the needs of Looked After Children are met
- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the Governing Body (these reports should

not include any names of individual children for child protection and confidentiality reasons).

- review the effective implementation of this policy at least every three years

### **Confidentiality**

- information on Looked After Children will be shared with school staff on a 'need to know' basis
- the Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with the social worker, carer, young person, and other parties; complete confidentiality is to be maintained

### **Training**

- the Executive Headteacher or the Designated Teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy

Written: April 2025

Next Review: April 2028

**PERSONAL EDUCATION PLAN (PEP) COMPLETING**

Social worker informs the school of a child becoming looked after  
(or a looked after child entering the school)

A date is set for the completion of a Personal Education Plan (PEP)

A copy of the form is sent to the school to enable completion of educational data  
PEP meeting takes place within 20 days, involving the social worker, Designated Teacher  
(or other appropriate staff), carer and young person if appropriate

A date is set for the next PEP meeting

PEP is taken to the child's statutory review and discussed within the wider context  
of the child's life

PEP sent by social worker to the LAC team