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*

# Children We Care For Policy

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| **Approved by Governing Board:** | 21.10.2026 |
| **Written:** | October 2026 |
| **Next review by:** | October 2027 |

## Designated Teacher: Mrs A Underwood (SENCo)
## Designated Governor: Mrs F Gale (Safeguarding Governor)

Nationally, Children we care for significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. At the Village Schools Federation, we strive to ensure that Children we care for in all of our schools are well prepared for the next steps in their lives. We aim to provide them with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful, enthusiastic learners and responsible individuals by providing a positive, safe and stimulating environment where all are included and achievements are celebrated.

## Children we care for are defined as:

- Children or young people who are the subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989.
- Children who are placed in foster care, children's residential homes, with relatives or friends, in semi-independent or supported independent accommodation.
- Children subject to a Care or Interim Care Order whilst placed with a parent, where the LA has parental responsibility.
- Children who are not subject to an order, but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents or respite care.

## Children previously cared for are defined as:

- Children who are no longer cared for by an LA in England and Wales because they have either been adopted or are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order.
- Children who were adopted outside England and Wales from 'state care' (care that is provided by a public authority, religious organisation, or other organisation whose main purpose is to benefit society).

## Children with a social worker are defined as:

- Children who have been assessed as needing or previously needing a social worker within the past 6 years due to safeguarding or welfare reasons under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

## Children in kinship care are defined as:

- Children living in informal arrangements made by their birth parents with a close relative, or by default, for example because their birth parent has died or abandoned them.
- Children cared for by the local authority and placed with kinship foster carers.
- Children living in arrangements which are due to lead to adoption by a relative or friend.
- Children living with testamentary guardians when a parent has died.

They may be on a Child Arrangement Order or Special Guardianship Order granted by the court.

LAC reviews, involving the school, will take place up until an adoption order has been granted. However, Pupil Premium Plus funding will continue for LAC until they are 16 years old.

As stated in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Virtual School Heads have a statutory responsibility for Children we care for and Previously Children we care for, and a non-statutory responsibility for promoting the educational outcomes of children with a social worker and children in kinship care. The school works with the Virtual School Head in supporting these children;

- To provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children.
- To support our Children we care for and give them access to every opportunity to achieve their potential, enjoy learning and take as full a part as possible in all school activities.
- To ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for LAC as for all children.
- To work with the Virtual School and ensure that carers and social workers of LAC pupils are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment.
- To fulfil our school's role as Corporate Parents to promote and support the education of our Children we care for, by asking the question, 'Would this be good enough for my child?'

Our school's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Children we care for is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education
- Promoting attendance
- Targeting support
- Having high expectations
- Promoting inclusion
- Raising aspiration
- Achieving stability and continuity
- Early intervention and priority action
- Listening to children
- Promoting health and well-being
- Reducing exclusions and promoting stability
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals

Inclusion is central to our approach to supporting children who are cared for. We are committed to ensuring that every child feels safe, valued, and fully part of our school community, regardless of their background or circumstances. We recognise that Children we care for may face additional challenges, and we respond with sensitivity, high expectations, and tailored support to meet their individual needs.

Through strong relationships, consistent routines, and a nurturing environment, we aim to remove barriers to learning and participation. We work closely with carers, social workers, and external professionals to ensure a coordinated approach, enabling each child to thrive both academically and personally.

- Our Designated Teacher for Children we care for will act as their advocate and co¬ordinate support for them.
- Our nominated school governor ensures that the needs of Children we care for in the schools are taken into account at a school management level and to support the Designated Teacher.

- Support the Designated Teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend training on Children we care for.
- Work closely with the Virtual School and Social Care in the best interests of LAC and in completion of the Personal Education Plan (PEP).

## Designated Teacher (DT)

The role became statutory in September 2009 under the Children and Young Persons' Act 2008. The Designated Teacher must be a qualified teacher or a member of staff. Ideally, they should be a senior member of staff who has enough status and experience to advise and provide training to school staff on issues relating to LAC. They need to be able to influence decisions about the teaching and learning of these children.

**DT Responsibilities:**

- Knowing who all the LAC are in our schools and ensuring availability of all relevant details from school record-keeping systems as required.
- Attending relevant training about LAC and acting as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to LAC.
- Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how LAC should learn.
- Helping school staff understand the issues that affect the learning of LAC, including advising on adapted learning.
- Making sure that LAC are prioritised in one-to-one tuition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home.
- Removing the barriers to learning for LAC.
- Ensuring any LAC new to the school are welcomed positively and assessed when they start at the school to identify strengths and weaknesses in their learning. This will be used to inform planning and teaching.
- Developing personalised learning packages for LAC in conjunction with the relevant teaching staff.
- Ensuring that the LAC in their school have a voice in setting learning targets for themselves.
- Championing for LAC.
- Leading on developing and implementing the PEP within the school. The social worker is responsible for initiating the PEP process completing the relevant pages of the ePEP form.
- Monitoring the child's progress against the targets on the PEP and extending these targets if they have been achieved.
- Ensuring the child makes a smooth transition to the new school and that the child's records are transferred without delay.
- Liaising with the Virtual School in all aspects of the LAC progress and support.
- Communicate with the Virtual School to manage allocation of PP+ for the benefit of LAC.
- Manage PP+ for Previously Children we care for to support educational attainment and personal development.
- Convening urgent multi-agency meetings if a LAC is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion.
- Arranging for a mentor or key worker to whom the young person can talk to.
- Arranging for the LAC to be supported by their peers.
- Producing at least one annual report to the governing body which should include: current progress, attendance and exclusions (if any), any concerns regarding behaviour, how the PEP has been implemented and whether the actions put in place are effective in addressing the learning needs of LAC, how the DT works in partnership with the LA, training undertaken for

carrying out the role effectively. The report must not mention the children's names for confidentiality reasons.

- Promoting good home-school links and the importance of education as a way of improving life chances for LAC.
- Ensuring that, where the school has concerns about a child's behaviour, the Virtual School is informed at the earliest opportunity and additional support is provided to prevent exclusion, which would only be used as an absolute last resort.
- Considering the needs of LAC and PLAC when designing and implementing the school's Behaviour Policy.
- Support the local authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of Children we care for.
- Ensure that the DT is given the appropriate level of support in order to fulfil their role.
- In partnership with the Executive Headteacher, ensure that, through their training and development, the DT has the opportunity to acquire and keep up-to-date the necessary skills, knowledge and training to understand the respond to the specific teaching and learning needs of LAC.
- Governing bodies and the SLT should make sure that the DT role contributes to the deeper understanding of everyone in the school who is likely to be involved in supporting LAC to achieve.
- The governing body, in partnership with the Executive Headteacher, is responsible for monitoring how well the role is working. As part of this monitoring an annual report will be received from the DT.

This policy links with a number of other school policies/procedures and it is important that Governors have regard to the needs of Children we care for when reviewing them:

- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying and Anti-Hate Policy
- Home-school agreement
- Equality Policy
- Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding Procedures
- Safeguarding Statement
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy (SEND)

Our schools will champion the needs of Children we care for, raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them, in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible.

For more information please see:

Promoting the Education of Children we care for

NSPCC Children we care for

Milton Keynes City Council - The Virtual School