



CHILDREN IN CARE (Looked-after children)

Brierley CE (VC) Primary School

Our Vision

Though we are many, we are one body. Together, we learn and grow.

God is at the heart of all we do, shining His light to guide us on our journey. Together, we face change and transformation with courage.

In love, we nurture all to be resilient, hopeful and aspirational; to become the very best version of ourselves, knowing that we are loved.

Each member of our school community is honoured and celebrated for their unique character and qualities: difference is met with dignity and compassion. Though we are many, we are one body.

Our community at Brierley stretches beyond the school, where we share God's message of love through our actions, our thoughts and our words as we continue on life's path.

Designated teacher for Children in Care – Sharon Gough

What do we mean by the Children in Care?

Children and young people become "looked after" either if they have been taken into care by the local authority or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most will be living in foster homes but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even be placed back at home with their natural parent(s).

A Child in care will have a care manager (Social Services Division) who arranges for the pupil's care plan.

The Governing Body of Brierley CE (VC) Primary School is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. This commitment is in line with BMBC's 'Pledge to Children and Young People in Care'. This Governing Body recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of Children in care when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in DfE statutory guidance 'Promoting the education of looked-after children – 2014 and noting the guidance in 'Children Looked-after in England including adoption 2016 to 2017 and the Children Act (2004). The Children Act places a duty to safeguard Children in care, to promote their educational achievements and to ensure that they are able to achieve and reach their full potential. The Guidance recognises the collective responsibility of local authorities and schools to achieve good parenting and sets out six principles:-

- Prioritising education
- Having high expectations
- Inclusion – changing and challenging attitudes
- Achieving continuity and stability
- Early intervention – priority, action and
- Listening to children

The Guidance introduced two key measures in order to improve multi-agency co-ordination and improve educational life chances for Children in care

- Designated teachers for every school – designated teacher is Mrs S Gough
- Personal Education Plans (PEPs) for all Children in care
- This Governing Body is committed to ensuring that designated teachers and staff are enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher should:-

- Be an advocate for Children in care;
- When new to the school, ensure a smooth and welcome induction for the child and carer(s) (and parent(s) where possible).
- Note any specific requirements, including care status;
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed (within 20 days of entering care or joining a school). This should be prepared with the child and the care(s) (and parent(s), if possible), in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies, and be linked to the Care Plan meetings, where in place. Where appropriate, the PEP should take account of any Special Needs Support, Pastoral Support Plan (PSP), Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP), or any other relevant plan. The PEP should inform and be reviewed, concurrently with the Care Plan, i.e. within 28 days, 3 months and 6 months and thereafter, at least, every 6 months.
- Keep PEPs and other records up to date, particularly in time to inform review meetings;
- Ensure entry to examinations for all Children in care
- 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, carer(s) (and parent(s) if possible) receive early notification of meetings, parent's evenings and other events and that communication remains regular and positive. A Home School Agreement may be adapted to take into account any specific points around communication, transport arrangements and consent signatures.

- Encourage Children in care to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning;
- 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.

Roles and Responsibilities of all Staff

- As with all children, have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Children in care;
- Ensure entry to examinations for Children in care;
- Ensure that any Child in care is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained.
- Ensure access to information regarding the Guidance on Children in care 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 care 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;
- Liaise with the Designated Teacher where a Child in care is experiencing difficulty;
- As with all children, ensure that no Child in care is stigmatised in any way;
- Provide a supportive climate to enable a Child in care to achieve stability within the school setting;
- Positively promote the self-esteem of Children in care.

Role and Responsibility of the Governing Body

The governing body of this school will:

- Ensure that admission criteria prioritise Children in care, according to the Code of Practice on Admissions;
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Children in care;
- Be aware of whether the school has Children in care and the numbers on roll (NO names);
- Ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Children in care;
- Liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out her/his responsibilities in relation to Children in care.
- Support the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of Children in care are met;
- Nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher (Mrs Gough), receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body which should include:
 - The number of Children in care in school (if any)
 - Their attendance, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils
 - Their SAT scores, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils
 - The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any)
 - The destinations of pupils who leave the school
- For child protection and confidentiality reasons, ensure that information will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity, and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned;
- Review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years;
- Ensure that the school's other policies and procedures give Children in care equal access in respect of:
 - Admission to school
 - The National Curriculum
 - Additional educational support where this is needed.
 - Extra-curricular activities

Training

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

Related Policies

This Policy links with a number of other school policies, particularly:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Home School Agreement
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy

For further information go to <https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/children-families-and-education/children-in-care/>

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