

# **AIRE VIEW INFANT SCHOOL**

## **Children in Care Policy**

**N.B. This policy is subject to statutory annual review**

**Last Review: Nov 2014**

**Next Review: Sept 2016**

**Aire View Infant School**

**Elliott Street Silsden**

**BD20 0AW**

**Tel: 01535 653290**

**Approved: 29th September 2015**

**Chair of Pupil Progress and Welfare Committee:**

Steve Wilkinson

At Aire View Infant School we are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children, staff and families in our school. The term Children in Care refers to children and young people who are either on Care Orders or Accommodated under the Children Act 1989. In addition to families and schools the Local Authority has parental responsibility for all Children in Care.

**Policy Objective:**

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of Children in Care.

**Designated Person Responsible for Children in Care:**

The Head Teacher/SENCO

**Role of the Designated Person: In school**

- To ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantages faced by children and young people in Care and understand the need for positive systems to overcome them
- To inform members of staff of the individual needs of Children in Care and to promote the involvement of them in school clubs, extra-curricular activities etc.
- To act as an advocate for Children in Care;
- To develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers and colleagues in Children's Social Care who support the child
- To ensure all relevant education and care information is available to school staff and carers and that this information is kept up to date
- To monitor the educational progress of all Children in Care in order to inform the school's development plan

- To intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement e.g. absence from school, risk of exclusion

- To develop knowledge of statutory responsibilities and procedures for Children in Care by attending relevant training events and cascade these to staff

- To manage the deployment of devolved pupil premium and evaluate its impact on progress

- To report annually to Governors on the progress of looked after pupils **With Children:**

- To arrange in school a child's Personal Education Plan (PEP) meeting in partnership with the Social Worker

- To ensure that actions identified in the PEP are implemented and reviewed

- To facilitate the completion of the child's section of the PEP

- To supervise the admission of new Children in Care and ensure appropriate induction into the school

**With other Colleagues and Agencies:**

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- To be the first point of contact for other professionals working with Children in Care and ensure the speedy transfer of information between agencies

- To liaise with the Designated Person of a receiving school on the child's transfer to another school to ensure effective integration where applicable

- To ensure the PEP informs the child's Care Plan and Looked After Children (LAC) Reviews

- to attend LAC Reviews if appropriate There is a

named governor with special responsibility for Children in Care (see governor responsibility list). **The Role of the Governor for Children in Care:** The named Governor or Designated Person will report to the Governing Body on an annual basis:

- The number of Children in Care on roll
- Standards achieved
- Attendance
- Incidence of fixed term or permanent exclusions

The named Governor should be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that Children in Care have equal and sometimes priority access to:

- Admissions
- Additional educational support
- Extra-curricular activities

**School Responsibility:** Personal Education Plans (PEP) are a statutory requirement for children and young people who are subject to Care Orders, Interim Care Orders and S20 Accommodation. The school is responsible for working in partnership with the child's Social Worker to draw up and review the PEP. **The child's first PEP will be held within 10 working days of a child entering care in time for the first LAC review (which is within 20 days).** The second review is at 3 months and then it's every six months. A current PEP should be in evidence at every statutory review and updated if a significant change occurs, e.g. change of school. PEP meetings should take place in school with relevant members of staff, the social worker, the carer and the child or young person as appropriate (see Personal Education Plan 'Guidelines for Social Workers and Designated Teachers'). It is very important that confidentiality for Children in Care is respected and that information is shared on a 'needs to know' basis – many children state that they do not want staff and other pupils to know of their situation. However, in order to

both understand a child's needs and act to ensure positive systems of support are met schoolwide, it is clearly essential that all teaching staff who are in contact with the child or young person are aware that he/she is in Care and being looked after by the local authority. It is appropriate for a Teaching Assistant to have knowledge that a child is in Care only when directly involved in teaching that child.

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In both cases the extent of the sharing of information should be determined by the Designated Person - the Head Teacher.

### **Pupil Premium Plus (PPP)**

Pupil Premium is additional funding to help close the attainment gap between children from low-income or other disadvantaged families and their peers, whilst enhancing the learning journey and achievement of Looked After Children. PPP is not ring-fenced for the individual child at school but it is used for looked after pupils as a group. PPP will always be allocated against targets within the PEPs of looked after pupils.

Additional funding will be accessed (from the centrally retained element of the PPP) for four categories of looked after children on the request of the school:

- new into care pupils at the initial PEP meeting. This is additional to the devolved PPP that arrives at the end of the first term and meets immediate settling-in needs at the time of coming into care
- A child on a short-term care placement who falls between termly census dates
- Children leaving care at adoption to ensure targets are maintained until the post LAC premium is received
- Low incidence/ high need pupils who arrive in school at short notice where support is not available from

**SEN or health** **Involve the Child:** It is important that a child is aware that information regarding their personal circumstances is known by the school. How this is shared with them clearly depends on their age and understanding. The explanation should emphasise that the school, the social worker and carers are working together to promote their education. For a child newly in Care it is important to establish his/her view of their changed circumstances and to monitor how this is impacting on behaviour and performance at school. Children may benefit from some preparation for when they may be asked about home by other pupils or staff.

**Admission Arrangements:** Children in Care are given top priority in terms of admission to school and are expected to be taken over numbers unless there are exceptional circumstances. On admission, records will be requested from the child's previous school and a meeting will be held with the carer/parent(s)/social worker as appropriate – but always involving someone with parental responsibility. At this meeting a date to draw up/review the PEP can be agreed. An appropriate induction must always take place. **Exclusion from School:**

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It should be noted that the guidance to schools on exclusion draws particular attention to Children in Care as a group especially at risk of exclusion. Schools should try every practicable means to maintain the child in school and should seek LA advice and other professional advice as appropriate. The child's social worker should in all cases be involved at the earliest opportunity in working with the school to avoid the need to exclude a child. In cases where a Child in Care is excluded, anyone who is legally defined as a parent will have the right to make representations and to appeal.

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