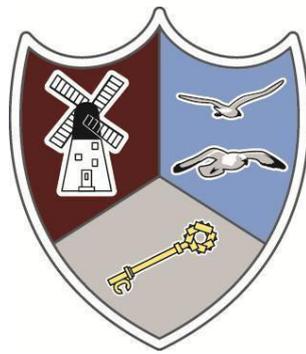




Proud to be a **Bright Futures EDUCATIONAL TRUST** school

Marion Primary Academy & Nursery



Working Together To Be The Best We Can Be

Looked After Children Policy

January 2020

MARTON PRIMARY ACADEMY AND NURSERY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

‘Working together to be the best we can be’

Marton Primary Academy and Nursery aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils who are looked after (CLA).

Designated Teacher for LAC: Miss Jo Reid Named

Governor for LAC: Mrs Terry Hodkinson

The views of Blackpool’s Looked After Children and Care Leavers have been included in this policy. See Appendix 1.

The Governing Body is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes. The policy includes requirements set out in “Statutory guidance on the duty of local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children” under section 52 of the Children Act 2004 and takes into account revisions from the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 and associated guidance on the education of CLA. We aim to contribute towards achieving the best outcomes.

The aims of the academy are to:

- ensure that school policies and procedure are followed for CLA as for all children;
- ensure that all CLA have access to a broad and balanced curriculum;
- provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual’s needs and ability;
- ensure that CLA pupils take as full a part as possible in all school activities;
- ensure that carers and social workers of CLA pupils are kept fully informed of their child’s progress and attainment;
- ensure that CLA pupils are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision.

Who are Looked After Children?

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They fall into four main groups:

- children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)

- children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- children who are subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
- children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21).

The term **‘in care’** refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989- they may live with foster carers, in a Children’s home, in a residential school, with relatives or with parents under supervision, Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are **‘accommodated’** by the Local Authority under section 20 of the Children Act- they may live in foster care, in a Children’s home or in a residential school. All these groups are said to be **‘Children Looked After’** – CLA. They may be looked after by our Local Authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

Admissions

The Governing Body endorses council policy. The Council, as the Admission Authority for Academies, believes that admissions criteria should give the highest priority to CLA. Due to care placement changes, CLA may enter school mid-term. It is vital that we give them a positive welcome as we would all children. If necessary we may offer additional support and pre-entry visits to help the new pupil settle.

Inclusion

This policy recognises that all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broadly based curriculum. Our CLA policy reinforces the need for teaching that is fully inclusive. The Governing Body will ensure the school makes appropriate provision for all CLA pupils.

Allocation of resources

The Governing Body will ensure that the school allocates resources to support appropriate provision for CLA, meeting the objectives set out in this policy.

Monitoring the progress of CLA

An electronic Personal Education Plan- ePEP or the young children’s Personal Development Plan will be initiated – within 20 days of the CLA joining the school, or of entering care, and the school should ensure that the young person is actively involved. It is vital that the school assesses each CLA’s attainment on entry to ensure continuity of learning.

The school will monitor and track the achievement and attainment of all pupils at regular intervals. CLA will require their ePEP to be reviewed, according to their needs, as initiated by the reviewing office or social worker, and the young person's views should be entered on the ePEP.

See Appendix 3- Guidance on the completion of the ePEP

Record Keeping

The Designated Teacher will know who are the CLA in school and will have access to their relevant contact details including birth parents, carers and social worker. The Designated Teacher will also know about any CLA from other authorities. It is important that the school flags LAC status appropriately in the school's information systems so that information is readily available as required. The school should complete the PEP on the format required by the placing authority.

Staff Development

We encourage staff to attend courses that help them to acquire the skills needed to support CLA. Part of the Designated Teacher's role is to develop awareness of issues associated with CLA.

Partnership with parents/carers and care workers

At Marton Primary Academy & Nursery we firmly believe in developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable CLA to achieve their potential. Review meetings are an opportunity to further this working partnership.

Links with external agencies/organisations

We also recognise the important contribution that external support services make in supporting CLA. Colleagues from the following support services may be involved with individual CLA:

- Virtual School
- Educational Psychologists and others from Local Authority SEND services
- Special School Outreach Services
- Medical officers
- School nurses
- CAMHS/SST
- Pupil Welfare Officers
- Social Care Worker/Community Care Worker/ Residential Child Care Worker
- Youth Offending Team

- Parent Support Officer for SEN pupils.

CLA policy review and evaluation

We consider the CLA policy to be important and we undertake a thorough review of both policy and practice each year. The findings of this review are used to inform the School Improvement Plan priorities.

Role of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher has a leadership role in promoting the educational achievement of every looked after child on the school's roll. The role should make a positive difference by promoting a whole school culture where the personalised learning needs of every looked after child matters and their personal, emotional and academic needs are prioritised. The designated teacher should have lead responsibility for helping school staff to understand the things which can affect how looked after children learn and achieve.

Role of Governing Body

From 1st September 2009 the Governing Bodies of all maintained schools and academies are required under the Children and Young Person's Act 2008 to appoint a Designated Teacher for CLA. This person must be a qualified teacher or be undertaking training to become a qualified teacher.

As a minimum the Governing Body must consider an annual report from the designated teacher which contains information about:

- Workload issues arising from the number of CLA or the number of LAs involved;
- Levels of progress made by the CLA on the school roll;
- Patterns of attendance and exclusion;
- Process or planning issues arising from the completion of the ePEP;
- Whether any CLA are identified as gifted and talented or as having SEND.

This policy was compiled by Miss Jo Reid, Inclusion Leader and Designated Teacher for Children Looked After.

It will be reviewed in Spring 2021.

APPENDIX 1

Looked After Children say...

- “Staying in the same school is important so you can keep friends and you don’t have to start all over again.”
- “I don’t want people knowing my business.”
- “It’s our choice who we tell; it’s our lives.”
- “The [Designated] teacher is good and I know where they are if I need them; I think we should know if they change too.”
- “It is important for us to be involved in plans for our education cos it’s our life but the meetings need to be less boring.”
- “I would like to know what is in my PEP.”

Blackpool Pledge Conference
May 2010

APPENDIX 2

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Rationale for roles and responsibilities:

Children who are continually looked after (CLA) are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational underachievement when compared to their peers.

Children who are looked after may experience:

- a high level of disruption and change in school placements;
- lack of involvement in extra-curricular activities;
- inconsistent or no attention paid to homework;
- extremely low self-esteem.

This may result in:

- poor exam success rates in comparison with the general population;
- underachievement in further and higher education.

These issues may also affect adopted young people.

The majority of children who remain in care are there because they have suffered abuse or neglect.

To date the outcomes achieved by CLA have been unacceptably poor and the Government is committed to addressing the disparity. As corporate parents we all have a part to play in this, vigorously applying the principles of good parenting by:

- giving priority to education;
- listening to children;
- providing stability and continuity;
- taking corporate responsibility;
- promoting inclusion;
- raising standards;
- intervening early;
- promoting early years experiences;
- celebrating success;
- monitoring attendance and early intervention for any issues.

The Designated Teacher will:

- be a qualified teacher, good practice suggests they should be a member of the SLT;
- be an advocate for CLA within school;

- give regard to the impact of relevant decisions for CLA on both the CLA and the rest of the school community;
- know who are all the CLA in school, including those in the care of other authorities, and ensure the availability of all relevant details from school record-keeping systems as required;
- attend relevant training about CLA;
- ensure the CLA receive a positive welcome on entering school, especially mid year and, if necessary, offer additional support and a pre-entry visit to help the new pupil settle;
- ensure that all CLA have an appropriate PEP that is completed within 20 days of joining the school or of entering care and ensure that the young person contributes to the plan OR ensure that the Annual Review of Statement process meets the requirements of the PEP;
- keep PEPs and other records up to date and review PEPs at transfer and at six monthly intervals;
- convene an urgent multi-agency meeting if a CLA is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion;
- ensure confidentiality on individual children, sharing confidential and personal information on a need to know basis, bearing in mind the wishes of the individual pupil;
- act as the key adviser for staff liaison for staff and governors on issues relevant to CLA;
- ensure that care and school liaison is effective, including invitations to meetings and other school events;
- actively encourage and promote out of hours learning and extra-curricular activities for CLA;
- ensure a speedy transfer of information, records and coursework, where appropriate, when a CLA transfers to another educational placement;
- contribute information to CLA reviews when required;
- report to the Governing body on CLA in the school and inform of relevant policy and practice development;
- agree with the social worker the appropriate people to invite to parents' evenings etc;
- prepare reports for Governors' meetings to include:
 - ❖ the number of CLA on roll and the confirmation that they have an ePEP;
 - ❖ their attendance compared to other pupils;
 - ❖ their attainment (SATs) compared to other pupils;
 - ❖ the number, if any, of fixed term and permanent exclusions;
 - ❖ the destinations of pupils who leave the school;
- attend governor meetings as appropriate – such as the admission, disciplinary and exclusion of CLA;
- arrange a mentor or 'buddy' (adult and /or pupil to whom the young person can talk,) particularly when the pupil is new to school;
- ensure that any Special Educational Needs are addressed in conjunction with the SENCO and in accordance with the Code of Practice for SEN; (CLA are ten times more likely to have a statement of Special Educational Needs than the general school population.)
- develop a relationship with parents/carers of CLA.

Good practice suggests that all academy staff will:

- follow school procedures;
- keep the Designated Teacher informed about a CLA's progress;
- have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of CLA;
- positively promote the raising of a CLA's self-esteem;
- ensure any CLA is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained;
- be familiar with the school's policy and guidance on CLA and respond appropriately to requests for information to support ePEPs and review meetings;
- liaise with the Designated Teachers where a CLA is experiencing difficulties;
- give only official exclusions and only use exclusions in line with the school's exclusion policy, and relevant national guidance, being mindful to the difficulties this may create in the care placement;
- contribute to regular liaison with social care colleagues and other appropriate professionals and keep carers fully informed at all times;
- keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to other professionals/ parents/carers/pupil as appropriate;
- make extra copies of reports available when required.

Good practice suggests that the Governing Body will:

- ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritises CLA according to the DFE Admissions Code of Practice;
- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for CLA;
- ensure there is a Designated Teacher for CLA;
- liaise with the Principal, Designated Teacher and all other staff to ensure the needs of CLA are met;
- nominate a governor with responsibility for CLA who links with the Designated Teacher;
- receive regular reports from the Designated Teacher;
- ensure that the school's policies and procedures give CLA equal access in respect of:
 - ❖ admission to school;
 - ❖ Curriculum and examinations, out of school learning and extra-curricular activities;
 - ❖ work experience and carers guidance.
- annually review the effective implementation of the school policy for CLA;
- ensure that the Designated Teacher is invited to the exclusion meetings of CLA.

The Local Authority will:

- lead the drive to improve educational and social care standards for CLA;
- ensure that the education for this group is as good as that provided for every other Blackpool pupil;
- ensure that CLA receive a full-time education in a mainstream setting wherever possible;
- ensure that every CLA has a school to go to within 20 days of coming into care or of coming to Blackpool from another authority upon official notification of placement;
- make sure that each CLA has an ePEP according to national guidance;
- ensure that every school has a Designated Teacher for CLA and that these teachers receive appropriate information, support and training;
- provide alternative educational provision where appropriate and where available;
- ensure that appropriate support is provided whenever possible;
- work with others to provide smooth transitions at the end of the Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1, 2 and 4 and at any mid-phase transfer;
- identify a designated officer who has responsibility for championing the education of CLA;
- be vigilant and proactive in identifying the special educational needs of CLA and work collaboratively with other services and agencies to meet those needs:

Local Authority contact numbers for the Education of CLA are:

Jeremy Mannino, Head of Virtual School for CLA: 01253 477684 or 07713 256854

Gemma Newton, Education officer for CLA: 01253 477027 or 07917394590

Patrick O'Donnell, Pupil Achievement Support Officer: 01253 477027 or 07917424438

Elvi Livesey, Educational Psychologist for CLA

APPENDIX 3 – PEP GUIDANCE

1. Type in :
 - welfarecall
2. Next screen:
 - Username –
 - Password –
3. Next screen says Welcome
 - From **Actions** list click on
 - „View your learners“
4. Click on one of the children"s names.
5. Find box which says '**Current Assessments**' or '**ePEP**' and click on **View**
6. Next screen – **Section 1** has been completed by the social worker, **Section 2** should be completed by school. **On every page you must click 'Save changes' in the bottom right hand corner.** Close the screen.
7. You have returned to the original screen. Find **Progress Tracking**. Mark the designated teacher part as complete.
8. Next with the complete the interactive pupil voice section with the child. Go through the questions and these will feed into part 3 of the professional part.
9. Return to the original screen. Mark the child"s part as complete. Find **Assessment Details**. Click on **Edit**. Tick the box **Assessment has been completed** and enter the date if it"s not today"s.
10. For pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs the process of the Annual Review of Statement will fulfil the requirements of the PEP and a PEP sheet will be attached to the Annual Review Summary. Where a pupil becomes looked after between Annual Reviews, the legal status, carer details and new address will be noted and attached.