

Longdean School



Children in Public Care Policy

Reviewed: October 2010
Ratified: October 2010
Next review: October 2011

Policy for Children in Public Care

The objective:

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of students in care.

The Name of the Designated Teacher for Children in Public Care for the school:

Mr G Cunningham

The Role of the Designated Teacher for Children in Public Care:

The Designated Teacher will aim to:

- Ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by children and young people 'in public care' and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them
- Inform members of staff of the general educational needs of children who are in public care, and to promote the involvement of these children in aspects of school life
- Act as an advocate for children and young people in public care
- Develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers and colleagues in CSF
- Hold a supervisory brief for all children in care, e.g. to ensure all relevant education and care information is available to school staff and carer(s), and that this information is kept up to date
- Monitor the educational progress of all children who are looked-after in order to inform the school's development plan
- Intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy or poor behaviour

When working with individual students the Designated Teacher will aim to:

- Work with individual children, possibly through a carer, to arrive at a statement about their circumstances that they would be happy to share with staff and/or pupils
- Enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their Care Plan
- Implement a Hertfordshire Personal Education Plan for each child and review it as required in the notes of guidance as this will contribute to the educational component of their care plan
- Supervise the smooth induction of a new looked after child into the school

School Responsibility

It is important that all teaching staff who are in contact with the child or young person are aware that he/she is being looked after by the Local Authority. The responsibility for the transfer of this information should be that of the Head Teacher and/or the Designated Teacher for Children in Public Care.

It is appropriate for a classroom support assistant to know that the young person is in public care only when directly involved in the teaching of the young person. In the absence of the usual class teacher, some information regarding the child's care should be shared with the teacher covering the class. The extent of this sharing should be determined by the Headteacher or the designated Teacher for Children in Public Care. All information should be shared on a need to know basis.

Admission Arrangements

On admission, records will be requested from the pupils previous school and a meeting will be held with carer/parent/Social Worker as appropriate — but always involving someone with parental responsibility. This will provide information to inform the Personal Education Plan. An appropriate school induction will take place.

Involve the Young Person

It is important that a young person is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. How this is shared with them clearly depends on their age and understanding. The explanation should emphasise that the school, the Social Worker, and their carer(s) are working together to promote their education. It is important to establish the child's view of their changed circumstances and what they want others to know. It is also important to ensure that a Social Worker/teacher/carer prepares the children for situations when they may be asked about home, e.g. by other pupils in the playground.

Liasion

- To help communication with CSF staff so that the Personal Education Plan can inform the Childs Care Plan
- To attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or to contribute in other ways to care planning meetings and statutory reviews
- To be named contact for colleagues in CSF
- To ensure the speedy transfer of information between agencies and individuals. and report on the progress of all children in care on the school role to the Corporate Parenting Officer as requested.
- Report annually to the Governing Body on Children in Public Care.

Training

- To develop knowledge of CSF procedures by attending training events organised by the Local Authority and in particular the Educational Support Service for Children in Care
- To cascade training to school staff as appropriate.

Communication with Other Agencies

- Schools should ensure that a copy of all reports (e.g. End of year reports) should be forwarded to the young person's Social Worker in addition to the foster carer or Residential Social Worker and if appropriate parent/s.
- Schools and education and social work colleagues within CSF should endeavour to co-ordinate their review meetings, e.g. to have an Annual or a Statement Review and a Personal Education Plan meeting or review.
- It is important to exchange information between formal reviews if there are significant changes in the young person's circumstances, e.g if school is considering an exclusion, there is a change or care placement or there are significant attendance issues.
- Each pupil in care will have a Care Plan that will include a Personal Education Plan (PEP) that is developed jointly by the Social Worker and Designated Teacher. This will identify specific areas of concern and include achievable targets. Areas for consideration will include:
 - Attendance
 - Achievement Record (academic or otherwise)
 - Behaviour
 - Extended learning opportunities
 - Involvement in Out of School Hours Activities
 - Special needs (if any)
 - Development needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge or subject areas and experiences); and
 - Long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations)
- The PEP will be updated at least annually or at the point of any major change and contribute to the Statutory Reviewing process carried out by the Social Care Case Coordinator.

The role of the Governing Body

- The Governing Body will appoint a governor with special responsibility for Child protection and Children in Public Care in the School
- The named governor should be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that looked-after pupils have equal access to:
 - The National Curriculum
 - Public Examinations
 - Careers and Connexions guidance
 - Additional education support
 - Extra curricular activities and
 - Work experience