

Bell Farm Primary School



Looked After Children Policy

School Aims

At Bell Farm Primary School, we believe that each pupil has individual and unique needs. We ensure that all children are encouraged, valued and accepted equally, regardless of their ability or behaviour. All pupils should receive appropriate educational provision through a broad and balanced curriculum that is relevant and differentiated, and that shows coherence and progression in learning. It is the aim of this school to provide every child with the best education possible. This reflects the UN Convention – The Right of the Child, by ensuring all children have a right to primary education. Some pupils may have Special Educational Needs and experience difficulties in: -

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- behaviour, emotional and social development
- sensory and /or physical and medical conditions

Definition

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

- i. children who are accommodated by the local authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents (Section 20)
- ii. children who are the subject of a care order (section 31 (1) , or interim care order (section 38); and
- iii. children who are the subject of emergency orders for the protection of the child (section 44).

A looked after child may be in residential care, a foster placement or could be living with their parents or extended family. If living with their parents, this could be on a part time basis or possibly returning home permanently after a care placement.

Objectives and Aims

At Bell Farm Primary School, we will support looked after children by:

- Making it a priority to know the children well and build strong relationships
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes
- Balance high levels of support with challenge and high expectations
- Ensure consistency
- Work in close partnership with carers, local authorities and specialist agencies
- Link each child to a person to whom they relate well
- Plan for future transitions effectively

Aims

- To closely monitor the academic, social and emotional progress of all looked after children
- To work alongside social workers and other professionals to ensure that each looked after child has a current Personal Education Plan (PEP) in place which includes appropriate and challenging targets
- To ensure discretion when addressing a child's care status and the background and family history of children who are in care, especially surrounding teaching and learning relating to family
- To ensure a clear protocol is followed in the sharing of information, both within school and with outside agencies

Roles and Responsibilities

The Role of the Designated Teacher

The designated teacher should have lead responsibility for helping school staff understand the things which affect how looked after children learn and achieve. The designated teacher should:

- promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how looked after children learn
- ensure a welcome and smooth transition for the child and their carer
- make sure the young person has a voice in setting learning targets
- be a source of advice for staff about differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children and in making full use of Assessment for Learning
- make sure that looked after children are prioritised in one-to-one tuition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home
- have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of the child's personal education plan (PEP) within 20 days of the child joining the school.
- work in conjunction with the social worker to ensure that the PEP is reviewed every 6 months
- ensure that the child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher but should be based on the child's own wishes
- ensure, as far as possible, attendance at planning and review meetings
- set up urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion

The Designated Teacher is the Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion

The Role of the Governing Body

- the appointment of a designated teacher in accordance with the regulations published in September 2009;
- to ensure that, in partnership with the Headteacher, the designated teacher has the opportunity to acquire and keep up to date the necessary skills, knowledge and training to understand and respond to the specific teaching and learning;
- to ensure that the designated teacher is either on the Senior Leadership team or, if not, that there is a champion of looked after children on the Senior Leadership team who can work closely with the designated teacher;
- to ensure that the designated teacher is appropriately supported in order to fulfil their role;
- to ensure that the school has a coherent policy in place for looked after children;
- to ensure that the school's policies and procedures are reviewed in the light of social inclusion guidance and joint DH/DfE guidelines;
- to make sure that there are arrangements in place to keep themselves informed about provision for, and attainment of, looked after children;

The name of the Governor with special responsibility for looked after children is: Margaret Hicks

The Role of the Headteacher:

- to ensure that, in partnership with the Governing body, the designated teacher has the opportunity to acquire and keep up to date the necessary skills, knowledge and training to understand and respond to the specific teaching and learning needs of looked after children;
- to make sure that the designated teacher role contributes to the deeper understanding of everyone in the school who is likely to be involved in supporting looked after children to achieve;
- in partnership with the Governing body, monitor the effectiveness of the role of the designated teacher;
- oversee the development of the policy on looked after children;
- wherever possible allocate looked after children to an experienced teacher

The Role of All Staff

All staff at Bell Farm Primary School will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of looked after children
- Ensure that all looked after children are supported sensitively
- Respond positively to a child's request to be the named member of staff with whom they can talk when they feel it is necessary
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information
- Work to enable the child to achieve stability and success within our school
- Promote the self-esteem of all looked after children, maintaining confidentiality and ensuring that no child is stigmatised in any way

Admission and Induction Arrangements

Looked after children are a priority for admission and, as such, we will follow the Surrey Local Authority's published admission criteria.

On admission, the child will meet with the designated teacher and pastoral lead. The designated teacher will identify any relevant issues, academic or pastoral, and ensure the child is comfortable and secure at Bell Farm School.

Records will be requested from the child's previous school, and as soon as possible, a meeting will be held with the carer/parent, social worker, other relevant professionals and the child, as appropriate, to put together a new Personal Education Plan (PEP) and also establish early communications.

At the first PEP meeting, we will seek clarification from the social worker as to who requires school reports and who may give permission for school trips or other such activities. At this meeting any means of communication to aid the exchange of information between statutory meetings will be discussed and agreed (such as a home/school book to detail any sudden significant changes in a child's circumstances.)

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in keeping with the Policy Review Cycle. This planned programme of review puts subjects together that have common strands of learning and is included in the School Improvement Plan published in the Spring of each year.

Status of Policy	Date
Authored by Charlotte Hendy	January 2014
Policy reviewed	January 2017
Agreed by Staff	January 2017
Agreed by Governors (C & L)	January 2017
Review	Annually (January 2018)