



Nelson Primary School

-Developing skills for life

Children Looked After Policy

Written November 2009
Reviewed February 2014

Policy for the Education of 'Looked After Children'

CONTEXT

There is national evidence that 'Looked After Children' significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion than their peers. Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that 'Looked After Children' are healthy and safe. They must be nurtured in order that they may achieve their full potential in life; in line with the Every Child Matters agenda and The Children's Act (2004).

Enabling 'Looked After Children' to succeed and supporting them in building a better future is a key priority for Newham Council and Newham Schools (whether they are looked after by Newham or another local authority).

Our policy takes account of:

- DfES Statutory Guidance to Governing Bodies: "Supporting Looked After Learners" 2006.
- The Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2007.
- The Local Authority's duty under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 to promote the education of looked after children (LAC).
- "Show Me How I Matter: a guide to the education of looked after children" LGA and IDEA publication 2006.

Nelson Primary School's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children is based on the following principles:

- High expectations
- Promoting inclusion by challenging attitudes towards vulnerable children
- Promoting regular attendance
- Early intervention and priority action
- Targeting support
- Minimising exclusions
- Achieving continuity and promoting stability
- Listening to children
- Promoting a wider learning experience
- Promoting health and wellbeing
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals

ACTIONS

As for all our pupils, Nelson Primary School is committed to helping all Looked After Children to achieve the highest possible standards. This can be measured by their attitude to learning, academic progress and general well-being. Nelson Primary School will promote the needs of 'Looked After Children', by raising awareness and challenging negative stereotypes about them, in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest possible level.

The Governing Body of Nelson Primary School is committed to providing quality education for all pupils and will adhere to the following statutory requirements in respect of Looked After Children:

- Ensure a Designated Teacher for 'Looked After Children' is identified and enabled to carry out the responsibilities set out below.
- Ensure a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is put in place, implemented and regularly reviewed in line with statutory and Newham guidance on PEP's for every looked after child.
- Currently our nominated governor for 'Looked After Children' is Diana Green.

This policy links with a number of other school documents and policies and it is important that Governors have regard to the needs of 'Looked After Children' when reviewing the following:

- Oversubscription Criteria
- School Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Home School Agreement
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Equality Duty
- Safeguarding Policy
- Inclusion Policy

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HEAD TEACHER

It is the responsibility of the Head teacher to:

- Identify a Designated Teacher for 'Looked After Children', whose role is set out below. Cover arrangements will need to be in place should the designated teacher not be available to carry out these legal duties.

- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor and track the admission, progress, attendance and exclusions (if any) of 'Looked After Children' and that appropriate action is taken where outcomes fall below expectations.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of 'Looked After Children'.
- Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

Government guidance says that the Designated Teacher should be "someone with sufficient authority to make things happen; who should be an advocate for looked after children, accessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them."

It is strongly recommended that this person should be a member of the Senior Management Team. Specialist training, advice and support for the role of Designated Teacher will be provided by CLASP. It should also be noted that the remit of OFSTED inspectors and School Improvement Partners now includes a specific focus on LAC, monitoring how the school has promoted their inclusion and attainment, and the effectiveness of joint working with other services involved with them.

Our Designated Teacher will:

- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan (PEP) to plan that transition in consultation with the child's social worker.
- Ensure that a PEP is completed with the child, their social worker, carer and other relevant people at least 2 weeks before their statutory reviews.
- Ensure that each looked after child has an identified member of staff they can talk to: this need not be the designated teacher, as it will be based on the child's own situation and wishes. It should be noted that members of staff who take on this role may also need to make use of appropriate support from the school's pastoral staff and Designated Teacher for Child Protection.
- Track academic and other progress and target support appropriately.
- Co-ordinate any support for 'Looked After Children' that is necessary within the school and from outside.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
- Facilitate and encourage 'Looked After Children' to join extra-curricular activities and maximise out of school learning.
- Attend planning and review meetings whenever possible.
- Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising awareness of the achievements as well as needs of 'Looked After children'.
- Set up timely meetings with relevant parties (eg carer, social worker, birth family, other professionals) where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or at risk of exclusion.

- Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and where appropriate between schools.
- Be pro-active in supporting transitions and planning when moving to a new phase in their education.
- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life.
- Actively monitor and prevent bullying of 'Looked After Children' in school.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNING BODY

The Nominated Governor for 'Looked After Children' is currently Diana Green. Her responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of 'Looked After Children'.
- Ensuring the school has an overview of the needs of all its 'Looked After Children', regardless of their originating authority.
- Allocating resources to meet the needs of 'Looked After Children'.
- Ensuring the school's policies and procedures support the needs of 'Looked After Children'.

The Governing Body will:

- Monitor the academic progress of 'Looked After Children', through an annual report (see below).
- Ensure, where relevant, that 'Looked After Children' are given priority when applying for places in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria.
- Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school, by ensuring the school implements policies, practices and procedures to ensure 'Looked After Children' achieve and enjoy their time at the school.
- Ensure the school has a Designated Teacher for 'Looked After Children' and that they are enabled and supported, along with the Head Teacher and other staff, to carry out their responsibilities.
- Receive a report each year setting out:
 - The number of looked after pupils (if any) on roll and dates of joining and/or leaving.
 - Their attendance, as a group, compared to other pupils.
 - Their results in SATS compared to other pupils.
 - The number and duration of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any) compared to other pupils.
 - The destination of pupils who leave the school.
 (The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.)
- Ensure systems are in place to share the above annual report with School Improvement Partners and OFSTED in line with current statutory requirements. Also, to provide termly information to the Newham CLASP team for 'Looked After Children'.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF

All our staff will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of 'Looked After Children', as for all pupils.
- Maintain looked after children's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond positively to a pupil's request for a Keyworker to whom they can talk when they feel it necessary.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- Work to enable 'Looked After Children' to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of 'Looked After Children'.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of 'Looked After Children'.

The Head Teacher will ensure that all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

Advice, information and support is available from CLASP to Governors and staff around general issues as well as issues relating to specific children.
