

Balcombe C E (C) School



Children Looked After Policy

Adopted by Governors: September 2020

Reviewed: Oct 21, Oct 23, Oct 25

Next Review: October 2026

Children Looked After Policy

A child who has been in the care of their local authority for more than 24 hours is known as a Child Looked After. A child stops being looked after when they are adopted, return home or turn 18. However local authorities in all the nations of the UK are required to support children leaving care at 18 until they are at least 21. This may involve them continuing to live with their foster family.

Balcombe Church of England Primary School believes that as Corporate Parents we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of Children Looked After. This policy has been produced to take account of the West Sussex Corporate Parent Board, West Sussex Virtual School for Children Looked After and National Government strategies for Children Looked After.

Aim

We aim to provide a safe and secure environment which values education and believes in and promotes the abilities and potential of *all* children.

This policy identifies our school's role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our Children Looked After, asking the question, 'Would this be good enough for my child?' The school aims to provide support for Children Looked After to ensure they have the same opportunities for well-being and development as their peers.

Responsibilities

The School will:

- Actively support and promote the education of Children Looked After.
- Work in partnership with carers and agencies.
- Support foster carers to value educational achievement and improve attendance.
- Celebrate the achievements of Children Looked After.
- Maintain register / database of all Children Looked After in the School.

This will include a record of:

- The name of the social worker, area office and contact details.
- Status i.e. care order or accommodated.
- Who holds Parental Responsibility, together with a note of any limitations on the ability or right to exercise this Parental Responsibility.
- Type of placement e.g. foster, respite, residential.
- Daily contact and telephone numbers where appropriate e.g. name of young person, name of parent, carer, key worker in children's home.
- Share Child safeguarding / disability information if appropriate.
- Baseline attainment information and all test results.
- Named persons who should receive copies of reports.

This school will respect the confidentiality of Children Looked After and ensure that any information is shared on a need to know basis.

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for Children Looked After.
- Be aware of whether the school has Children Looked After and how many.
- Support the SENCo, as Designated Teacher for Children Looked After, and other staff in ensuring the needs of Children Looked After are met.
- Nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body.
- Review the effective implementation of this policy at least every three years.

The Designated teacher will:

- Act as an advocate and co-ordinate support for the school's Children Looked After.
- Provide an annual report to Governors (see 'Monitoring and Evaluation').
- Liaise with West Sussex Virtual School to ensure every child is receiving 25 hours of education per week, and to ensure additional support is available if required.
- Ensure that there is a current PEP for each child to include appropriate targets. This must be compatible with the child's Social Services Care Plan and form part of any other school plan. E.g. an EHCP, Transition Plan, Pastoral Support Programme.
- Organise and chair a termly PEP meeting.
- Liaise with Social Services so that reviews on each child are attended, if necessary or are supported by a written report that promotes the continuity and stability of their education.
- Ensure that if a Child Looked After is identified as at risk of exclusion, contact is made with the LA Inclusion Officer and the Head of the Virtual School.
- Participate in training as provided by West Sussex Virtual School when appropriate.
- Ensure that on admission or transfer all relevant information is requested or sent to the new school.
- Have high expectations for the educational and personal achievement of Children Looked After.
- Positively promote the self-esteem of Children Looked After.
- Ensure that systems are in place to identify underachievement and implement early intervention strategies.
- Refer any attendance concerns to the Education Welfare Officer, and supply attendance data as required.
- Ensure that systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about Children Looked After.
- Ensure that Children Looked After are listened to and have access to support in school.
- Maintain an overview of the needs and progress of Children Looked After.
- Ensure the co-ordination of any extra pastoral or academic help required and, where possible, prioritise access to extracurricular activities and the full range of additional support available to all students in the school.
- Ensure speedy transfer of information between individuals and other relevant agencies.
- Ensure that there is sensitivity to the background of Children Looked After in the teaching materials available, especially around work on families and family trees.

- Contribute to the statutory Children Looked After reviews in person or in report form – written or verbal.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The designated teacher will report to Governors on the achievements and current status of the school's Children Looked After.

This will include:

- Workload issues arising as a result of the number of Children Looked After on roll in the school.
- Levels of progress made by Children Looked After in relation to all children.
- Whether the pattern of attendance and exclusions for Children Looked After is different to that of all children.
- Any progress or planning issues arising from the PEPs.
- Whether Children Looked After have Special Educational Needs and whether they are at SEN support or have full Statements/EHCP's.
- How the teaching and learning of Children Looked After are reflected in the Development Plan re resources and interventions.
- The impact of any school policies on Children Looked After.
- NC test results where age-appropriate
- Attendance figures.
- Exclusion issues.
- Changes in home placements.
- Interventions to raise achievement, such as study support, learning mentor support, home school contracts, Pastoral Support Plans, counselling support.
- Information about non-academic progress in extra curricular activities.

The Designated teacher is Beverley Hoddell.

The Governing body will monitor and evaluate the progress made by individuals and all the children using the same criteria used for other children in their peer group.