



**Wren's Nest Primary School
Looked After Children Policy
April 2016**



Key Professionals at Wren's Nest Primary School:

Gill Abrahams – Chair of Governors

Ruth Wylie – Head Teacher

Alison Keyes – Designated Teacher for Looked After Children

Jill Bayliss – Learning Mentor

Overview

A child is looked after if:

- The parents agree that the child goes into care. (Section 20)
- The child has been legally removed from their parents, without the parents' consent. The court decides whether to place the child on an Interim Care Order (ICO) for up to 8 weeks or Full Care Order (FCO).
- When children are taken into care, the Local Authority (and all employees of the LA) becomes their corporate parent. This means that all staff must have the same expectations and aspirations for a LAC as they would for their own child.

The majority of children subject to a care order live with caring relatives or foster families. Many children in care have to move away from their home but wherever possible, their placement at Wren's Nest Primary School is continued and the children are then taxied in or brought in by their carers. For some children this consistent school place is all the consistency that they have.

The experience of suddenly being moved away from your birth family and in some cases siblings as well can be extremely traumatic for some children and they may return to school distressed, confused, angry or deeply shocked needing some or a significant amount of additional support. For these reasons the school has a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children (Mrs Keyes) whose role is to act as their advocate and co-ordinate their support within school. (See Roles and Responsibilities appendix)

Wren's Nest prides itself on the excellent relationship it builds with both foster carers and parents alike and works hard with Children's Services to achieve the best outcomes possible for each child, socially, emotionally and academically.

This policy has been written for parents, carers, staff and other partners and sets out how we, at Wren's Nest, promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children.

The Governing Body will use its best endeavours to:

- provide a first class education for all children, including looked after children.
- continually raise aspirations, expectations and personal achievement.
- make additional support, mentoring and advocacy available where necessary using resources available in school or through additional lac pupil premium.
- promote a positive, supportive, safe and secure environment.

The Process	Steps Taken
<p>Child is legally removed from the care of parents by the court</p> <p>OR parents give permission for their child to be placed with a foster family or caring relatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class Teacher and Learning Mentors are informed of the child's new status. • Mrs Keyes meets with or telephones Carers on the first school day to ensure that they have all the relevant information about school. • Contact details are exchanged. • Mrs Keyes meets with the child to explain her special role with them. • Class Teachers keep a special watching brief. • Learning Mentors check in with/support the child as necessary. This may be increased or reduced to meet the needs of the child using available resources. • Arrangements are made for a TA to bring them down to the foyer at the end of school if taxis have been provided.
<p>Within 28 days, a <u>Personal Education Plan (PEP)</u> is written and shared.</p> <p>This involves the child, school, parents, carers and the social worker.</p>	<p>The initial PEP meeting is arranged by the LACES team. Class Teachers write the report from school, the child completes their contribution in the form of the "All About Me" Record. Mrs Keyes then plans for the use of the additional <u>pupil premium</u> and sets targets to be met over the course of the next term. The social worker also has a section to complete. Mrs Keyes collates and copies the plan for everybody.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting is chaired by Mrs Keyes • Children are invited to attend their PEPS. • The PEP is reviewed termly. • Additional funding (Pupil Premium) is available to support the educational attainment of LAC • Gifts and talents are nurtured • There are 2 PEPs in use. EYFS PEP and KS1/2 PEP. <p>In subsequent PEPs, progress is reviewed, barriers to learning identified and strategies and resources are put in place to address them.</p>
<p>LAC Review</p>	<p>The first LAC Review takes place after 4 weeks, then 3 months and then at least 6 monthly. Its purpose is to review the Local Authority Care Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All agencies produce a report which is shared at the review. Recommendations are made by the Independent Reviewing Officer who chairs the meeting. • Children may be invited to attend some or all of the meeting as

	appropriate.
A LAC leaving Wren's Nest	<p>Moves are planned for, whether this is because a child is moving on to a high school or is moving to a school nearer to their new home.</p> <p>Mrs Keyes arranges a transition PEP and prepares the child using photobooks, internet research, visits and induction days. A representative from the new school is invited to the PEP.</p> <p>At their final assembly, Mrs Wylie presents the child with a special book as a memento. Photos are taken of the child and their friends which are shared when the child leaves. Sometimes this forms part of their Life Story Work.</p>
A LAC entering Wren's Nest	<p>Unless initiated by the previous school Mrs Keyes arranges a transition PEP and prepares the child using photobooks, internet research, visits and induction days. A representative from the previous school is invited to the PEP. The child is taken to meet their new teacher and a place is made for them in the classroom and a special "buddy" assigned by the class teacher to ease them in.</p>
Home/School	<p>In some instances it may be appropriate to set up home school diaries, emails or phone calls between the child's home and school to ensure key information is shared. Staff can be contacted in the following ways:</p> <p>Mrs Alison Keyes tel. 01384 818517 akeyes@wrens-nest.dudley.sch.uk</p> <p>Mrs Jill Bayliss tel. 01384 818515 jbayliss@wrens-nest.dudley.sch.uk</p>
Contact with birth parents and siblings	<p>Contact varies from 3 times weekly to 6 times a year. Some children can become very emotional as a result. Mrs Keyes and Mrs Bayliss will need to be kept informed of this and they will in turn liaise with the Child's Social Worker.</p> <p>For most children contact is carefully arranged around other activities in their weekly schedule.</p>
Taxis	<p>In the morning, children are dropped off by taxis in time for breakfast club (8.20-8.30) at the main entrance. At the end of the day, taxis can park close to the school building at the rear of the school. The children are brought down to the foyer by a member of school staff who checks the ID badges of the Taxi Escort before handing the children over. Any concerns regarding the taxi, driver or escort MUST be reported to Mrs Keyes, Mrs Bayliss or Mrs Pugh before the children are released.</p>

Parents Evenings Inspire Sessions Assemblies Sports Day etc.	Every effort is made to ensure invitations are sent to Parents and Carers for these special events. On some occasions children have to be supervised by school in line with their Care Plan. Sometimes it is easier for Parents or Carers to request an alternative time to meet with teachers than in an overcrowded classroom at parents' evening.
Trips and Visits	Foster Carers can sign permission letters for most things. Social workers have to sign trip letters where this includes an overnight stay. If in doubt refer to Mrs Keyes.
Admissions	Children who are Looked After will be given priority places in line with local and national policy. Please refer to the detailed admission notes for LAC (Appendix 2)
Monitoring Progress	Class teachers report to Mrs Keyes on the progress of LAC in their classes. This is then shared at the PEPs and the RAP review. At any time the teachers, parents, carers or child can request a meeting with Mrs Keyes to address any concerns they might have.
Self-Review	The DT will review the effectiveness of the policy in meeting the needs of the LAC in her care with the Head Teacher. Priorities for development will be included in the school's RAP. Mrs Abrahams, the Chair of Governors, meets with Mrs Keyes on a termly basis and receives a termly progress update for all LAC. This will follow the termly RAP review at which this information will also be presented and discussed as appropriate.
Addressing Children's additional needs	LAC children, by virtue of being in care, are more likely to present with social, emotional and mental health needs and therefore are given priority for places in the Nurture Group, Learning Mentor Groups and for the Educational Psychologist. Children are also given priority places in the after school clubs to enable them to socialise with their peer group after school. Some LAC children may have or develop Special Educational Needs requiring additional or different provision to be made. This will be discussed at the PEP. Targets and provision will be documented in the PEP.
Complaints	If parent/carer or professional wishes to make a formal complaint about the provision made, they should raise it first with Mrs Keyes who will try to resolve the issue as quickly as possible. If the issue cannot be resolved

	<p>within 2 school days, then the parent/carer or professional should submit a formal complaint, in writing, to Mrs Ruth Wylie (Head Teacher). Mrs Wylie will investigate and respond within 2 school days. Any issues that remain unresolved at this stage should be addressed with the Chair of Governors, Mrs Gill Abrahams c/o Wren's Nest Primary School.</p>
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