



School Vision:

To encourage and support thoughtful, happy and responsible children with a lifelong passion for learning, within a Christian community

Stanwell Fields CofE Primary School

Children in Care / Looked After Children Policy 2015

Governors' Committee Responsible: Safeguarding Committee

Governor Lead: Jo Rixon

Nominated Lead Member of Staff: Colin Franklyn Headteacher

Status & Review Cycle: Statutory Annual

Reviewed: September 2015, September 2016

Next Review Date: September 2017

CONTEXT

The terms 'Looked After Children' and 'Children in Care' are often used to define the same group of young people. In documents produced by Surrey's Virtual School the use of Children in Care (CiC) is the preferred term.

When a child or young person is taken into Care by a local authority under a Court Order, the key feature is a change in parental responsibility, which is then undertaken by the local authority – who become their 'Corporate Parent'. Young people can also be in Care under a voluntary arrangement with parents (a status known as Accommodated) where parental responsibility remains with birth parents, but this arrangement is monitored and supported by social services. Most children in care will be living in foster homes but some may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even be placed back at home with their birth parent(s). It is important the school attended by the child is aware of their Care status, as many children and families are supported by social care without the use of Care Orders. Foster carers will very rarely hold parental responsibility – this is assumed by the social worker. Children placed for adoption remain looked after by the local authority until the Final Order

A Personal Education Plan is required for every Child in Care and forms part of their overall Care Plan. The Care Plan should be in place within six weeks of entering care and thereafter reviewed at least every six months.

The Children Act (2004) places a duty to safeguard children in care, to promote their educational achievement and to ensure they are able to 'achieve to and reach their full potential'. The collective responsibility of local authorities and schools to achieve this are set out under six principles;



The role of a Virtual Headteacher for Children in Care is now statutory for every local authority. Virtual Headteachers will scrutinise, challenge and support schools with their teaching and learning for all children in care and assist each other in this task where children cross physical borders to live and attend education provision.

A. ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HEADTEACHER AND SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

- We promote a culture in which children in care believe they can succeed and aspire to further and higher education, without being labelled or singled out
- We have a Designated Teacher for CiC
- We ensure all staff, both teaching and non-teaching have an understanding of the potential difficulties and educational disadvantages faced by children in care and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them
- We recognise the particular circumstances of CiC and provide for these in all other relevant school policies
- We ensure the day-to-day management of information provides sufficient access to promote an understanding of, and provide safeguards for individual children
- We are committed to working with local authority Virtual Headteachers to promote the achievement of children in care

B. ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR CIC / LAC

- to have high expectations of looked after children's involvement in learning and educational progress
- to monitor the educational progress of all Children in Care in order to ensure they are reaching their potential and feel a part of the school community
- to intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement or absence from school, taking action to communicate any difficulties as soon as possible
- to act as an advocate for Children in Care
- to inform members of staff of the general educational needs of children in care
- to promote the involvement of these children in out of school hours learning
- to be the named contact for and develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers, local authority children's services and the Virtual School of the caring authority, to ensure the speedy transfer of information between key partners
- to ensure every child in care has a current [Personal Education Plan](#) that includes appropriate educational targets and encourages the 'voice of the child' to be heard
- to attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or to contribute in other ways to care planning meetings
- to provide a programme of transition support, as appropriate

- to prepare an Annual Report for school governors and Surrey Virtual School
- to access statutory training events organised by Surrey Virtual School (as a minimum requirement)
- to cascade training to school staff and governors as appropriate

The name of our Designated Teacher for CiC is: Sophie Earnshaw (Adoption Leave)

Deborah Davis (deputising)

C. ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GOVERNING BODY

The Governing Body will:

- monitor the school's policies and ensure they are effective in reflecting the needs of children in care
- ensure all governors are fully aware of legal requirements and [guidance on the education](#) of children in care
- receive an annual report from the Designated Teacher
- examine whether the school is making the fullest possible use of all available resources, such as additional funding.
- scrutinise the school's admission procedures to ensure students are admitted into the school as quickly as possible recognising the importance of re-establishing school stability for children in care
- champion the needs of those in care and support the work of the Designated Teacher.

The name of our Governor for CiC at Stanwell Fields CofE Primary School is:

Jo Rixon

The Headteacher and Designated Teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in the Policy.