

# THE FEDERATION OF NETTLESTONE & NEWCHURCH PRIMARY SCHOOLS



## DESIGNATED TEACHER POLICY

Date Agreed: 14<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Review Date: September 2018

*DMF Botlett*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Chairman Board of Governors**  
The Federation of Nettlestone & Newchurch Primary School

## Revision Record

Revision No.	Date Issued	Prepared By	Approved	Comments
1	August 2014	KJH		Revision of Policy in line with Federation with Nettlestone Primary School.
2	September 2016	KJH		Update of policy – small amendments including the naming of the designated teacher in each school.

*All the governors and staff of The Federation of Nettlestone & Newchurch Primary Schools are committed to sharing a common objective to help keep the children and staff of the school community safe. We ensure that consistent effective safeguarding procedures are in place in order to support families, children and staff of the school.*

To be read in conjunction with:

- Child Protection Policy
- Single Equalities Policy

### **School Aims for Children in Care:**

- to provide a safe and secure environment, where education is always central to the planning, and all adults understand the specific needs of children in care
- to narrow the gap between the attainment of children in care and their peers, ensuring **accelerated** and **rapid** progress. (DCSF Guidance for Children in Care, '09).
- that they benefit from school-based interventions and have access to pupil premium benefits
- that federation-based support will be set up across the federation, thus facilitating access to it when a child is in care, or moves into care, without prompting awkward questions, or making the child stand out
- for all children in care to have a minimum of two Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings in an academic year, and for the joint planning to actively impact on each child's learning on a daily basis, to ensure accelerated and rapid progress (DCSF Guidance for Children in Care, '09)
- for all adults to provide discreet, sensitive, child-led support, with one key adult identified who will form a strong relationship and take a special interest in daily life at school
- children in care will be advantaged within federation policies and procedures, with their needs explicitly considered and provided for (DCSF Guidance for Children in Care, '09)
- children in care and their foster families will feel part of the federation/school community; they will be actively welcomed into the community, in recognition of the particular needs of this group (DCSF Guidance for Children in Care, '09)

## **Who is a 'Child in Care' or Looked After Child'?**

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

1. children who are accommodated by the local authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
2. children who are subject to a care order (section 32(1)) or interim care order (section 38)
3. children who are the subject of emergency orders for the protection of the child (section 44)

**The federation is also aware that children can be looked after when being cared for by extended family members e.g. under a kinship arrangement.**

## **The difference between being "accommodated" or on a care order?**

Children are accommodated when:

1. there is no person who has parental responsibility for them
2. the child is lost or abandoned
3. the person who has been caring for them is prevented from providing them with suitable accommodation or care

Children are subject to a care order:

If the local authority believes that the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer "significant harm" if they remain with their birth family, the local authority can apply to the courts for a care order to assume parental responsibility

(Ref: The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children - statutory guidance for school governing bodies, Nov '09)

\*unaccompanied minors can also be accommodated under Section 20 or 17. Section 17 means they are not a Child in Care.

Children can also be classed as a Child in Care if they have more than 8 days respite in a year.

## **Statutory Document when planning for the Education of Children in Care**

### **Personal Education Plans**

**The federation must ensure that every child in care on roll has a minimum of 2 Personal Education Planning meetings every year, within the statutory care planning framework, and in collaboration with the social worker, carer and other relevant professionals. The school needs to adopt the 'Isle of Wight PEP' for children and young people in the care of the Isle of Wight (unless they have come from another Local Authority)**

### **Each School needs to:**

- ✓ ensure that every child in care on roll has a working PEP within the statutory timeframe:
- ✓ within 20 working days of being taken into care
- ✓ then in 3 months
- ✓ 6 monthly thereafter
- ✓ a PEP will be called outside this timeframe if there is a change of care or educational placement, or if there are any concerns about their education
- ✓ liaise with the child's Social Worker and other professionals, as appropriate, to set a Personal Education Plan (PEP) meeting date

- ✓ complete and electronically forward all relevant school sections to the Social Worker at the end of/following the meeting so that the Social Worker can distribute the PEP to all professionals involved
- ✓ lead on the setting of PEP targets which have high expectation of rapid progress
- ✓ promote children in care accessing 'culture and leisure' activities
- ✓ ensure that copies of the PEP are distributed to school staff who work with the child
- ✓ ensure that the PEP is 'actioned' by school staff from the date of the meeting
- ✓ ensure that there is coordination between the PEP and all other education plans, including Individual Education Plan, Statement, Transition Plan, Pastoral Support Plan, as appropriate. It will also be central to the care plan.

**The Executive Headteacher and Governing Body needs to promote improved educational life chances for Children in Care by ensuring that:**

- a Designated Teacher for children in care (with qualified teacher status) is appointed who has appropriate status within the school and relevant experience to perform this important statutory role (DCSF Guidance for Children in Care, '09) Currently this role is fulfilled by **Jo Payne** at Newchurch Primary and **Anna Jacobs** at Nettlestone Primary
- every child in care on roll has a minimum of 2 Personal Education Planning meetings every academic year within the statutory care planning framework, and in collaboration with the social worker, carer and other relevant professionals
- any issues raised by the Designated Teacher are considered, discussed and acted upon, as appropriate
- a 'child in care-friendly' culture is established and maintained across the federation to support this group
- all personnel receive appropriate training
- appropriate levels of support are in place for staff who are managing children who may have complex emotional and/or behaviour needs; alongside this, they may also be managing complex issues with foster and birth families, for which they may need support
- staff have time to complete tasks and fulfil responsibilities for Children in Care
- effective systems of communication are established and maintained both within the school and with other agencies
- appropriate assessment, reporting and monitoring procedures are established and maintained

**The Designated Teacher for Children in Care needs to promote improved educational life chances for Children in Care by ensuring that they:**

- maintain a register (in SIMS) of all children in care (this includes children in the care of Isle of Wight Local Authority, and those under other authorities)

This will include a record of:

- ✓ who should be contacted in an emergency, including names and contact details, eg. carer, social worker, key worker (for those in a children's home) or parent (if they are in the care of the Local Authority and living at home)
- ✓ care status eg. full or interim care order; accommodated under section 20
- ✓ any restrictions on who is allowed to collect the young person from school
- ✓ type of placement e.g. foster, respite, residential, kinship, at home with parent
- ✓ name and contact of Social Worker (SW), SW Manager, SW Team and Independent Reviewing Officer
- ✓ child protection / disability information, shared on a 'needs to know' basis
- ✓ relevant health information
- ✓ all educational test results and assessments, including baseline assessments

- identify a special, trusted adult at school or within the federation who is able to take time to listen to the young person; this could be anyone the child is able to talk to: Deputy Head, Class Teacher, Learning Support Assistant etc
- liaise with carers, natural parents (as appropriate) and social workers on a wide variety of educational and care issues
- advocate for Children in Care while challenging colleagues to have high expectation of each child's potential
- coordinate educational planning and multi-agency working, always insisting that education remains the central focus at school
- complete a minimum of two PEPs every academic year, within the statutory care planning framework, and in collaboration with the social worker, carer and other relevant professionals
- include children in care in school-based interventions, even if they do not meet the criteria, and actively promote their best interests (DCSF Guidance for Children in Care, '09)
- include children in care in 'culture and leisure' activities whenever possible, and encourage them and their carers to ensure they access activities within the school offer, and in the community
- support carers to value educational achievement and improve attendance
- hold the contacts of named officers within the local authority (LA) who manage issues such as attendance, transition and exclusion, at LA level
- attend relevant training to develop expertise, and deliver training to school staff, as appropriate
- advise school staff about the particular issues which affect children in care, and lead the development of a 'Child in Care-friendly' school culture
- develop an awareness in staff of the variety of issues that may undermine the young person's ability to engage in the learning process including: feelings of loss; rejection; isolation; confusion; low self-esteem; possible unresolved feelings the young person may have about their own families and siblings, in addition to insecurity over their current homes and carers
- influence the setting up of a supportive and non-judgemental staff culture where staff can discuss their feelings about troubling situations with the Designated Teacher and possibly other senior managers, dependent on the level of challenge and distress; this is essential in order to contain strong emotions sometimes aroused in staff when working with this group
- establish criteria which provides teaching and support staff with a threshold above which they need to refer a situation on to the Designated Teacher, and when the Designated Teacher needs to refer on to the Executive Headteacher. By sharing information with senior staff, and involving outside agencies early, as appropriate, the school hopes to avoid a situation developing into a crisis.
- submit data to governors outlining the educational progress of this group and any training, time or resource issues which impact on them
- regularly update governors throughout the year, in addition to the annual report, highlighting the rapid progress of children in care
- attend Children in Care Statutory Reviews on individual children, or delegate this task to a colleague with appropriate expertise and seniority, if they are unable to attend
- prepare a written report for the Children in Care Statutory Review that provides current educational attainment data, information regarding the child's social and emotional development, including any behaviour issues (if appropriate), interventions in place, and promotes the continuity and stability of their education
- inform key staff, on a 'needs to know' basis, of any restrictions on who is allowed to collect the young person from school
- contact the Social Worker regarding any concerns about the child
- actively engaging children in care and their foster families in the school community
- follow the school's child protection policy, if there are any safeguarding concerns for a child in care

**All staff need to promote improved educational life chances for Children in Care by ensuring that they:**

- work in partnership with parents, carers, social workers and other agencies
- celebrate the achievements of children in care, sharing positives within and between schools (at times of transition), and with carers, social workers, and outside agencies
- have high expectations of the young person, encouraging achievement and ambition, and ensuring that the child makes accelerated and rapid progress (DCSF Guidance for Children in Care, '09), or at least two sub-levels progress each academic year (Progression Guidance '09-'10)
- include children in care in school-based interventions, even if they do not meet the criteria, and actively promote their best interests (DCSF Guidance for Children in Care, '09)
- contribute to effective school-based assessment, recording and reporting practices, and understand that these have particular significance for raising the attainment of children in care
- are sensitive to the young person's needs and, in consultation with the Designated Teacher, provide a key, trusted adult at school who is able to take time to listen to them
- have an awareness of the impact being, or becoming a child in care has on a child, and take account of this when managing their learning, behaviour, social and emotional needs
- are sensitive to the young person's wishes over what is known, and by whom, regarding their care status
- know when to seek advice from the Designated Teacher and understand the criteria for triggering an automatic referral to the Designated Teacher who may go on to discuss it with the Executive Headteacher, Child Protection Liaison Officer or other members of the senior management team
- become actively engaged in training to understand the particular needs of children in care
- actively encourage and support the engagement of children in care in 'leisure and cultural' activities, and understand its' importance for this particular group
- actively work with children in care and their foster families to help them to become part of the school community, in recognition of their particular needs

### **Attendance**

#### **School procedures to ensure that all children in care have good attendance:**

- communicate the significance of good attendance and punctuality with designated Carers
- where attendance is a concern, a first day of absence procedure will be established with the foster carer, parent (if appropriate) and social worker
- when a child is absent for three consecutive days or more, the social worker will be informed via email or phone call
- ensure that the Executive Headteacher communicates with agencies who contact the school for children in care attendance data
- acknowledge 'attendance' in all education meetings, celebrating success and setting realistic targets if it is a concern

### **Admissions/ Transitions**

#### **School procedures to support children in care during admission and transition:**

- ensure that, on admission, information is requested from the previous school after one week if it is not forwarded promptly
- ensure that a peer 'buddy' is identified to support a child in care on admission to our school
- when a child is at risk of being taken into care a key adult who is close to the young person will begin to establish a closer relationship at school to support them through the transition into care and beyond
- ensure that there is a structured 'goodbye', including a goodbye card, photographs, farewell party; the young person may want to give something to the class to leave a 'legacy'
- ensure that we promptly forward all education plans, especially the Personal Education Plan, to the receiving school at the point of transition
- ensure that children in care receive additional support to mainstream children at the points of transition between classes, and phases of education, especially if it involves a change of school

- every effort will be made to provide continuity of schooling and educational experience
- children in care will be prioritised within the school's own admissions procedures and we will admit students as quickly as possible, recognising the particular importance of re-establishing school stability for children in care

### **Additional Educational Needs**

**All Staff need to work towards securing accelerated and rapid progress for children in care who have additional educational needs by:**

- having high expectations so that they make good or better progress every academic year
- challenging suggestions that a child's emotional needs are greater than their learning needs and that they 'just need time', as this results in poor outcomes for children in care
- completing a CAF (Common Assessment Framework) when appropriate
- following structured assessment procedures to avoid mis-diagnosis of Special Educational Needs (SEN), which can have a negative impact on progress due to the impact on self esteem
- ensuring, through the school assessment procedures, that children in care who do have special educational needs are progressed onto the school SEN register to receive appropriate assessment and support
- ensuring that children in care who's rate of progress is below average, but who do not have SEN are supported within the school's universal offer, and additional educational needs provision
- ensuring that children in care with additional educational needs are prioritised for additional learning, behaviour, social and emotional support, as appropriate, in recognition of their long-term need, and the very high level of disadvantage being in care represents
- ensuring that any programmes run by teaching/learning assistants have teacher oversight. The teacher will: structure the programme; train staff; perform baseline/final/on-going assessments; discuss progress and next steps; facilitate transfer of group work to their classroom practice

### **Special Educational Needs**

**All Staff need to work towards securing accelerated and rapid progress for children in care who have special educational needs by:**

- having high expectations so that they achieve at least good or better progress every academic year (in line with the DCSF Progression Guidance 2009/10)
- early identification of need through structured assessments, which inform teaching
- ensuring that they access school-based targeted support that is 'additional to and different from' the universal and additional educational needs provision (SEN Code of Practice)
- ensuring that they are prioritised for high levels of learning, behaviour, social or emotional support, in recognition of their long-term need, and the very high level of disadvantage being in care represents
- ensuring that pupil passports/IEP's/pastoral support plans /annual review minutes are attached to the Personal Education Plan so that all plans are linked and work is coordinated
- ensuring that any programmes run by teaching/learning assistants have teacher oversight to: structure the programme; train staff; perform baseline/final/on-going assessments; discuss progress and next steps; facilitate transfer of group/individual work to their classroom practice (Lamb Report, Dec '09)
- ensuring that information from the individual education plans, pastoral support plans and/or Annual Review of the EHCP feeds into the Children in Care Statutory Review

### **Safeguarding**

**School staff need to be vigilant for any safeguarding issues which can impact particularly on children in care by:**

- being sensitive to the child's likely wish to keep their care status confidential, and avoid the risk of bullying

- being careful not to single the young person out with special treatment or different provision that raises difficult questions from peers and could lead to bullying
- speaking privately to the young person about confidentiality, to reduce their fear of becoming known as a child in care, (45% of children in care worry about others knowing they are in care, for fear of being judged, treated differently or bullied - Dr R. Morgan research findings, '09; Children's Rights Director for England; reducing the fear will free their minds to learn
- monitoring for signs of excessive risk-taking
- monitoring for signs of them becoming at risk of exploitation by peers; older children or adults; mixing with older children; coercion into illegal activities/sexual exploitation
- monitoring their attendance, any truanting patterns or exclusion risks
- following the school's child protection policy, if there are any safeguarding concerns for a child in care
- informing the Social Worker of any concerns so that they are also managed through the care planning process

### **Exclusion**

**The school needs to make every effort to avoid excluding a child in care. This is in recognition of the increased risk exclusion poses in terms of them becoming quickly disengaged from the school, due to their early experience of broken attachments and loss. If there is no option other than exclusion, then they need to make every attempt to keep the number of days of the exclusion to a minimum.**

#### **School procedures to reduce the risk of exclusion of children in care:**

- arrange systems to identify early any child in care who is at risk of exclusion and contact the Social Worker, Foster Carer, Virtual Head of the child's initiating authority, and other relevant professionals, to convene a Pastoral Support Planning meeting and agree proactive strategies to avoid loss of days from school
- to involve the local Behaviour Support in planning and reviewing a programme to manage any behaviour concerns, and identify further support, via the Pastoral Support Plan (PSP)
- if a child in care has a statement of special educational need and, despite the implementation and review of a PSP, is still at risk of exclusion, the school will call for an early Annual Review of their EHCP
- to identify creative alternatives to exclusion, wherever possible; this could involve time limited 'internal exclusion' (seclusion), and other arrangements agreed with the Virtual Head for Children in Care, and the young person concerned.
- if exclusion is unavoidable, we will inform the carer **and** person holding parental responsibility verbally **on the day of the incident**
- if we exclude, we will make arrangements for provision from day one
- we will inform key people in writing within one day of the exclusion, specifying: the period and reasons for the exclusion; date of return; outline of the rights of the carers to make representations to the governing body, where appropriate; details of arrangements made to enable the excluded pupil to continue their education. Key people include: carer, social worker and the Virtual Head of the child's initiating authority

- if a child in care is involved in repeated exclusions, despite multi-agency planning and reviewing of the PSP, the school will work to facilitate a managed move to another local school and avoid permanent exclusion
- it is our policy to avoid the permanent exclusion of children in care

### **Multi-Agency Working:**

**School staff need to make every effort to make strong links with colleagues from other agencies. They need to facilitate the work of colleagues to enable them to successfully perform their roles and positively impact on the education and wider needs of children in care. A culture of mutual respect is essential.**

### **The School needs to:**

- lead on educational planning and provision
- fully respect the specific qualities and expertise colleagues from other agencies bring to the work, providing them with the educational information they need, and so empowering them to successfully fulfil aspects of their roles which positively impact on education
- complete a CAF (Common Assessment Framework) on children for whom the gathering/sharing of information is necessary to facilitate joint working, as appropriate
- liaise with colleagues from other agencies to complete the PEP, which serves as a 'collective memory' about the child's educational history and achievements
- liaise closely with carers, parents, if appropriate, and social workers on a variety of issues, including homework, equipment, timetable, attendance, attainment, behaviour and social skills
- clearly define the roles and responsibility of school staff in relation to the young person and other professionals
- link with agencies to deliver a well planned and coordinated approach to meeting the young person's educational and social needs, including the prevention of potentially disruptive changes that will negatively impact on school
- be sensitive to the appropriate role of the parents, in liaison with the social worker
- make school-based statistical information available to the local authority on request, and ensure that it is returned on time
- support the young person to participate fully in planning and decision-making, or set up systems which: allow them to attend only part of the meeting; keeps them informed, if they do not want to be fully involved
- share positive perceptions and high expectations of the young person with other professionals
- encourage and facilitate the young person, in conjunction with colleagues from other agencies, to access 'cultural and leisure' activities, in recognition of the positive impact on self esteem and learning

**Designated Teacher at Nettlestone – Anna Jacobs**  
**Designated Teacher at Newchurch – Jo Payne.**  
**Virtual Head – Anwen Foy, 01983 821000 ext 6260**

**Key Documents:**

**1. The Role and Responsibilities of Designated Teacher for Looked after Children - Statutory Guidance for School Governing Bodies**

You can download this publication at: [www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/earlyyears](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/earlyyears) or order copies online at [www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications) using ref: DCSF-01046-2009

**2. Improving the Attainment of Looked After Children in primary schools - Guidance for Schools**

[www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/earlyyears](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/earlyyears) or order copies online at

[www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications) using ref: DCSF-01047-2009

**3. Improving the Attainment of Looked After Young People in secondary schools - Guidance for Schools**

[www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/earlyyears](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/earlyyears) or order copies online at

[www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications) using ref: DCSF-01048-2009

**4. Improving the Educational Attainment of Children in Care [Looked after Children]**

[www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications) using ref: DCSF-00523-2009

**5. DCSF Progression Guidance 2009/10** [www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications) using ref: DCSF-00553-2009BKT-EN

