



# **The Laurels Primary School**

## **Policy for the Education of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children 2020-2021**

This policy outlines our school commitment to the Education of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.

## **1. The Governing Body / Trust Board**

The Governors will carry out their role in line with statutory guidance. The Designated Governor in school is Sara Woodcock. The Governing Body/Trust Board, head teacher and school leadership team will support the education of looked after and previously looked after children by ensuring that the Designated Teacher has:

- Appropriate seniority and professional experience to provide leadership, training, information, challenge and advice to others
- Training opportunities, including time away from timetable commitments, to acquire and keep up-to-date the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding, including a good knowledge of SEN
- Appropriate monitoring arrangements to ensure that the school/education setting is providing appropriate support for looked-after and previously looked-after children

They will also ensure that school policies consider the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children. This consideration will include additional arrangements for looked –after and previously looked-after children when considering;

- Admission
- Attendance and Exclusion
- Behaviour management
- Mental health needs
- Specific safeguarding challenges
- Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- Gifted and talented students
- Teaching and learning needs
- Educational visits and extended school activities

The Governing body/trust board will hold the school to account on how it supports its looked-after and previously looked-after children, including;

- how the Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) is used
- level of progress of this group of children

## **2. The Designated Teacher**

The Designated Teacher (DT) will carry out their role in line with statutory guidance. The Designated Teacher is Helen Pinney. The Designated Teacher (DT) is the central point of initial contact within the school. They will join up resources and support to minimise any disruption to a child's learning.

The DT will work with Virtual Schools Head to promote the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children by promoting a whole school culture where the personalised learning needs of every looked-after and previously looked-after child matters and their personal, emotional and academic needs are prioritised.

They will take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils. Our school will make sure that all staff:

- have high expectations of children's learning and set targets to accelerate educational progress;
- are aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation (attachment awareness)
- understand how important it is to see children as individuals
- appreciate the central importance of the looked-after child's PEP and understand how it fits into the wider care planning for the child
- for previously looked-after children, understand the importance of involving the child's parents or guardians in decisions affecting their child's education, and be a contact for parents or guardians who want advice or have concerns about their child's progress at school.

The Designated Teacher will have a direct and day-to-day role in promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children. They will:

- Work directly with looked-after and previously looked-after children and their carers, parents or guardians
- Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies and procedures
- Provide support and advice to teachers on differentiated teaching strategies and the use of AfL
- Ensure the pupil premium plus is used effectively within school to have the greatest positive impact on children's learning.
  - This includes;
    - Ensuring parents and guardians of previously looked-after children are reminded that they need to inform the school if their child is eligible to attract PP+
    - Ensure looked after and previously looked after children are prioritised for support; listened to; encouraged to participate; and believe they can achieve through an ethos of aspiration.
    - The Designated Teacher will chair Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings to effectively plan to utilise school resources and ensure each child has access to the support they need to achieve.

#### **Further information on PEP meetings:**

- These meetings will take place 3 times per academic year to review support and deploy effective resources.
- Documentation will be coproduced with family and social care and shared with appropriate professionals as part of the child's care plan.
- The Designated Teacher will work closely with professional agencies including the foster carer; allocated social worker; virtual school head; learning and behaviour support agencies; EPS; SENDs, CAMHs, local police/youth offending service; community nurses and any other professional agency involved in supporting the child and family.

### **3. Transfer out of care**

When children cease to be looked-after the Designated Teacher will maintain links with VSH's for the purposes of promoting the educational achievement of this group of previously looked-after children to ensure continuity. The Designated Teacher will ensure that family members and carers are aware that they must pass on information about previous care status to any education settings. This information cannot be passed from school to school as it will be protected information under GDPR.

#### **4. Voice of the child**

We will listen to the voice of looked-after and previously looked-after children as a vital part of successfully understanding and meeting their needs.

#### **5. Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)**

Looked-after children and children adopted from care, on a special guardianship or child arrangements order are eligible for PP+ funding. This additional funding is provided to help improve the attainment of looked-after and previously looked-after children and close the attainment gap between this group and their peers. The DT along with Senior Leadership Team and Governor will ensure:

- All pupil premium spending will take account of the specific needs of eligible pupils.
- PP+ reflects the significant additional barriers faced by looked-after and previously looked-after children
- PP+ is allocated according to need rather than a personal budget.
- Our school will use pupil premium to address need in social, academic and mental health needs. This will be in agreement with the VSH from the child's home authority.

#### **6. Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

Looked-after children and previously looked-after children are significantly more likely to have SEN than their peers. Of those with SEN, a significant proportion will have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC plans). The Designated Teacher will ensure that:

- They work closely with the SENCO and local authority support team where applicable and follow the DfE Code of Practice  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/398815/SEND\\_Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_January\\_2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf)
- Children's PEPs work in harmony with their EHC plan

#### **7. Meeting Mental Health needs**

Looked-after children and previously looked-after children are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues than their peers. The Designated Teacher has an important role in ensuring they and other school staff can identify signs of potential issues and understand where the school can draw on specialist services. Our school will utilise the CAMHS education link to support understanding mental health needs for looked-after and previously looked –after children. This will enable us to improve a whole school understanding of attachment and trauma and the impact on learning and behaviour for vulnerable children. We also recognise the impact on staff when working with traumatised children. We will ensure all staff feel supported to address their own needs as well as those of the vulnerable children they are caring for.

#### **8. Working with local authorities**

The DT will draw on the expertise of the Virtual Schools team for West Sussex as appropriate, including liaising with their specialist teacher.

#### **9. Working with carers and parents**

The DT will liaise with parents and carers termly for the PEP meetings. They will also ensure they are available throughout the year to address any issues that arise. The DT will be available to support parents and carers at parent's evenings.

**The Laurels Primary School (part of Durrington Multi Academy Trust)**

## **10. Exclusions**

The past experiences of looked-after and previously looked-after children can impact on their behaviour. Where a looked-after child is at risk of either fixed term or permanent exclusion, the Designated Teacher will contact the relevant authority's VSH as soon as possible so they can help the school decide how to support the child to improve their behaviour and avoid exclusion becoming necessary. Our school behaviour policy reflects the differing needs and experiences of our cohorts and the use of behaviours plans and risk assessments provides a framework within which we can work collaboratively to support the differing needs of children, including drawing on the advice of professionals where appropriate.

**Written by: Helen Pinney**

**Dated: May 2020 and approved July 2020**