

Looked After Children Policy

Statement of intent

BEST Nurseries recognises that children and young people become 'Looked After' either if they have been taken into Care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most Looked After Children (LAC) will be living in foster homes but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even be placed back at home with their natural parent(s).

Aim

We aim to provide quality education for every child, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. BEST Nurseries recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of Looked After Children, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in DfEE Circular 0269/2000 and DfEE/DOH Guidance 2000, the Children Act 2004, the Children and Adoption Act 2006, the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 and the Children and Families Act 2014. These Acts place a duty to safeguard looked after children, to promote their educational achievements and to ensure that they are able to "achieve to and reach their full potential". The Guidance recognises the collective responsibility of local authorities and day care settings to achieve good parenting and sets out six principles:

- Prioritising education
- Having high expectations
- Inclusion – changing and challenging attitudes
- Achieving continuity and stability
- Early intervention – priority action
- Listening to children

The Guidance also introduced two key measures:

- To ensure designated Looked After Child co-ordinators are nominated in every setting
- To ensure Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are in place for all Looked After Children.

BEST Nurseries is committed to ensuring that nominated LAC co-ordinator is enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively

Role and Responsibility of the LAC co-ordinator

The current nominated LAC co-ordinator are the Nursery Managers. The LAC co-ordinator should:

- Be an advocate for Looked After Children
- Ensure a smooth and welcoming induction for the child and carer/s (and parent/s where possible). Note any specific requirements, including care status

- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed (within 20 days of entering care or joining a new Pre-school). This should be prepared with the child and the carer/s (and parent/s if possible), in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies. Where appropriate, the PEP should take account of any Individual Educational Plan (IEP), Pastoral Support Plan (PSP), Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP), career plan or any other relevant plans. The PEP should inform and be reviewed
- Ensure that each Looked After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to
- Co-ordinate support for the child in the Nursery and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary
- Ensure all staff receive relevant information and training
- Ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis
- Provide written information to assist planning or review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible
- Seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded

Role and Responsibilities of all Staff

- As with all children, have high aspirations and celebrate the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children
- Be familiar with the Guidance on Looked After Children and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings
- Liaise with the nominated co-ordinator where a Looked After Child is experiencing difficulty
- Liaise with the Educational Psychologist concerned with Looked After Children as and when necessary for advice or otherwise at all stages of the child's inclusion at BEST Nursery. At present this is Val Walker who can be contacted by telephone on 01234 228603

Role and Responsibility of the Nursery Management

The management of the nursery will:

- Ensure that admission criteria prioritise Looked After Children, according to the Code of Practice on Admissions
- Ensure all staff are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Looked After Children
- Ensure that there is a named nominated co-ordinator for Looked After Children

- For child protection and confidentiality reasons, ensure that information will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity, and respect the confidentiality of the children concerned
- Review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years
- Ensure that the Nurseries other policies and procedures give Looked After Children equal access in respect of:
 - Admission to Nursery
 - The Early Years Foundation Stage
 - Additional educational support where this is needed

Training

- The Nursery Manager, nominated co-ordinator and Inclusion Officer will be responsible for ensuring that all members of staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in the guidance from the Department of further education and skills (DfES) and Department of Health (DoH)
- The Nursery Manager will ensure that the nominated co-ordinator attends the relevant training days relating to Looked After Children

**BEST Nurseries Looked After Children's Co-ordinator is:
The Nursery Manager**

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| DATE APPROVED: | 19th July 2021 |
| APPROVED BY: | Alison Wilshaw |
| NEXT REVIEW DATE: | 19th July 2022 |