



FARNEY CLOSE SCHOOL

Child Looked After Policy

Date last reviewed (v4)	May 2022
Review Due	May 2023

Approval Level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Governing Body <input type="checkbox"/> Principal to Determine
Signed	
Role	Governor
Date Approved	

Introduction

Under the Children Act 1989, a Child Looked After (CLA) is a child who has been placed in the care of the local authority for more than 24 hours. These children were previously referred to as Looked After Children or Child in Care depending on the local authority they are from. The pupil may also have a preferred term that they wish to be referred to. CLA at Farney Close may be living with foster carers, living in a residential children's home or living with parents but have a Looked After Child status due to being in a residential school. CLA may be under a section 20 or a section 31 of the Children's Act 1989. They may also be under an Interim Care Order which is Section 38 of the Children Act 1989. Section 20 of the Children's Act 1989 is where the parents agree to their child being taken into care. The parents maintain parental responsibility for their child. Section 31 of the Children's Act 1989 is where a child is taken into care via a Court Order. Under this section, parental responsibility is shared between the local authority and the parents. The 1989 Children Act and DfEE Circular 13/94, places key responsibilities on schools and Local Authorities to address more effectively the needs of children who are Looked After in public care.

Research shows that nationally, CLA significantly underachieve compared to their peers at school. They are more likely to get excluded from school and are at higher risk of becoming "Not in Education, Employment, or Training" (NEET). Farney Close School recognises the major role that it plays in helping young people in care to succeed and build a better future for themselves where they can be happy, healthy, safe and able to make a positive contribution to society.

Farney Close School supports the needs of CLA by:

- Promoting attendance
- Building relationships
- Promoting inclusion
- Providing stability
- Listening to the views of the child
- Promoting health and wellbeing
- Reducing exclusions
- Staff training
- Working in partnership with carers, parents, Social Workers, and other professionals

The role and responsibilities of Trustee Directors

Section 20 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 places a duty on the Directors to designate a member of staff (the designated teacher) as having responsibility to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children To this effect, the Directors should:

- Ensure that the necessary provision is being made for any pupil who is a Looked After Child or previously Looked After Child.
- Ensure that the designated teachers are given the appropriate level of support and has the opportunity to keep up to date with relevant training

- Ensure the designated teacher disseminates relevant training and provides support for all members of staff that will influence teaching and learning for Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children.
- The Directors in partnership with the school's Principal are responsible for monitoring how well the role is working. As part of this monitoring an annual report will be received from the Designated Teacher.
- Annually review the effective implementation of the Trust's policy for LAC and previously Looked After Children.

Roles and responsibilities of the Principal

Identify a Looked After Child Coordinator, whose role is set out below. It is essential that the Principle identify another person for this role if the Looked After Coordinator were to leave their employment or be on leave.

- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the attendance, admission, exclusions and progress of CLA and that action is taken where necessary.
- Ensure all staff receive regular training and are aware of this policy and how best to support the pupils who are CLA.

Roles and responsibilities of the Looked After Child Coordinator (the designated teacher)

The designated coordinator for CLA is the School Social Worker. In their absence, a member of the safeguarding team will be allocated to this area.

Their role and responsibilities are:

- To be an advocate for the CLA.
- Ensure that all CLA have an allocated link worker and a member of staff that they feel they can talk to (this may be the same person).
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed every term. The pupil, their carer, social worker, and other professionals should attend these meetings. If appropriate the pupil's parents should also be invited to attend.
- Ensure that all Farney Close paperwork for PEPs are completed prior to the PEP meeting.
- Ensure that the local authority paperwork is completed in a timely manner after the PEP.
- Chair the CLA's annual review of their EHCP.
- Track the progress, both educationally and socially, and identify further support where necessary.
- Coordinate any support that takes place within school.
- Ensure confidentiality is maintained for the pupil and only share information on a need to know basis. Gain permission within PEP and CLA meetings to share information if necessary.
- Promote attendance. If attendance becomes a problem work alongside the Referrals and Inclusion officer to support re-engagement in school. Complete a home visit or organise for another member of staff to complete a home visit.
- Act as an advisor to the members of staff and the governors. Give guidance on the needs of CLA.

- Set up additional meetings in a timely manner if the pupil is experiencing difficulties within school or if they are facing exclusion.
- Communicate effectively with carers, parents, social workers and other external agencies. Ensure they are aware of any problems but also achievements that the young person is experiencing.
- Support the pupil through transitions they are experiencing such as, leaving school.
- Work alongside the Vice-Principle to ensure that any pupil premium the school receives for CLA is used to promote achievement for the pupil.

Roles and responsibility of all staff

Maintain confidentiality with regard to the CLA and support them with sensitivity.

- Respond in a timely manner to any request of information or paperwork from the Looked After Child Coordinator.
- Report any problems or concerns regarding a CLA to the CLA Coordinator.
- Attend PEP and CLA meetings if asked to do so by the CLA Coordinator.
- Understand the challenges CLA face.
- Be aware that CLA can often be the targets of bullying and act to prevent this happening.

Personal Education Plans

All CLA children must have a Personal Education Plan (PEP), which their own social worker will take the lead in developing. The PEP is a record of the child's education and forms part of the overall Care Plan. It provides a clear and shared understanding about the teaching and learning provision to ensure academic progress. The social worker, parents, carers and the child may be invited to the PEP meeting to ensure the views of all stakeholders are considered. The school's role in this plan is crucial and at least one member of staff who knows the child well will attend the meeting to establish and subsequently review this.

Issues that may be discussed in the PEP:

- the child's strengths and weaknesses
- include the child's views on how they see they have progressed and what support they consider to be most effective
- interests, both in and out of school
- developmental and educational and pastoral needs
- future plans, and how these can be supported
- issues arising for the child
- It will also identify targets that will be reviewed during the next PEP meeting.

The PEP will set clear objectives or targets which relate to academic achievement as well as out of school activities and wherever necessary behavioural targets.

If a child or young person moves school, the PEP should be forwarded, as a matter of urgency, to the new school when known.

In relation to previously CLA pupils, although they no longer required a PEP, the designated teachers should continue to consider their educational needs. The

designated teachers should maintain links with VSHs who must make advice and information available, in order to promote the educational achievement of this group of previously looked-after children.

Funding

CLA or previously CLA children and young people are entitled to additional funding to help improve their outcomes and narrow the gap between their outcomes and those of their peers.

Farney Close School is committed to ensuring effective use of dedicated funding, where available, for all eligible Children Looked After on roll to provide additional, personalised support to ensure accelerated progress in order to improve outcomes.

The appropriate use of allocated funding is to be assessed through the Personal Education Plan.

Partnership Working

Farney Close School values partnership working, and in order to secure the best possible outcomes for Children Looked After, viewing it as essential that we work with parents/carers, social workers, the Virtual School Head and other external partners to ensure we are providing the best possible life chances for our Children Looked After.