

Greenway Primary
& Nursery School



Greenway Primary and Nursery School

Children Looked After Policy

Date of Approval: 18 March 2021

Date of Review: Spring Term 2022

Policy Objective:

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of Children Looked After (CLA) and Children Previously Looked After (PLA) on the roll of this school.

Name of the Designated Teacher for CLA and PLA

KATHARINE ELLWOOD

Name of the Designated School Governor for CLA and PLA

ELIZABETH O'REILLY

At **Greenway Primary and Nursery School** we ensure that children looked after (CLA) and children previously looked after (PLA) have access to excellent educational provision and are prioritised for additional support through school-based interventions to achieve as well as possible, in accordance with the '*DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018.*

We recognise that our school plays a vital role in providing a stable base for CLA and PLA and in promoting their academic, social and emotional development. We promote whole school staff training in their specific needs, so that all adults at this school are sensitive to the barriers to learning that CLA experience and feel able to support the children discretely and confidentially, as needs arise. We understand the need to work in a 'relationship-based' way so that CLA and PLA feel valued and a part of our school community.

Our aim is to champion the needs of CLA and PLA to ensure they make rapid educational and social progress during their period in care on the roll of this school.

Equality and Diversity statement

This policy is intended to be helpful for improvement in the education available for all learners but has a focus on CLA and PLA who, statistically, experience disadvantage in education. The criteria are clear that the expectation is that all learners receive a high-quality, ambitious education; that providers are inclusive of all learners; and that all providers must be meeting their statutory duties, including those under the Equality Act 2010 and all protected characteristics therein.

We believe that an inclusive learning environment in which everybody is respected is conducive to a happy and healthy learning environment.

The Virtual School Attachment Aware and Trauma Informed Toolkit training will support a greater understanding of diversity and equality and is relevant to many children particularly those returning to school in September 2020.

Coronavirus response:

We have reviewed the Virtual School Recovery Curriculum presentation and delivered the Attachment Aware and Trauma Informed Toolkit training to all school staff and will develop a school response based on the principles promoted in both. The ethos at Greenway supports all of those working within the school to feel confident in reporting and evidencing

issues relating to equality and diversity. Promoting an inclusive environment is key to the well-being of all pupils as is a commitment to deepening pupils' understanding of "democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law and mutual respect and tolerance" (Ofsted 2019).

Our Aims for all CLA and PLA:

- to provide a safe and secure environment where educational progress and stability is always central to the planning and all adults understand the specific needs of CLA and PLA
- to narrow the gap between the attainment of CLA and PLA and their peers, ensuring **accelerated** and **rapid** progress
- to ensure that CLA and PLA benefit from school-based interventions, even if they do not meet the criteria for that intervention (*DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018*) and to use the allocated Pupil Premium *Plus* (PP+) to ensure effective impact
- to arrange for all CLA at least termly Personal Education Planning (ePEP) meetings each academic year and for the joint planning and quality first teaching to have measurable impact on each child's learning on a daily basis (*DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018*)
- for all adults to provide sensitive, child-led support, adopting a relationship-based approach and with at least one key adult with whom the child or young person has a trusted relationship and who will act as an advocate for them and take a special interest in their progress in all school activities
- that school systems facilitate discrete support, that includes a strong relationship between school staff, carers and children looked after on roll
- to ensure that CLA and PLA are advantaged within school policies and procedures, with their needs explicitly considered and provided for (*DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018*)
- to ensure that the school's Behaviour Policy maintains clear boundaries and expectations about behaviour but provides an acknowledgement that we understand that not all behaviour is a matter of choice for some children. We do not enforce sanctions that shame and ostracise CLA or PLA from their peers, school, community or family. In this school we seek to create an inclusive and positive school ethos for every pupil
- to ensure that CLA and PLA and their families feel part of the school community and that they are actively welcomed, involved and engaged into this school community (*DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018*).

Educational Planning for Children Looked After: Personal Education Plans (ePEP) and CLA Self Evaluation Forms (CLASEF)

The school ensures that every CLA on roll has a Personal Education Planning (ePEP) meeting that is reviewed termly, within the statutory care planning framework, and in

collaboration with the social worker, carer and other relevant professionals. In any one school year there are at least 3 PEP meetings for each CLA. The school completes all sections of the CLASEF to share our plan for improvement and development in school for disadvantaged children and also to inform the Hertfordshire Virtual School of the school's policy and practice, to account for the efficient and effective spend of the PP+ funding and to inform the school Governing Body via the annual CLA report.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Headteacher (who is also the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After) and Governing Body are committed to promoting improved educational life chances for CLA and PLA. They ensure that the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After has qualified teacher status, appropriate seniority in the leadership team and time and experience to fulfil this statutory role and has at least 2 days per year training to remain fully informed. The Governing Body monitor the role of the Designated Teacher to ensure that all CLA and PLA make accelerated and rapid progress and that the whole school staff receive appropriate training.

The Designated Teacher for Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After in 2020/21 is **KATHARINE ELLWOOD (who is also the Headteacher)**. She is a qualified teacher, and promotes improved educational life chances for CLA and PLA by:

- ensuring that the CLA or PLA have access to quality first teaching
- tracking the progress of CLA and PLA across the curriculum using data, teacher reports and book looks
- ensuring that the PP+ is used effectively and efficiently
- performing a coordinating role with school staff and outside agencies
- ensuring effective communication with the school's assigned Education Adviser from the Virtual School
- developing expertise in the field of CLA, including attachment theory and trauma-informed practice
- delivering the Virtual School training: 'An introduction to Attachment Aware and Trauma-Informed Practice' to the whole school
- providing and attending training and offering advice to the whole school staff
- promoting a school culture which is supportive, relationship-based and has high expectations for CLA and PLA
- regularly reporting to the Governing Body on the attainment of CLA and PLA and school resource and staff training needs for working with this group

- prioritising CLA for school-based additional support, even when the young person does not meet the criteria (*DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018*)
- ensuring that CLA and PLA are not overlooked for positions of student responsibility within the school because of their care status
- completing the annual Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) of each CLA as requested, to inform their annual CLA health review.

All staff promote improved educational life chances for CLA and PLA by:

- reading this school policy for CLA
- attending relevant training, including the Virtual School toolkit training on 'Attachment Aware and Trauma-Informed Practice' (to be found on the Virtual School website: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/virtualschool)
- providing accurate information and data when asked by the Designated Teacher
- referring to the Designated Teacher for advice
- playing their part in creating an attachment and trauma-informed 'CLA-friendly' culture and securing rapid progress for CLA by ensuring that they benefit from any additional school-based support available

Attendance:

School attendance procedures reflect the specific needs of CLA and PLA to ensure good school attendance. Where there is a concern about attendance or punctuality, the school contact the carer, social worker and other professionals including the Virtual School, as an early intervention, as outlined in the school's Attendance Policy.

Admissions/ Transitions:

School procedures to support CLA and PLA during admission and transition include:

- prioritising CLA and PLA at the point of admission
- the swift transfer of information between schools that may include school visits and at times of transition, teaching at the previous school
- early identification of staff mentor and peer buddy
- additional support and planning for CLA and PLA at times of transition
- structured activities to 'say goodbye', in recognition of the impact of broken attachments and loss

Additional Educational Needs:

All staff work creatively to secure accelerated and rapid progress for CLA and PLA with additional educational needs by:

- having high expectations
- ensuring that they are prioritised for additional school-based support, even if they do not meet the criteria (*in line with the DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018*)

- ensuring that planning is coordinated, appropriate interventions identified and teaching to the plan is systematic; ensuring that any work undertaken by non-teaching staff has teacher over-sight (*in line with the Lamb Report, Dec '09*)
- ensuring that progress is regularly monitored and reviewed, against the targets set as agreed in the termly Virtual School visit, ePEP and CLASEF

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities:

All staff work creatively to secure accelerated and rapid progress for CLA and PLA who have special educational needs & disabilities by:

- having high expectation of progress each academic year (*in line with the expectation set out in the ePEP and CLA-SEF*)
- ensuring that they are accessing school-based targeted support which is 'additional to and different from' the universal and additional needs provision (*in line with the SEND Code of Practice*)
- ensuring that all plans are coordinated, appropriate interventions identified, and teaching to the plan is systematic
- ensuring that progress is regularly monitored and reviewed, in line with the SEND Code of Practice
- ensuring that any work undertaken by non-teaching staff has teacher over-sight
- that with the school SENCO the EHCP review is held in a timely way with all relevant professionals invited and their views obtained.

Safeguarding:

School staff are vigilant for any safeguarding issues which can impact particularly on CLA by: familiarising themselves with the 'School Policy Guidance for Children in Care' and following the school's Child Protection Policy and the 'DfE: Keeping Children Safe in Education' (All staff) September 2020 (as amended in January 2021) if there are any safeguarding concerns.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Alternative Provision:

We make every effort to ensure that in any arrangements for provision alternative to daily attendance at school there is:

- a plan that retains the CLA on the roll of the school or clarifies in writing which educational establishment is responsible for essential reporting and accountable for the PP+
- an agreed part of the overall ePEP for the student
- full time (25 hours) provision or provision that contributes to full time attendance and is of high quality
- provision that meets the educational needs of the CLA or PLA
- provision that provides the opportunity to make rapid progress in the course of study provided by the setting
- regular monitoring and that ePEPs include the school and the alternative provider

Exclusion:

- We reviewed and ratified the school Behaviour Policy on 30 September 2020 in line with the statutory guidance published in February 2018 (*DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018*) and subsequently amended the Behaviour Policy on 18 March 2021 to reflect the additional changes made on 4 March 2021. See www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion/changes-to-the-school-exclusion-process-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak
- We make every effort to avoid excluding a CLA, in recognition of the increased risk this poses in terms of them quickly disengaging from the school, due to their early experience of broken attachments and loss. Before acting, we discuss the rationale for exclusion with the assigned Education Adviser from the Virtual School.
- If there is no option other than exclusion, then we make every attempt to reduce the number of days of the exclusion.
- School procedures are in place to reduce the risk of exclusion of CLA and PLA. CLA and PLA with special educational needs should have exclusion as a behaviour management action as a last possible resort (*Regulation 4(1)(c) of the Equalities Act 2010 which means that a head teacher could only lawfully exclude a child for a reason relating to their disability, even a disability that results in the child having a tendency to physical abuse, if reasonable adjustments have been made*).
- We follow the school's Behaviour Policy (see extract below 'Differentiated responses') to try and avoid excluding a CLA or PLA

'Differentiated responses

- *At Greenway, we recognise that there are times when a differentiated response to anti-social behavior will be necessary based on the individual circumstances of the child.*
- *We acknowledge that disruptive, difficult or dangerous behaviour patterns may arise for a range of reasons, including poor self-image, life events, trauma, fear and fear of failure, because the child is not succeeding socially or academically, or as a result of Special Educational Needs/Disabilities (SEND). Where appropriate, school will use tools (e.g. Anxiety Mapping and/or Roots and Fruits) to seek to understand this better and may adapt the prevention and de-escalation strategies as well as the consequences chosen as necessary.*
- *Where anti-social behaviour has become very significant, an Individual Risk Reduction Plan may be required. This would be shared with parents/carers and all staff coming into contact with the child and would provide a highly personalised approach to their specific behavioural needs (see template at Appendix 5).*
- *Multi-agency involvement may also be considered for guidance or support where appropriate and particularly if there is a concern that reasonable adjustments that are already in place are not having, and appear unlikely to have, the desired effect (e.g. for a pupil who is persistently displaying significant anti-social behaviour). In such instances, Greenway staff work with agencies and take their guidance to ensure that as comprehensive an understanding of underlying issues (including any previously undiagnosed Special Educational Needs or Disabilities as well as any mental health problems and/or family issues) have been identified as possible, so that appropriate intervention strategies are put in place at the earliest reasonable opportunity.*

Multi-Agency Working:

- **School staff make every effort to** develop positive professional relationships with colleagues from other agencies and facilitate their work. This enables colleagues to successfully perform their roles and positively impact on the education and wider needs of CLA and PLA.

The Headteacher (who is also the Designated Teacher) and Governing Body ensure that all staff are briefed on the Statutory Guidance and practice outlined in this policy.

Date 18 March 2021

Review date Autumn 2021

Relevant Contact Information

The Hertfordshire Virtual School for Children Looked After

- *Website:* www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/virtualschool
- *Twitter:* @VS_HCC
- *Email:* virtualschool@hertfordshire.gov.uk
- *Phone:* 01992 556915