

At St Dennis Primary Academy, we believe that all Looked After, Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) and children with a social worker should have equitable access to excellent educational provision and achieve in line or better than all children from Cornwall and children nationally. We, as a school community, aim to be champions and advocates for Looked After Children, PLAC and children with a social worker, and will take a proactive approach to support their success and achievement, recognising that we have a vital role to play in promoting children's social and emotional development and enhancing life outcomes.

The Designated Teacher for Looked After and PLAC is **Mrs Joanna Waters** (SENCo).

The second contact for Looked After and PLAC if the DT is unavailable is **Mrs Cathy Brokenshire** (Headteacher).

Aims for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children and PLAC

- Provide a safe and secure environment, which values education and believes in the abilities and potential of all children.
- Close the gap - bring the educational attainments of our Looked After and PLA Children to in line with or better than those of their peers.
- Ensure the appropriate use of Pupil Premium Plus to support education (Looked After Children have access to Pupil Premium Plus. £350 will be allocated to every child from day one of being in care by the Virtual School Head. The school receives this at the end of each term. A bid can be made via the ePEP to top this up by a further £350 if required. The school follows Education Endowment Fund guidance on use, good practice and impact of PP+).
- Make sure Looked After and PLAC have access to education appropriate to their age, ability and emotional understanding. This includes access to a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum.
- Identify our school's role to promote and support the education of our Looked After and PLAC.
- To have a Designated Teacher (DT) for Looked After and PLAC who will act as their advocate and coordinate support for them, liaising with carers, birth parents (as appropriate), social workers and health on a wide variety of educational and care issues. This person will be required to make financial decisions in the best interest of the child.
- For all staff and governors to be committed to ensuring improved educational life chances for Looked After and PLAC by ensuring that the relevant personnel have reasonable support and time to compete tasks and responsibilities. Also, to establish and maintain appropriate reporting and monitoring procedures, both within the school and with other agencies.

Role of the Designated Teacher to ensure a whole school approach

- Complete the ePEP - every Looked After child between the ages of 2 & 18 must have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) whether they are in Early Years, Education, Training, Employment or NEET and it is the Designated Teacher's (DT) role to complete the PEP for education. It is a statutory requirement that a PEP meeting should take place within 10 school days of the child coming into care or if there has been a significant change in their life e.g. change of school, carer or social worker. Cornwall Virtual School uses an electronic PEP (ePEP) system called Welfare Call <http://extranet.welfarecall.com/>. The ePEP must be completed in a manner that supports requests made by the school to support a child in their learning and also backs up requests for additional funding. By reading a child's PEP you should be able to know the child. There is an expectation that the ePEP is fully completed on the Welfare Call system within 10 working days of the PEP meeting having taken

place. Data and information should be collated before the meeting and this includes:

- Attainment
- Attitudes to learning
- Attendance & exclusion information
- Pupil view
- A list of who is involved with the child CAMHS, Ed Psych etc
- Participate in appropriate annual DT Forums, an induction and joint agency training with the Virtual School and list this in the annual safeguarding return (S175/157).
- If there are safeguarding concerns for a Child in Care or PLAC, contact and advice will be sought from the Virtual School and MARU (Multi-agency referral unit) as per safeguarding procedures.
- Ensure that positive messages about behaviour and achievement are shared within the school and between school, carers and outside agencies, and that high educational expectations are maintained.
- Ensure systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about Looked After and PLAC, ensuring teachers have high expectations of the child, encouraging achievement and ambition.
- Ensure the child has a special, trusted adult in school who is able to take time to listen to them and have access to support and counselling in school if required. A nurturing and trauma informed approach, in-line with the school's Relationship Policy, including and understanding of ACES will be employed to support Looked After and PLAC.
- Ensure that adults in school are sensitive to the child's wishes over what is known and by whom regarding their care status and are aware of a variety of emotional issues and trauma that may undermine the child's ability to engage in the learning process, including feelings of loss, rejection, isolation, confusion and low self-esteem.
- Ensure staff training recognises that being or becoming Child in Care has a major impact on children's lives and that when reflecting on children's learning and or behaviour, due consideration is given.
- Share information so all teachers within the school are made aware of the needs of Looked After and PLAC and actively promote their best interests and celebrate achievements whilst support the engagement of Looked After and PLAC in out of school hours learning.
- Work in partnership with carers and agencies and parents (where appropriate) and support carers to value educational achievement and improve attendance.
- Ensure teachers are aware of possible unresolved feelings the young person may have about their own families and siblings, in addition to insecurity over their current homes and carers.
- Ensure clarity in relation to who is and is not allowed to collect the child from school.
- Establish effective assessment, recording and reporting practices.

Role of Local Monitoring Committee

The Designated Safeguarding Local Monitoring Committee member is also the LMC member for Looked After and needs to know:

- Number of Looked After and PLAC on school roll
- Number of Looked After with up-to-date PEPs
- Overall attainment and progress of Looked After and PLAC in the school with performance compared to peers and national data
- Number of Looked After and PLAC with SEN including the level of support (EHC Plan / School Support)
- Authorised and unauthorised absence levels of Looked After and PLAC
- Number of Looked After and PLAC who have been excluded in previous 12 months
- How the LA supports educational achievement of Looked After and PLAC
- Use of Pupil Premium Plus spend and impact on attainment

The Local Monitoring Committee should also:

- Ensure the DT has opportunity to attend training.
- Be aware of the 'Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children', Feb 2018 DfE and that there is a duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of Looked After and PLAC, under Section 52 of the Children's Act 2004.
- Ensure there is a dedicated Governor or committee to champion and monitor the work of the school in supporting its Looked After and PLAC as a part of a larger group of vulnerable children. The schools dedicated Governor is **Mrs Samantha Truscott**.
- Take a proactive approach in co-operating with and supporting the Local Authority with regard to the education of Looked After and PLAC attending the school.
- Ensure Designated Teachers and staff are aware of and enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively with the full support of the Headteacher.

Special Educational Needs

- Any special educational needs are quickly identified and appropriate provision is made – early identification and action is key.
- Systems are in place to identify and prioritise when Looked After and PLAC are underachieving and have early interventions to improve this and contact is made with the Virtual School for Looked After and PLAC as soon as concerns are raised.
- If the child has an EHC Plan, the annual review coincides with one of the six monthly Statutory Care Reviews / termly PEP meetings.

Admissions and transitions

- Looked After and PLAC have priority on school admission.
- The school prioritises Looked After and PLAC and admits children as quickly as possible, recognising the importance of re-establishing school stability. The school makes every effort to provide continuity of schooling and educational experience.
- The school adheres to Cornwall Council School Admission protocol and has awareness of 'Placement of pupils out of their chronological year group' – a Cornwall Council guide.

- The school ensures that on admission or transfer that all relevant information is obtained at the outset and forwards appropriate documents, in a timely fashion, to any receiving school where the receiving school is made known.

Attendance

- A weekly report is submitted to the Virtual School for Looked After children
- Where attendance is a problem, a first day of absence procedure will be established.
- The school will inform the Education Welfare Officer / Social Worker / Virtual School with any concerns about attendance.
- Attendance is acknowledged in any education meetings, celebrating success and setting realistic targets if it is a concern.
- If a child is on a Child Protection plan, the school will ensure the social worker and carer are contacted if the child is absent.
- Looked After and PLAC should not be taken out of school for holidays, only for 'exceptional circumstances'.
- There should be no unauthorised absences for Looked After and PLAC.
- Safety plans are put in place where a Looked After or PLAC is on a reduced timetable or Children Missing Education or Children Missing Out of Education (CME/CMOE).

Exclusion

- The school will identify any Looked After child who is at risk of exclusion and contact the Virtual School, Education Welfare Officer, social worker and relevant professionals to put proactive strategies in place to avoid them missing days from school.
- The school will ensure, in the case of a fixed term exclusion, that the carer (or persons holding parental responsibility) and the social worker have been spoken to and within one day a letter has been sent specifying the period and the reasons for the exclusion, date of return, outline of the rights of carers to make representations to the governing body where appropriate and details of arrangements made to enable the excluded pupil to continue his/her education.
- The school will make sure in the event of any exclusion, contact is made with the Virtual School with details of the exclusion outlining the reasons why the child has been excluded so that an appropriate response can be made.

At risk

- The school will share information if they feel a Looked After, PLAC or children with a social worker are at risk in any way.
- The school will have a safety plan in place with regards to absconding, going missing and at risk of exploitation.

The Headteacher and Designated Teacher are responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

Person responsible for policy: Mrs C Brokenshire (Headteacher and Designated Teacher)

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