



Sunny Bank Primary School Children in Care Policy

December 2025

Nationally, Children in Care significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that Children in Care are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic wellbeing, in line with Every Child Matters.

Helping Children in Care succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority for Kent County Council and Kent schools. This policy takes account of:

- The County Council's duty under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children (LAC).
- The Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006.
- Relevant DfEs guidance to Governing Bodies *{Supporting Looked After Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors}*.

Our approach to supporting the educational achievement of Children in Care is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education
- Promoting attendance
- Targeting support
- Having high expectations
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes
- Achieving stability and continuity
- Early intervention and priority action
- Listening to children
- Promoting health and wellbeing
- Reducing exclusions and promoting stability
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals

Who are Children in Care?

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They fall into four main groups:

- children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
- children who are compulsorily accommodated - this includes children remanded to the local

authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21).

The term 'in care' refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 - they may live with foster carers, in a Children's home, in a residential school, with relatives or with parents under supervision. Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are 'accommodated' by the local authority under section 20 of the Children Act - they may live in foster care, in a Children's home or in a residential school. All these groups are said to be 'Children in Care' (CIC). They may be looked after by our local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

PEP reviews, involving the school, will take place until an adoption order has been granted. However, Pupil Premium Plus funding will continue for CIC until they are 16 years old.

Children in Care may (or may not) have some of the following issues:

- low self esteem
- poor education standards due to time out of school
- delayed social/emotional/cognitive development
- be bullied or bully others.
- be prone to mental health issues
- be isolated with few friends
- have behaviour issues.
- poor attachments to others.
- have a need to be very private.

This makes them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life-chances. The governing body of Sunny Bank Primary School, under the TILT trust, is committed to ensuring that these children are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following are in place, and are working effectively:

- a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children
- Personal Education Plans for all Looked After Children
- all staff have a clear understanding of confidentiality and issues that affect looked after children
- effective strategies that supports the education of this vulnerable group

Our Designated Teachers for Children in Care are:

Joanne Akrill/SENDCo and Sunny Bank Designated Safeguarding Lead

Role and Responsibility of The Designated Teacher:

The Designated Teacher should:

- be an advocate for Children In Care
 - when new to the school, ensure a smooth and welcome induction for the child and carer, and note any specific requirements, including care status;
 - ensure that a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is completed, as soon as possible. This should be prepared with the child and the carer, in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies, and be linked to the Care Plan meetings, within 28 days, 3 months and 6 months and, at least, every 6 months;
 - keep PEPs and other records up to date, particularly in time to inform review meetings;
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- ensure that each child in public care (if they wish) has an identified member of staff that they can talk to (this should be based on the child's request, and may not necessarily be the Designated Teacher);
- co-ordinate support for the child in the school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary;
- ensure staff receive relevant information and training and act as an advisor to staff and governors;
- ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis;
- provide written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible;
- ensure that the child and carer(s) receive early notification of meetings, parent's evenings and other events and that communication remains regular and positive.
- encourage Children in Care to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning, where feasible;
- ensure speedy transfer of information between individuals and other relevant agencies and to a new school if and when the child transfers;
- seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded.

Roles and responsibilities of all staff

- ensure that any child in public care is supported sensitively and that
- confidentiality is maintained;
- be familiar with the policy and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings;
- respond positively to a child in public care's request to be the named person that they can talk to when they feel it is necessary;
- contribute to the Designated Teacher's requests for information on educational attainment and needs, as appropriate;
- as with all children, ensure that no child in public care is stigmatised in any way;
- provide a supportive climate to enable a child in public care to achieve stability within the school setting;
- as with all children, have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children
- positively promote the self-esteem of Children in Care.

Roles and Responsibility of the Governing Body

The Trustees/governing body of this school will:

- ensure all Trustees/Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Children in Care;
 - be aware of whether the school has Children in Care and how many (no names);
 - ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Children in Care;
 - liaise with the Head of School to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out her/his responsibilities in relation to Children in Care;
 - support the Head of School, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of Children in Care are met;
 - nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the trustees/governing body (these reports should not include any names of individual children for child protection and confidentiality reasons)
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- review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually

Confidentiality

- information on looked after children will be shared with school staff on a "need to know basis"
- the Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with which school staff at the PEP meeting.
- once this has been agreed with the social worker, carer, young person, and other parties, complete confidentiality is to be maintained.

Training

The Heads of School or the Designated Teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

Personal Education Plan (PEP) completion

- Social worker informs school of a child becoming looked after (or a looked after child entering the school)
- Date is set for the completion of a Personal Education Plan (PEP).
- A copy of the form is sent to the school to enable completion of educational data PEP meeting takes place within 20 days, involving the social worker designated teacher (or other appropriate staff), carer and young person if appropriate.
- A date is set for the next pep meeting Personal Education Plan is taken to the child's statutory review and discussed within the wider context of the child's life. PEP sent by SW to the CIC team.

This policy links with a number of other school policies and it is important that Governors have regard to the needs of Children in Care when reviewing them:

- Oversubscription criteria
- Nurturing Relationships and Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Home-school agreement
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

The school will champion the needs of Children in Care, raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them, in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible.

Review date: December 2026

