Designated Teacher policy (Looked after and previously Looked after and previously Looked After Children)

Author, date and title	Reviewed on/by	Next review due date	Statutory Requirement
Jill Davies May 2012	January 2016	January 2017	No
	March 2017	March 2018	No
	May 2018	May 2019	No
Sarah Woodham (Joint Federation Policy)	February 2019	February 2022	No
Sarah Woodham (Joint Federation Policy)	February 2022 ST&L Ratified on 3.3.22	February 2023	Yes

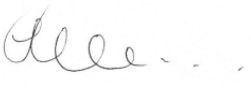
As Values Schools, Shillington Lower and Stondon Lower ensures that all its policies, principals and practices adhere to the Values Education ethos.

We are committed to recognising, valuing and respecting the diversity of our schools' communities. We adhere to the Local Authority's Equal Opportunities Policy and the Equality Duty 2010. We welcome all members of the schools' communities irrespective of race, ethnic or national origins, religious and political beliefs, gender, disability, sexuality, age, marital status and linguistic ability. We will ensure equality and value diversity, and address any unfair treatment, discrimination and prejudice.

All our schools' policies include the Pixie class (Shillington) and the before and after school club (Stondon).

Amendments in this issue

1.	Policy renamed
2. 3.	‘Looked after and previously Looked After Children’ reworded to ‘Looked after and previously Looked After Children and previously Looked after and previously Looked After Children’
4.	Added reference to the Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire into the role of the Designated teacher Updated Local authority contact details

Head Teacher:  Date: 03/03/2022

Chair of Governors:  Date: 03/03/2022

The Shillington and Stondon Federation

EDUCATION OF LOOKED AFTER AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

Introduction

Shillington and Stondon Lower School and Governors are committed to providing quality education for all pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. This policy sets out the role which Shillington and Stondon School plays in supporting and enhancing the educational experiences of Looked after and previously Looked After Children on roll at either school. The school recognises that nationally there is considerable educational under achievement of children in residential and foster care, when compared with their peers and is committed to implementing the principles and practice. Relevant legislation and guidance includes,

- 'Promoting the achievement of Looked after and previously Looked After Children and previously Looked after and previously Looked After Children' (July 2014, updated February 2018), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683556/Promoting_the_education_of_looked-after_children_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf

- Section 20 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 ("the 2008 Act")
- Section 20A of the 2008 Act inserted by section 5 of the children and social work Act 2017 ("the 2017 Act)")
- 'The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked–after children' Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities (Feb 2018)

  https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683561/The_designated_teacher_for_looked-after_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf

A 'looked after child' (LAC) is any child or young person taken into care by the local authority ('in public care'), being accommodated by the local authority or remanded/detained. The child's placement may include living with a relative, emergency care and short or long term formal foster placement. The statutory guidance now applies to academies, and to children who were previously a looked after child. 'Previously LAC' is defined as a child who is no longer LAC because they have been adopted, placed under a special guardianship order, or a child arrangements order.

Accommodation (Section 20):

A voluntary arrangement with parents as they may be ill, missing, unable to cope for a period of time. The parents retain parental responsibility.

In Care:

If a court has granted a Care Order (Section 31(1) or interim care order (section 38) which it will issue if it believes a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. A Care Order gives additional parental responsibility to the local authority which it shares with the birth parents.

Remanded/detained into care:

Relates to children who are the subject of emergency orders. Police may use their powers of protection and courts may remand into care following criminal charges.

The local authority and the school are the 'corporate parents' of the child as well as other involved professionals and have a duty to work together to ensure that the child/young person is fully supported during their period of compulsory education and beyond this if they choose to continue in education after the age of sixteen. Looked after and previously Looked After Children and previously Looked after and previously Looked After Children are recognised to be a very vulnerable group in terms of education and future life chances and may have some or all 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

The 2018 guidance now refers specifically to the higher likelihood that such young people will experience periods of mental ill-health as a result of their early experiences. In particular, the guidance says that designated staff should have a good understanding of attachment issues, and should raise awareness of these issues with staff.

The Governing Board of Shillington and Stondon School, is committed to ensuring that these children are supported as fully as possible and, as part of its Corporate Parenting role, will ensure that the following are in place and are working effectively:

- A named Designated Teacher for Looked after and previously Looked After Children (This must be an appropriately qualified and experienced member of staff as described in "The designated teacher for looked after and previously Looked after and previously Looked After Children" (Feb 2018)
- A named Designated Governor
- Personal Education Plans (PEP) for all Looked after and previously Looked After Children up to the end of Year 11 and beyond this if the young person continues in education and chooses to continue the PEP
- All staff have a clear understanding of confidentiality and the issues that affect LAC
- Effective strategies that support the education of this vulnerable group
- Close working links with the local authority and all other involved professionals including the Virtual School Head teacher (or equivalent) for LAC

Role and Responsibility of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher is currently Miss Sarah Woodham who will:

- Be an advocate for Looked after and previously Looked After Children and previously Looked after and previously Looked After Children, within the schools

- Ensure a smooth and welcoming induction for any new looked after child and carer

- Ensure that a PEP is completed as soon as possible, working jointly with the child and carer, in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies and using the results of the Strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ).

- Keep PEPs and other records up to date, particularly in time to inform review meetings

- Ensure that each child in public care has an identified member of staff who they can talk to (this will usually be the child's form tutor) and where appropriate, a trained peer mentor.

- Co-ordinate support for the child in school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary

- Ensure school staff receive relevant information and training to ensure progress and provide feedback for review meetings

- Ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share very personal information on a need to know basis

- Provide written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible

- Ensure the child and carer receive notification of meetings, parents evenings and other events

- Encourage LAC to participate in extra curricular activities and out of hours learning where feasible, ensuring they are provided with any entitlements e.g. free music lessons where appropriate, access to the 16-19 bursary arrangements.

- Ensure speedy transfer of information between individuals and other relevant agencies and to a new school during any transfer periods

- Seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties or is in danger of exclusion
- Ensure wherever possible that exclusion is a last resort and where absolutely necessary is as short a period as possible seeking partnership arrangements with other schools for provision elsewhere if at all possible.

- Track the progress of LAC within the school to ensure they remain "on track" and identify and ensure appropriate use of Pupil premium to support

- Ensure that returns on LAC are completed as requested by the local authority.

Relationships beyond the school:

The designated teacher will:

- Proactivey engage with external professionals to enable the school to respond effectively to the needs of these children
- Engage effectively with parents and carers and support them to be actively engaged in their children's education
- Ensure the school is clear about with whom information about these children is shared

- Ensure that school works effectively with others outside of the school to maximise the stability of

Role and Responsibility of all staff:

- Ensure that any child in public care is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained
- Be familiar with and respond to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other review meetings
- Contribute to the Designated Teacher's request for information on educational attainment and needs as appropriate
- As with all children, ensure that no LAC is stigmatised in any way
- Provide a supportive climate to ensure that a LAC can achieve stability within the school setting
- Set high aspirations for the education and personal achievement of all LAC
- Positively promote the self esteem of LAC

Role and Responsibility of the Governing Body:

- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for Looked after and previously Looked After Children
- Be aware of whether the school has any LAC on roll and how many in each year group
- Ensure there is a named Designated Teacher for LAC
- Liaise with the Head teacher to ensure the Designated Teacher is able to carry out her responsibilities in relation to LAC
- Support the Head teacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of LAC are met
- Nominate a Governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body (any reports must not include the names of LAC)
- Review the effectiveness of this policy as least every three years.

Confidentiality:

Information on Looked after and previously 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 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. Any reports to the Governing Body in relation to LAC will not include names of children.

Training:

The Designated Teacher for Looked after and previously Looked After Children will undertake regular training as provided by the local authority.

Application of this policy:

This policy and the information within it affects all Looked after and previously Looked After Children regardless of which authority has responsibility for them. The designated teacher will follow the guidance and work with the practices and procedures of the differing authorities

where appropriate, although with the recognition that Shillington and Stondon Schools are in Central Bedfordshire and as such the local authority wish to know if any Looked after and previously Looked After Children within its schools are not receiving the necessary support from the appropriate local authority.

Local Authority:

Email: **virtualschoolhead@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk**
Telephone: 0300 300 6977

Linked School Policies: Child Protection, Admissions, Equality, Special Educational Needs, Confidentiality.