BELLINGHAM PARTNERSHIP OF SCHOOLS

LOOKED AFTER CHILD SCHOOL POLICY

SAFEGUARDING: LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

This brings previous Child Protection Policies under the new Safeguarding Guidelines and must be reviewed annually in light of new legislation.
Governors have a duty to monitor the implementation of this policy annually and ensure that their duties with regard to Looked after children are fully discharged

RATIONALE:

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

Helping Looked After Children succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority for Bellingham Partnership Schools and Sports College. 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 DfE guidance to Governing Bodies (*Supporting Looked After Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors*).

Bellingham Partnership Schools Policy for the Education of Looked After Children

Bellingham Partnership Schools approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children 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.

Implications
As for all our pupils, BPS is committed to helping every Looked After Child to achieve the highest standards they can, including supporting aspirations to achieve in further and higher education. This can be measured by improvement in their achievements and attendance.

The Governing Body of BPS is committed to providing quality education for all pupils and will:

- Ensure Looked After Children are prioritised in the school's oversubscription criteria, in line with the Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006. (We will give top priority for admission to LAC in their oversubscription criteria.).
- Ensure a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children is identified and enabled to carry out the responsibilities set out below
- Ensure a Personal Education Plan is put in place, implemented and regularly reviewed for every Looked After Child, in line with Northumberland guidance on Personal Education Plans.
- BPS has identified the safeguarding governors – Trish Taylor and Helen Revels as Designated Governors for Looked After Children.

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

- Safeguarding Policy
- Child Protection Policy.
- Special Educational Needs Policy.
- Behaviour Policy.
- Attendance Policy
- Home School Agreement.
- Anti-bullying Policy.
- Diversity and Equal Opportunities Policy.

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

Policy:	**LAC Policy**
Published by:	**Governing Body**
Issue Date:	**January 2017**
Next Review Date:	**January 2018 & checked annually**

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN SCHOOL POLICY ATTACHMENTS

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HEADTEACHER

- Identify a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children, whose role is set out below. It is essential that another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take sick leave. ***Helen Samuels SENDCo, Rebecca Simpson Headteacher,– BMS Wendy Goddard –BFS – Helen Revels –North Tynies***
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusions of Looked After Children and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of Looked After Children. OFSTED now select a number of Looked After Children, tracking their results and the support they have received.
- Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNING BODY

- Identify a nominated Governor for Looked After Children.
- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Looked After Children.
- Ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Looked After Children.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of Looked After Children.
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.

Procedures: the Governing Body will:

- Monitor the academic progress of Local After Children, through an annual report (see below).
- Ensure that Looked After Children are given top priority when applying for places in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria.
- Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school, by ensuring the school implements policies and procedures to ensure Looked After Children achieve and enjoy their time at the school, by recognising the extra problems caused by excluding them and by not excluding them except as a last resort.
- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Support the Headteacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of Looked After Children are recognised and met.
- Receive a report once a year setting out:

1. The number of looked-after pupils on the school's roll (if any).
2. Their attendance, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils.
3. Their SAT scores, progress in subjects during each academic year, and other qualifications achieved, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils.
4. The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any).
5. The destinations of pupils who leave the school.
6. The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.

THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

Government Guidance says that the Designated Teacher should be "someone with sufficient authority to make things happen…[who] should be an advocate for Looked After Children,

assessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them."

Governors should be aware that all schools are already required to have a designated teacher for LAC. It is strongly recommended that this person should be a member of the Senior Management Team. Training for Designated Teachers has been and will continue to be available through our Looked After Children Education Adviser Team. Governors should also be aware that OFSTED will focus on Looked After Children, monitoring how the School has promoted their inclusion and attainment and the effectiveness of joint working with other services involved with them.

Our Designated Teacher will:

- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan to plan for that transition in consultation with the child's social worker
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people, at least two weeks before the Care Plan reviews.
- Ensure that each Looked After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher, but should be based on the child's own wishes. *Members of staff who take on this role may need to be supported by someone from the school's pastoral staff. They should also be alert to any child protection issues, any disclosures that pupils may make, and know what action to take. They should link closely therefore with the school's Designated Teacher for Child Protection.*
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately
- Co-ordinate any support for the Looked After Children that is necessary within school.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
- Encourage Looked After Children to join in extra-curricular activities and out of school learning.
- Ensure, as far as possible, attendance at planning and review meetings.
- Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of Looked After Children.
- Set up timely meetings with relevant parties where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion.
- Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and – if the pupil changes school – to a new school.
- Be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately.
- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life.
- Be aware that 60% of Looked After Children say they are bullied, so will actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy.
- Ensure that the audit on attendance and numbers is returned to the LAC Education Adviser every Term.
- Raise awareness that in Northumberland Looked After Children have access to a grant to support their education
- Ensure that the school makes arrangements for LAC's to have free access to music tuition and curriculum visits if the foster carers will not contribute.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF

All our staff will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children, as for all pupils.
- Maintain Looked After Children's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond positively to a pupil's request to be the named member of staff whom they can talk to when they feel it is necessary.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- Work to enable Looked After Children to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all Looked After Children.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of Looked After Children.
- Be aware that 60% of Looked After Children say they are bullied so work to prevent bullying in line with the School's policy.

The Headteacher/the Designated Teacher will ensure that all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

Advice and support is available from Northumberland County Council's Looked After Children Education Adviser team. NCC website now has a LAC Education section, which includes relevant guidance documents www.northumberland.gov.uk/learning/looked-after-children/index.html