



## **Ruardean C of E Primary School**

### **Children in Care (CiC) Policy**

*Love of Learning - Love of Life - Love of One Another*

*Matthew ch22 v33-40*

<b>Policy Reviewed:</b>	<b>Bi-Annually</b>
<b>By:</b>	<b>Performance, Standards and Community Committee</b>
<b>Agreed:</b>	<b>08/05/2025</b>
<b>Next Review:</b>	<b>May 2027</b>
<b>Owner:</b>	<b>Headteacher</b>

#### **Related Policies**

- Acceptable Users Policy (includes internet safety)
- Safeguarding Child Protection Policy and Offer of Early Help
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
- Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy
- Disability Equality Policy

#### **Purpose**

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of Children in Care (CiC).

#### **Rationale**

Children in Care (also known as Looked after Children (LAC)) are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. The majority of Children in Care have suffered abuse or neglect and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational underachievement when compared to their peers, which can result in poor academic success rates in comparison with the general population, with fewer Children in Care progressing to Higher Education and following progression pathways that will lead to future economic success and well-being.

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.

## **Introduction**

Ruardean C of E Primary School aims to promote the educational attainment and achievement and Welfare of Children in Care. The Designated Teacher for Children in Care is Mr Simon Manning. The Governor with special responsibility for Children in Care is Emma Smith. The governing body is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes.

This policy includes requirements set out in "Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004" (Nov 2005) and associated guidance on the education of Children in Care.

## **Aims**

The aims of the school are to:

- ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for Children in Care as for all children
- ensure that all Children in Care have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual's needs and ability
- ensure that Children in Care pupils take as full a part as possible in all school activities
- ensure that carers and social workers of Children in Care pupils are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment
- ensure that Children in Care pupils are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision.

## **Admissions**

The Governing Body endorses the Gloucestershire County Council Policy for the admission of Children in Care. Due to care placement changes, Children in Care may enter school mid-term. This school believes that it is vital that we give each child in care a positive welcome and full support for their induction.

## **Inclusion**

This policy recognises that all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broadly based curriculum. Our CiC Policy reinforces the need for teaching that is fully inclusive. The Governing Body will ensure the school makes appropriate provision for all Children in Care.

## **Allocation of Resources**

The Governing Body will ensure that the school allocates resources to support appropriate provision for CiC, meeting the objectives set out in this policy.

We will work in partnership with Gloucestershire Virtual School for Children in Care, to ensure that Children in Care receive the full range of support to which they are entitled to enable them to make progress and achieve.

## **Record Keeping**

The Designated Teacher knows all the Children in Care in school and has access to their relevant contact details including parents, carers, Gloucestershire Virtual School specialist staff, teacher/support worker and social worker. The status of Children in Care is identified within the school's information systems so that information is readily available as required.

**Staff Development**

We encourage staff to attend courses that help them to acquire the skills needed to support CiC. Part of the Designated Teacher's role is to raise awareness of issues associated with CiC within the school and disseminate information.

**Partnership with parents/carers and care workers**

We believe in developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable CiC to achieve their potential to aid their future economic well-being. Review meetings are an opportunity to further this collaboration and partnership working.

**Links with external agencies/organisations**

We recognise the important contribution that external support services make in supporting CiC. Colleagues from the following support services may be involved with individual CiC:

- Social care worker/ Community care worker/ Residential child care worker
- Gloucestershire Virtual School for Children in Care
- Educational psychologists and others from Local Authority Special Educational Disability Needs (SEND) services
- Doctors
- School nurses
- Children and Young People's Service
- Education Welfare Officers

**The Designated Teacher will:**

- be an advocate for Children in Care within school
- be proactive in identifying ways in which the school can raise attainment of Children in Care
- work in partnership with Gloucestershire Virtual School, providing termly progress data on the progress of Children in Care
- give regard to the impact of relevant decisions for Children in Care on both the Children in Care and the rest of the school community
- know all the Children in Care in school and ensure the availability of all relevant details from school record-keeping systems as required
- attend relevant training about Children in Care and disseminate information and good practice to other staff
- influence school policy and practice for Children in Care
- act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to Children in Care, seeking advice from Gloucestershire Virtual School, when appropriate
- ensure that Children in Care receive a positive welcome on entering school, especially mid year, and offer additional support wherever possible such as a pre-entry visit to help the new pupil settle
- ensure that all CiC have an appropriate Personal Education Plan ( PEP) that is completed within 20 days of joining the school or of entering care and ensure that the young person contributes to the plan
- arrange and contribute to PEP Review meetings
- keep PEPs and other records up to date and review PEPs at transfer and at six monthly intervals
- monitor the targets set out in the PEP
- convene an urgent multi-agency meeting if a Children in Care is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion
- ensure confidentiality on individual children, sharing confidential and personal information on a need to know basis, bearing in mind the wishes of the individual pupil
- act as the key adviser for staff and governors on issues relevant to Children in Care
- actively encourage and promote extra-curricular activities Children in Care
- ensure a speedy transfer of information, records and coursework, where appropriate, when a Children in Care transfers to another educational placement
- report to the Governing body on Children in Care in the school and inform of relevant policy and practice development
- agree with the social worker the appropriate people to invite to parents' evenings and other events
- ensure that any SEND are addressed in accordance with the Code of Practice for SEND

**The Governing Body will:**

- ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritises Children in Care according to the Department for Education (DFE) Admissions Code of Practice
- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for Children in Care (*DFE website-statutory guidance for school governing bodies "The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children"*)
- ensure there is a Designated Teacher for Children in Care
- liaise with the headteacher, Designated Teacher and all other staff to ensure the needs of Children in Care are met
- nominate a governor with responsibility for Children in Care who links with the Designated Teacher

- receive regular reports from the Designated Teacher
- ensure that the school's policies and procedures give Children in Care equal access
- annually review the effective implementation of the school policy for Children in Care
- in the event of an exclusion, ensure that the Designated Teacher is invited to the exclusion meeting of the Children in Care

**All school staff will:**

- positively promote the raising of self-esteem for all children in care
- have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of children in care
- keep the Designated Teacher informed about a children in care's progress
- ensure any children in care are supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained
- be familiar with the school's policy and guidance on children in care and respond appropriately to requests for information to support PEPs and review meetings
- liaise with the Designated Teacher when a Children in Care is experiencing difficulties
- work in partnership with Gloucestershire Virtual School, to prevent a Child in Care's behaviour leading to an official exclusion and only use exclusions in line with the school's exclusion policy, and relevant national guidance, being mindful to the difficulties this may create in the care placement
- contribute to regular liaison with social care colleagues and other appropriate professionals and keep carers fully informed at all times
- keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to the Designated Teacher, Gloucestershire Virtual School for Looked After Children, and professionals/ parents/carers/pupil as appropriate
- make extra copies of reports available when required.