

Homefield Primary School and SSC

Aiming high together



CWCF Policy for 'Children We Care for' and 'Previously Children We Care For'

Reviewer: Jez Himsworth

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Reviewed & Approved by C&L Committee: 15th October 2025

Next Review Date: September 2026

WSCC Virtual School for Children Looked After

The Homefield Primary School policy for Education of Children We Care for

Homefield primary School believes that we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the educational achievement of 'Children We care for' (CWCF) previously known as 'Looked After', and 'Previously Looked After Children'. This policy has been produced to take account of the West Sussex Virtual School and PEP Guidance, West Sussex Corporate Parent Board for CWCF and National Government strategies for CWCF and Post CWCF.

Definitions

In this policy, CWCF refers to:

- Children who are in the care of a local authority
- Children who are being provided with accommodation by a local authority in England in the exercise of their social services functions.

Post CWCF refers to those children who immediately after leaving care (as outlined above) became subject to:

- Adoption Order
- Child Arrangement Order
- Special Guardianship Order
- and have been declared as such to the school by parent/carers.

There is Pupil Premium plus funding for Previously Cared For Children. The PP + allocation is for children adopted from care, children who left care under a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) and children who left care under a Child Arrangement Order (CAO)

Aim

- To provide a safe and secure environment, which values education and believes in and promotes the abilities and potential of all children.
- To promote and secure educational progress and attainment of all care-experienced children. The virtual school tracks pupils' progress. The designated teacher and social workers are, therefore, an essential part of the team as we work together to achieve the best for our children and young people.
- To bring the educational attainment of our CWCF nearer to those of their peers and 'diminish the difference'.
- To promote the educational achievement of Post CWCF.

- Identifying our school's role as corporate parents/carers or guardians to promote and support the education of our CWCF and Post CWCF. Asking the question 'Would this be good enough for my child?'

Responsibilities

The School will:

- Actively support, promote and celebrate the educational achievements of CWCF and Post CWCF.
- Work in partnership with carers and agencies.
- Support carers to value educational achievement and improve attendance.
- Respect the confidentiality of CWCF and Post CWCF and ensure that any information is shared on a need to know basis.
- Maintain records of all CWCF.
- To provide interventions to close any academic gaps and provide therapeutic social and emotional support.

These will include a record of the following:

- The name of the social worker, area office and contact details.
- Status i.e. care order or accommodated.
- Who holds Parental Responsibility, together with a note of any limitations on the ability or right to exercise this Parental Responsibility.
- Type of placement e.g. foster, respite, residential.
- Name of the contact person in Virtual School and contact details.
- Daily contact and telephone numbers where appropriate e.g. name of young person, name of parent, carer, key worker in children's home.
- Share Child safeguarding/disability information if appropriate.
- Baseline attainment and progress information and interventions.
- Named persons who should receive copies of reports.
- The dates of ePEP meetings held.

The Governing Body will carry out their role in line with statutory guidance;

The governing body, head teacher and school leadership team will support the education of 'Children We Care For' and previously 'Children We Care For' by ensuring that the Designated Teacher has:

- Appropriate seniority and professional experience to provide leadership, training, information, challenge and advice to others.
- Training opportunities, including time away from timetable commitments, to acquire and keep up-to-date the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding, including a good knowledge of SEN.
- Appropriate monitoring arrangements to ensure that the school/education setting is providing a stimulating and challenging learning environment.

They will also ensure that school policies consider the needs of Children We Care for' and previously 'Children We Care for'. This consideration will include additional arrangements when considering;

- Admission
- Attendance and Suspension
- Behaviour and Relationships management
- Mental health needs
- Specific safeguarding challenges
- Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

The Governing body/trust board will hold the school to account on how it supports Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For, including;

- How the Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) is used
- Level of progress.
- Inclusion
- Attendance

The Designated Teacher will:

The Designated Teacher (DT) will carry out their role in line with statutory guidance.

- Under the Children and Young Persons Act 2008, all maintained schools are required to have a designated teacher for 'Children We Care For' (Previously known as Looked After Children).
- The primary duty of the designated teacher is to promote the educational achievement of Children We Care For at the school.
- It is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure the designated teacher has received adequate training for the role.

The Personal Education Plan (PEP) is a statutory document that is required for all Children We Care For and young people. It is a record (recorded on the ePEP-online) of the discussions and actions taken by professionals and corporate parents. ePEP monitors and tracks Pupil Premium expenditure against SMART targets. Designated teachers can request funding directly using the ePEP platform.

PEP meetings must take place within 10 days of a child coming in to care.

- The Designated Teacher is the central point of initial contact within the school. They will join up resources and support to minimise any disruption to a child's learning.
- The DT will work with Virtual School to promote the education of 'Children We Care for' and previously Children We Care For by promoting a whole school culture where the personalised learning needs and their personal, emotional and academic needs are prioritised.
- They will take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils. Our school will make sure that all staff:
 - Act as an advocate for the school's CWCF and Post CWCF by having high expectations for their educational and personal achievement and positively promote their self-esteem, adaptive teaching and set targets to accelerate educational progress.
 - Are aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation (All staff have had attachment awareness and trauma training).
 - Understand how important it is to see children as individuals.
 - Appreciate the central importance of the Children We Care For PEP and understand how it fits into the wider care planning for the child.

- To understand the importance of involving the child's parents or guardians in decisions affecting their child's education, and be a contact for parents or guardians who want advice or have concerns about their child's progress at school.

The Designated Teacher will have a direct and day-to-day role in promoting the educational achievement of Children We Care for and previously Children We Care For. They will:

- Work directly with the CWCF and previously CWCF and their carer's, parents or guardians.
- Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies and procedures.
- Ensure the Pupil Premium Plus is used effectively within school to have the greatest positive impact on children's learning. This includes;
 - Ensuring parents and guardians of previously CWCF are reminded that they need to inform the school if their child is eligible to attract PP+.
 - Ensure CWCF and previously CWCF are prioritised for support; listened to; encouraged to participate; and believe they can achieve through an ethos of aspiration.
 - Meet and contact the parent/foster carer and/or social worker, alongside the class teacher, to gather information on new CWCF and Post CWCF entering the school.
 - Liaise with West Sussex Virtual School to ensure every CWCF is receiving 25 hours of education per week, and to ensure additional support is available if required.
 - Monitor and challenge attendance/absence
 - Ensure that should a CWCF be identified as at risk of suspension, contact is made with the LA Inclusion Officer and the Head of the Virtual School.
 - The Designated Teacher will chair Personal Education Plan (ePEP) meetings to effectively plan to utilise school resources and ensure each child has access to the support they need to achieve.

These meetings will take place three times per academic year to review support and deploy effective resources.

- Documentation will be co-produced with family and social care and shared with appropriate professionals as part of the child's care plan.
- The DT will work closely with professional agencies including the foster carer; allocated social worker; Virtual School Headteachers, advisors; learning and behaviour support (LBAT) agencies; EPs; SEND agencies, CAMHs, local police/youth offending service; community nurses and any other professional agency involved in supporting the child and family.

Communicating with agencies

- The school will ensure that copies of all relevant reports are forwarded to the child's social workers, in addition to carers or residential social workers.
- The school will co-ordinate their review meetings, for example, hold their annual review of Children We Care For with their statutory care review.
- The school will work with other agencies to exchange information such as changes in circumstances, exclusions or attendance issues.

Pupil Premium Plus and the PEP:

- The PEP is a key document to plan for how pupil premium plus will be spend and therefore the role of the designated teacher is crucial in ensuring the PEP is of a high quality and provides the information below:
- Hold a termly PEP (Personal Education Plan) meeting for each CWCF in conjunction with the social worker, foster carer and parents (if appropriate). They will complete the 'School' sections ePEP to:
- The views of the child/ young person and how these will be addressed.
- Prior and current attainment data along with robust progress data to determine whether the child is on track.
- Attendance data.
- Education needs as identified through the analysis of data and wider knowledge of the child.
- Intended outcomes must be clear and SMART targets for improvements must be set.
- Interventions supported by the pupil premium plus must be evidence based and in the best interests of the child.

- Costings must be provided for interventions and clear timescales given for implementation and review.
- The impact of interventions must be reviewed at subsequent PEP meetings and outcomes clearly recorded.

Social workers, foster carers and others may have a valuable contribution to make via the PEP meetings. However, the overriding principle is that Pupil Premium Plus must focus on improving educational outcomes. This will be based on the school's assessment of the child's current attainment and progress and understanding of what is required to take next steps and pursue their aspirations.

This must be compatible with the child's Social Services Care Plan and form part of any other school plan. e.g. an EHCP, Pastoral Support Programme and Transition Plan, such as additional visits to next placement, exploring the child's feeling about the transition and transition meetings with the team around the child.

- To prepare for the PEP by meeting with the class teachers of CWCF to discuss their development, attainment and progress in order to set effective targets for the child, so the teacher can write a school report.
- Liaise with senior leaders responsible for intervention (e.g. Pupil Premium Lead/Committee, SENCO) to ensure that CLA and PLAC are receiving appropriate intervention, additional support and access to extra-curricular activities available to all students in the school.
- Ensure that CWCF and Post Children We Care For are listened to and have access to support e.g. Feelings Group, Nurture group, Play Therapy etc., as appropriate to the needs of the child.
- Ensure that class teachers of CWCF and Post CWCF are supported and kept informed of any issues relevant to their status.
- Teachers to adopt a therapeutic approach, following on from trauma training.
- Ensure that there is sensitivity to the background of CWCF and Post CWCF in the teaching materials available, especially around work on families and family trees.
- Liaise with Social Services and contribute to the statutory CWCF reviews in person or in report form – written or verbal - to promote the continuity and stability of their education.
- Refer any CWCF attendance concerns to the PEI (Pupil Entitlement Investigation) Team, and supply attendance data as required.
- Ensure that on admission or transfer all relevant information is requested or sent to the new school.

- Ensure speedy transfer of information between individuals and other relevant agencies.
- Meet the Governor responsible for CWCF each term for monitoring.
- Provide a full annual report to Governors (see 'Monitoring and Evaluation') and a termly update to the Governor responsible for CLA.
- Participate in appropriate training as provided by West Sussex Virtual School.

Transfer out of care

- When children cease to be 'Children We Care For' the Designated Teacher will maintain links with Virtual Schools for the purposes of promoting the educational achievement of this group of previously 'Children We Care For' to ensure continuity.
- The Designated Teacher will ensure that family members and carers are aware that they must pass on information about previous care status to any education settings. This information cannot be passed from school to school as it will be protected information under GDPR.

Voice of the child

- We will listen to the voice of Children We Care For and previously Child We Care For as a vital part of successfully understanding and meeting their needs. These will be added to the ePEP.

Pupil Premium and Pupil Premium +

Children We Care For and children adopted from care, on a special guardianship or child arrangements order are eligible for PP+ funding. This is additional funding is provided to help improve the attainment of CWCF and previously CWCF and close the attainment gap between this group and their peers.

The Pupil Premium and Pupil Premium + Lead will:

- Have high expectations for the educational and personal achievement of CWCF, Post Children We Care For and ensure they are accessing appropriate interventions, alongside other PP children, with support from the Designated Teacher as required.
- Work alongside the Pupil Premium Committee to track the use of funding for CWCF, Post CWCF, alongside other PP children. Please note that PLAC funding is not ring-fenced for the individual child.

- Liaise with the Designated Teacher regarding interventions, progress and provision for CWCF, Post CWCF.
- PP+ reflects the significant additional barriers faced by CWCF and previously CWCF.
- PP+ is allocated according to need rather than a personal budget.
- All pupil premium spending will take account of the specific needs of eligible pupils.
- Our school will use pupil premium to address need in social, academic and mental health needs. This will be agreed with the Virtual School (VSH) from the child's home authority.

Each term, the DT/PP lead will carry out an analysis of data (both hard and soft) to identify attainment gaps and barriers to achievement. Research has shown that teacher expectation is a fundamental factor in pupil progress. A selection of strategies based on evidence of what is most likely to work in meeting that individual child's need will then be planned.

Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities (SEND)

- Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For are significantly more likely to have SEND than their peers. Of those with SEND, a significant proportion will have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).
- The Designated Teacher will ensure that:
 - They work closely with the SENCO and local authority support team where applicable and follow the DfE Code of Practice

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf)

- Children's PEPs work in harmony with their EHC plan

Meeting Mental Health needs

- Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues than their peers.
- The Designated Teacher has an important role in ensuring they and other school staff can identify signs of potential issues and understand where the school can draw on specialist services (key members of staff have had mental health training). All staff have had trauma and attachment training.

- Our school will utilise the CAMHS education link to support understanding mental health needs for CWCF and previously CWCF.
- This will enable us to improve a whole school understanding of attachment and trauma issues, and the impact on learning and behaviour for vulnerable children. Additionally, school to adopt a therapeutic approach to support the child's social, emotional and mental health.

Suspensions

- The past experiences of Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For can impact on their behaviour
- Where a Child We Care For is at risk of either fixed term or permanent suspension, the Designated Teacher will contact the relevant authority's Virtual School as soon as possible so they can help the school decide how to support the child to improve their behaviour and avoid suspension becoming necessary.
- Designated to work with outside agencies such as Fair Access to reduce the risk of suspension and complete a Pastoral Support Programme, if the child has a reduced timetable.

Monitoring and Evaluations

The Designated Teacher will meet the Governor responsible for CWCF each term to carry out monitoring. They will prepare a yearly report for Governors on the achievements and current status of the school's CWCF and Post CWCF.

This will include:

- Workload issues arising as a result of the number of CWCF and Post CWCF on roll in the school.
- Levels of progress and, where appropriate, national curriculum test results for CWCF and Post CWCF in relation to all children.
- Interventions to raise achievement, such as study support, learning mentor support, home school contracts, Pastoral Support, Therapeutic/Attachment Plans, counselling support e.g. Play therapy.
- Attendance figures and whether the pattern of attendance and suspensions for CWCF and Post CWCF is different to that of all children.
- Whether CWCF or Post CWCF have Special Educational Needs.
- At Risk of Suspension.
- Changes in home placements.
- Any progress or planning issues arising from the PEPs.
- The impact of the school development plan or any other school policies on CWCF or Post CWCF.

The Assessment Lead will monitor the progress and attainment of CWCF and Post CWCF, alongside other 'groups' of children, as part of the data review cycle.

Class Teachers will monitor the progress and attainment of CWCF and Post CWCF in their class, alongside other 'groups' of children.

The Governing body will monitor and evaluate the progress made by individuals and all the children using the same criteria used for other children in their peer group.

Homefield primary School have followed the Designated Teacher for Looked after and Previously Looked after Children Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities. DfE, 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

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Children Act 1989
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- The Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The designated teacher for looked after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities February 2018