COLLIS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Children who are looked after, have been previously looked after or are in Kinship Care

Collis Primary School
Fairfax Road, Teddington TW11 9BS

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Non-Statutory Policy

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1. Introduction

Our vision at Collis Primary School is 'Learning to Make the World a Better Place'. As an inclusive school we support all our children to be the best they can be through the 5Cs of Collis:

- **Care – promoting empathy and well-being**
- **Challenge – providing an academic environment that encourages and inspires**
- **Collaboration – learning together to achieve more**
- **Courage – encouraging resilience for now and the future**
- **Creativity – enabling children to find their true passions**

Collis Primary School is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in "Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children" (February 2018), in order to ensure these children have the maximum opportunity to reach their full educational potential. This duty applies to children who are in Collis Nursery and in Collis Primary School.

The School demonstrates commitment to improving outcomes and having high expectations for all children and recognises that this is especially important for children who are looked after or who have been previously looked after.

2. Definitions

Children who are looked after

- A child (0-18 years of age) who is subject to a care order (or an interim care order) or who is accommodated by the local authority (section 22 of the Children Act 1989).

Note the change of name from 'Looked After Children' to 'Children looked after'. This places the child at the front of every part of the care process.

Children who have been previously looked after

- Children who are no longer looked after by a local authority in England and Wales (as defined by the Children Act 1989) because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement order; or
- Children who were adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales. 'State care' is care provided by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other organisation whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

Kinship Care

- Children who are cared for by a relative, family friend or other connected person in a formal arrangement (such as a Special Guardianship Order) or informal arrangement.

3. Aims

Children who are looked after, previously looked after or are in kinship care start school with the disadvantage of their pre-care experiences. In addition, they might also have special educational needs. These children are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues than their peers. For example, they may struggle with executive functioning skills, forming trusting relationships, social skills, managing strong feelings (e.g. shame, sadness, anxiety and anger), sensory processing difficulties and/or coping with transitions and change. This can impact on their behaviour and education.

This makes them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life-chances. The School is committed to ensuring that these children are supported fully and will ensure that the following are in place, and are working effectively:

- a named Designated Teacher (Susie Lord who is also the school's SENDCo) to champion the educational attainment of children who are looked after, previously looked after or are in kinship care and act as a source of information and advice about their needs.
- Personal Education Plans for all children who are looked after (from Reception to Year 6).
- the offer of Excellence in Education Plans for all children who have been previously looked after or are in kinship care.
- all staff have a clear understanding of confidentiality and issues that affect children who are looked after, previously looked after or are in kinship care.
- effective strategies that support the education and wellbeing of this vulnerable group.
- staff training and procedures in place to identify signs of potential mental health issues and know how to access further assessment and support where necessary.
- a Mental health lead (or leads) are appointed within school (Sophie Macartney and Susie Lord) to oversee the school's approach to mental health and wellbeing and seek external advice and support where needed.
- staff training takes place to ensure staff understand the impact of issues such as trauma and attachment difficulties and are "attachment aware".

4. Role and Responsibility of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher should:

- be an advocate for children who are looked after, previously looked after or are in kinship care;
- ensure the child's voice is heard and recorded within Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and Excellence in Education Plans (EEPs) and that all staff understand the importance of listening to and taking account of the child's wishes and feelings;
- 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 is prepared with the child and the carer, in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies such as the Virtual School, and be linked to the Care Plan meetings;
- keep PEPs and EEPs 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 that they can talk to (this should be based on the child's request, and may not necessarily be the Designated Teacher) as part of their five trusted adults;

- ensure that a termly Excellence in Education Plan (EEP) meeting is offered to parents. This is prepared with the child, carer, teacher and Designated Teacher and reviewed termly;
- 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 adviser 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 carer(s) receive early notification of meetings and that communication remains regular and positive;
- encourage children who are looked after, previously looked after or are in kinship 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; and
- ensure that any paperwork for Children who are looked after is completed in a timely manner – as requested by the LA.

5. Roles and Responsibilities of All Staff

Staff will:

- ensure that any child who is looked after or has been previously looked after is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained;
- be familiar with and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings;
- ensure provision set out within a PEP or EEP is taking place in order to meet targets set;
- respond positively to a child's request to be the named person that they can talk to when they feel it is necessary and to contribute to the Designated Teacher's requests for information on educational attainment and needs, as appropriate;
- as with all children, ensure that no child is stigmatised in any way;
- provide a supportive climate to enable a child to achieve stability within the school setting;
- as with all children, have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of children who are looked after, previously looked after and in kinship care; and
- positively promote the self-esteem of children who are looked after, previously looked after and in kinship care.

6. Role and Responsibility of the Governing Body

The Governing Body of the School will:

- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for children who are looked after, previously looked after or are in kinship care including the requirement for priority

to be given for children who are looked after or have been in care when determining school admissions;
- be aware of whether the school has children who are looked after, previously looked after or in kinship care and how many (no names);
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Children who are looked after;
- liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out her/his responsibilities in relation to children who are looked after, previously looked after or are in kinship care;
- support the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of children who are looked after, previously looked after or in kinship care are met;
- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the Governing Body (these reports should not include any names of individual children for child protection and confidentiality reasons);
- review spending of Premium Plus funding to ensure it is used effectively;
- review the effective implementation of this policy annually.

7. Confidentiality

Information on children who are looked after, previously looked after or are in kinship care will be shared with school staff on a "need to know basis". The Designated Teacher will discuss and agree what information is shared with which school staff at the PEP (or EEP) meeting.

8. Training

The Head Teacher or the Designated Teacher will be responsible for:
- ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.
- staff training and procedures are in place to know how to identify signs of potential mental health issues and know how to access further assessment and support where necessary.
- Mental health lead(s) within school (Sophie Macartney and Susie Lord) have regular training in order to oversee the school's approach to mental health and wellbeing and to know how to seek external advice and support where needed.
- ensuring staff training to ensure staff understand the impact of issues such as trauma and attachment difficulties and are "attachment aware".

9. Personal Education Plan (PEP) and Excellence in Education Plan (EEP) Completion

- The Social worker informs school of a child becoming looked after (or a child looked after entering the School).
- A 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. Most are sent electronically.
- PEP meetings involve the social worker, Designated Teacher (or other appropriate staff), carer and young person if appropriate.
- A date is set for the next PEP meeting.

- The PEP is taken to the child's statutory review and discussed within the wider context of the child's life.
- The PEP is sent by the social worker to the Children looked after team.
- Parents, teacher and the Designated Teacher meet as soon as possible when a child who is, previously looked after or in kinship care begins school or has a change in circumstance in order to create an EEP. This is reviewed termly.

10. Pupil Premium and Premium Plus Funding

Utilizing Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and Excellence in Education Plans (EEPs) allows the School to maximize the impact of Pupil Premium (Plus) funding in order to help improve the attainment of children who are looked after, previously looked after or are in kinship care and close the attainment gap between them and their peers academically, socially and emotionally. The funding enables us to implement targeted interventions such as Play Therapy and to scaffold social skills and peer relationships, support emotional literacy and regulation, facilitate transitions, address barriers to learning and ensure access to wider opportunities through offering a free club each term.

11. Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)

The school is aware that children who are looked after, previously looked after or in kinship care are significantly more likely to have SEND than their peers. The school follows the SEND Code of Practice (2015) for all children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The Designated Teacher in Collis, Susie Lord, is also the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo). The SENDCo will ensure that, for children who are looked after, previously looked after or are in kinship care, their EHC plan and/or Learning Support Plan works in harmony with their care plan, PEP and/or EEP to tell a coherent and comprehensive story of how the child's needs are being met.