



HOE VALLEY SCHOOL CHILDREN IN CARE (CIC) POLICY

Person Responsible: Deputy Head
Date Adopted: September 2015
Date of last review: Spring 2024
Date of next review: Spring 2025

To be read in conjunction with the Inclusion Policy

1. CONTEXT

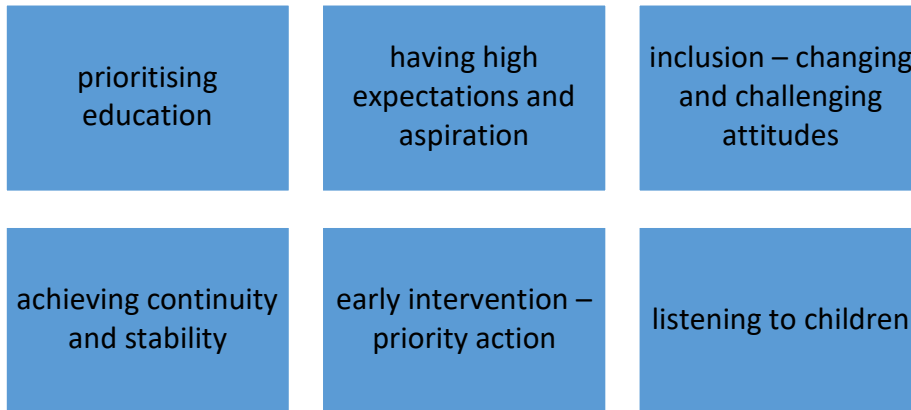
The terms 'Looked After Children' and 'Children in Care' are often used to define the same group of young people. In documents produced by Surrey's Virtual School the use of Children in Care (CiC) is the preferred term.

When a child or young person is taken into Care by a local authority under a Court Order, the key feature is a change in parental responsibility, which is then undertaken by the local authority – who become their 'Corporate Parent'. Young people can also be in Care under a voluntary arrangement with parents (a status known as Accommodated) where parental responsibility remains with birth parents, but this arrangement is monitored and supported by social services.

Most children in care will be living in foster homes but some may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even be placed back at home with their birth parent(s). It is important the school attended by the child is aware of their Care status, as many children and families are supported by social care without the use of Care Orders. Foster carers will very rarely hold parental responsibility – this is assumed by the social worker. Children placed for adoption remain looked after by the local authority until the Final Order.

A Personal Education Plan (PEP) is required for every Child in Care and forms part of their overall Care Plan. The Care Plan should be in place within six weeks of entering care and thereafter reviewed at least every six months.

The Children Act (2004) places a duty to safeguard children in care, to promote their educational achievement and to ensure they are able to 'achieve to and reach their full potential'. The collective responsibility of local authorities and schools to achieve this are set out under six principles;



2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 The Virtual Head Teacher

The role of a Virtual Head Teacher for Children in Care is now statutory for every local authority. Virtual Head Teachers will scrutinise, challenge and support schools with their teaching and learning for all children in care and assist each other in this task where children cross physical borders to live and attend education provision.

2.2 The Deputy Head

The Deputy Head is the lead professional for CIC. It is their responsibility to:

- Promote a culture in which children in care believe they can succeed and aspire to further and higher education, without being labelled or singled out
- Appoint a Designated Teacher for CIC (the Head of Personalisation)
- Empower the Designated Teacher to fulfil their role and responsibilities
- Ensure all staff, both teaching and non-teaching have an understanding of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by children in care and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them
- Recognise the particular circumstances of CIC and provide for these in all other appropriate School Policies
- Ensure the day-to-day management of information provides sufficient access to promote an understanding of, and provide safeguards for individual children o Sufficient access is to ensure staff who are in contact with the child are aware of their care status on a need to know basis, including staff cover where appropriate and day-to-day arrangements such as the collection of children from school and automated texting to carers from school information systems.
- Work with local authority Virtual Head Teachers to promote the achievement of children in care. The Virtual School can be contacted at any time, about any pupil to aid communications with other local authorities.

2.3 The Designated Teacher for CIC (Deputy Head Teacher)

It is their responsibility to:

- have high expectations of a child in care's involvement in learning and educational progress
- monitor the educational progress of all Children in Care in order to ensure they are reaching their potential and feel a part of the school community
- intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy, taking action to communicate any difficulties as soon as possible
- act as an advocate for Children in Care
- inform members of staff of the general educational needs of children in care
- promote the involvement of these children in out of school hours learning
- be the named contact for and develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers, local authority children's services and the Virtual School of the caring authority, to ensure the speedy transfer of information between key partners
- ensure every child in care has a current Personal Education Plan that includes appropriate educational targets and encourages the 'voice of the child' to be heard
- attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or to contribute in other ways to care planning meetings
- provide a programme of transition support, as appropriate
- present regular Reports to School Governors, including an Annual Report (see appendix 1)
- access statutory training events organised by Surrey Virtual School (as a minimum requirement)
- cascade training to school staff and governors as appropriate

2.4 The Board of Governors

It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors to:

- Ensure the appointment of a Designated Teacher in accordance with the Regulations. Designated Teachers must have Qualified Teacher Status and ideally be a member of the SLT in school, or have direct access to the team
- Ensure the designated teacher is given the appropriate level of support in order to fulfil their role
- Monitor the school's policies and ensure they are effective in reflecting the needs of children in care
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of legal requirements and guidance on the education of children in care, 'Supporting Looked After Learners' the latest version, published in January 2006, is available on the national archives website for the DfE
- Monitor the effectiveness of the Designated Teacher role; the Inclusion governor should, as a minimum, prepare an annual report to present to the Board of Governors
- Examine whether the school is making the fullest possible use of all available resources, such as additional funding, in order to provide the maximum opportunity for CIC to achieve at least two levels of progress within a key stage.

- Scrutinise the school's admission procedures to ensure students are admitted into the school as quickly as possible recognising the importance of re-establishing school stability for children in care
- Nominate a governor for Children in Care (the Inclusion governor)

**APPENDIX 1:
CHILDREN IN CARE (CiC) ANNUAL REVIEW AND REPORT**

Children in Care (CiC) Annual Review & Report

Designated teacher:

Training undertaken:

Designated governor:

Training undertaken:

Governor Committee reviewing CiC Policy & receiving CiC report:

Overview

Current Number of Children in Care (CiC):

Comparison with number in previous year(s):

Monitoring of CiC

PEP in place for each child:

Additional support identified and resourced:

Effectiveness of additional support:

Access to extra curricular activities:

Educational achievement against expectation:

Attendance:

Specific health issues:

Additional security issues:

Home / School Liaison provision:

Links with other external agencies:

School Policy and Practice

Date of last review of CiC Policy:

Review of practice against policy:

Impact on other policies:

Consideration within School Development Plan:

Contact between class teacher and designated teacher:

Contact with Surrey's Virtual School: Workload Impact: