

# **STANDARD 1**

## **– Child Protection**



### **EYFS key themes and commitments**

<b>A Unique Child</b>	<b>Positive Relationships</b>	<b>Enabling Environments</b>	<b>Learning and Development</b>
1.3 Keeping safe	2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners	3.4 The wider context	4.4 Personal, social and emotional development

### **Standard 1.3 – Looked after children**

#### **Policy Statement**

Early years settings are committed to providing quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. All staff are committed to doing all they can to enable 'Children in Care' to achieve and reach their full potential.

Definition of 'Looked after: Children and young people become 'Looked after' if they have either been taken into care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most looked after children will be living in foster homes, but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even placed back home with their natural parent(s).

We recognise that children who are being looked after have often experienced traumatic situations; physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. However, we also recognise that not all looked after children have experienced abuse and that there are a range of reasons for children to be taken in to the care of the local authority. Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that has an impact on their emotional well-being. Most local authorities do not place children under five with foster carers who work outside the home; however, there are instances when this does occur or where the child has been placed with another family member who works. The Alliance maintains that it is not appropriate for a looked after child who is under two years to be placed in a day care setting in addition to a foster placement.

In our settings, we place emphasis on promoting the right of children to be strong, resilient and listened to. Our policy and practice guidelines for looked after children are based on these two important concepts, attachment and resilience.

The basis of this is to promote secure attachments in children's lives as the basis for resilience. These aspects of wellbeing underpin the child's responsiveness to learning and are the basis in developing positive dispositions for learning. For young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled enough with their carer to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them.

#### **Principles**

- The term 'Looked after child' denotes a child's current legal status; this term is never used to categorise a child as standing out from others. We do not refer to such a child using acronyms such as LAC.
- We will always offer 'stay and play' provision for any child who is still settling with their foster carer, or who is only temporarily being look after.
- Where a child who normally attends one of our settings is taken into care and is cared for by a local foster carer we will continue to offer a placement for the child.

## Procedures

- The designated support worker for looked after children is [Susan Hicks](#) our SENCO/INCO.
- We endeavour to allocate a key person before to every child before they start and this is no different for a looked after child
- The designated person ensures the key person has the information, support and training necessary to meet the needs of a looked after child.
- The designated person and the key person liaise with agencies, professionals and practitioners involved with the child, his or her family, and ensures appropriate information is gained and shared.
- The setting recognises the role of the local authority social care department as the child's 'corporate parent' and the key agency in determining what takes place with the child.
- Nothing changes, especially with regard to the birth parent's or foster carer's role in relation to the setting without prior discussion and agreement with the child's social care worker.
- The settling in process for the child is agreed. It should be the same as for any other child, with the foster carer taking the place of the parent, unless otherwise agreed. It is even more important that the 'proximity' stage is followed until it is visible that the child has formed a relationship with his or her key person sufficient to act as a 'secure base' to allow the gradual separation from the foster carer. This process may take longer in some cases, so time needs to be allowed for it to take place without causing further distress or anxiety to the child.
- In the first two weeks after settling-in, the child's well-being is the focus of observation, their sociability and their ability to manage their feelings with or without support.
- Further observations about communication, interests and abilities will be noted to form a picture of the whole child in relation to the EYFS prime and specific areas of learning and development.
- Concerns about the child will be noted in the child's file and discussed with the foster carer.
- If the concerns are about the foster carer's treatment of the child or if abuse is suspected, these are recorded in the child's file and reported to the child's social care worker according to the setting's safeguarding children procedure.
- Regular contact should be maintained with the social care worker through planned meetings that will include the foster carer.
- Transition to school will be handled sensitively and the designated person and or the child's key person will liaise with the school, passing on relevant information and documentation with the agreement of the child's social worker as detailed in the care plan.

## The Role of the Setting

- The designated team member for looked after children is: [Susan Hicks](#)
- Keep a register of looked after children stored in a confidential place.
- Give all foster carers relevant information about the setting.
- Provide an ethos of acceptance and challenge negative stereotypes.
- Consult and involve children in decisions taken about themselves, as appropriate and where possible; taking into account the Child's age / level of understanding and maturity.
- Consider how extra educational support can be given if needed.
- Contribute to looked after child Reviews in person or in report form.
- Take appropriate action as soon as there are any problems with behaviour or attendance and ensure foster carers and social care workers are aware of any difficulties as a soon as possible.
- Have regular communications with Social Care, Social Care Workers and foster carers, parents/carers and other professionals involved in the child's life.

- Ensure that children with learning difficulties are being assessed and getting appropriate resources to support their learning.
- Keep a record of looked after children's absences and make these available on a regular basis to relevant agencies.

### **Admissions Arrangements**

On admission, records will be requested from the child's previous setting, if applicable and a meeting will be held with all those in the life of the looked after child. An appropriate induction will take place into the setting.

### **Communications with Other Agencies**

The setting needs to ensure that any reports need to be forwarded to the looked after child's Social Care Worker, in addition the foster carer and, if appropriate, the parents/carers.

The setting and Social Care Department need to co-ordinate their review meetings but always ensure that ongoing communication takes place between those agencies involved in the life of the looked after child.

### **Assessment, Monitoring, and Review Procedures**

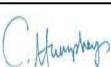
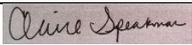
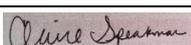
Each looked after child will have an individual Personal Education Plan, where applicable, that those involved will help develop. This will identify specific areas of concern and include achievable targets. Areas for consideration include:

- Attendance
- Progress through the assessment process
- Behaviour
- Additional Needs (if any)

The Personal Education Plan will be updated at least every six months where applicable.

### **Further Guidance**

- Guidance on the Education of Children and Young People in Public Care (DfEE 2000)
- Who Does What: How Social Workers and Carers can support the Education of Children in Care (DfES 2005)
- Supporting looked After Learners – A Practical Guide for School Governors (DfES 2006)

This policy was adopted by	Horsted Keynes Preschool
On	1 <sup>st</sup> June 2017
Date to be reviewed	
Reviewed 1 <sup>st</sup> Jun 2018	 
Reviewed 1 <sup>st</sup> Jun 2019	
Reviewed 1 <sup>st</sup> Jun 2020	
Reviewed 1 <sup>st</sup> Jun 2021	
Reviewed 1 <sup>st</sup> Oct 2022	
Signed on behalf of the provider	
Name of signatory & Role of signatory	Clare Humphreys    Manager
Countersigned by Chair of committee	
Name of Counter signatory	Claire Speakman