



**Hilderthorpe**  
**PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
Aiming High ~ Reaching Higher

**CLA Policy**  
**Children Looked After Policy**

**Policy Updated: September 2024**  
**Approved by Governors: September 2024**  
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Hilderthorpe Primary School aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in public care.

### **1.0 Roles and Responsibilities**



**1.1 Designated Teacher and adults for CLA:**

Mrs Sarah Hall (Headteacher and DDSL)

Mrs Jo Brown (DSL)

**1.2 Governor with responsibility for CLA: Mr R Hare**

**1.3 Educational Psychologist with responsibility for CLA: Bronwyn Orsanne.**

**2.0** 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 CLA. We aim to contribute towards achieving the five outcomes of Every Child Matters, which is the Government's aim for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances: (See Appendix 1)

- **Stay safe**
- **Be healthy**
- **Enjoy and achieve**
- **Make a positive contribution**
- **Achieve economic well being**

**3.0 The aims of the school are to:**

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

**4.0 Who are Looked After Children?**



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).

**4.1** 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 '**Looked After Children**' -CLA. They may be looked after by our local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

## 5.0 Inclusion

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

## 6.0 Monitoring the progress of CLA

The social worker for the CLA should initiate a Personal Education Plan - PEP - within 20 days of joining the school, or of entering care, and ensure that the young person is actively involved. It is vital that the school assesses each CLA's attainment on entry to ensure continuity of learning. The school will monitor and track the achievement and attainment of all pupils at regular intervals. CLA will require their PEP to be reviewed, according to their needs, as initiated by the reviewing office or social worker, and the young person's views should be sought and noted on the PEP. (See Appendix 2)



### **6.1 Record Keeping**

The Designated Teacher/adults know who all the CLA in school are and has access to relevant contact details including parents, carers and social worker. The Designated Teacher/adults will also know about any CLA from other authorities. It is important that the school flags CLA status appropriately in the school's information systems so that information is readily available as required. The information is collated on SIMS.

### **7.0 Staff Development**

We encourage staff to attend courses that help them to acquire the skills needed to support CLA. Part of the Designated Teacher's role is to develop awareness of issues associated with CLA.

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

At school we firmly believe in developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable CLA to achieve their potential. Review meetings are an opportunity to further this partnership working.

#### **8.1 Links with external agencies/organisations**

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

- o CLA teams
- o educational psychologists and others from Local Authority SEN services
- o medical officers
- o school nurses
- o CAMHS
- o Education Welfare Officers
- o Social care worker/ Community care worker/ Residential child care worker
- o Youth Offending Service
- o School age parents' officer.

### **9.0 CLA policy review and evaluation**



We consider the CLA policy to be important and we undertake a thorough review of both policy and practice each year.

## 10.0 APPENDICES

### Appendix 1

#### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

##### **Rationale for roles and responsibilities:**

Looked After Children - CLA - are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational underachievement when compared to their peers.

For example, they may experience:

- o a high level of disruption and change in school placements
- o Lack of involvement in extra curricular activities
- o inconsistent or no attention paid to homework.

This may result in:

- o poor exam success rates in comparison with the general population
- o underachievement in further and higher education.

These issues may also affect adopted young people. The majority of children who remain in care are there because they have suffered abuse or neglect. The Every Child Matters: Change for Children programme aims to improve outcomes for all children. To date the outcomes achieved by CLA have been unacceptably poor and the Government is committed to addressing this disparity. As corporate parents we all have a part to play in this by vigorously applying the principles of good parenting by:

- o giving priority to education
- o listening to children
- o providing stability and continuity
- o taking corporate responsibility
- o promoting inclusion
- o raising standards
- o intervening early
- o promoting early years experiences
- o celebrating success.





**The Designated Teacher/Adult will:**

- o be an advocate for CLA within school
- o give regard to the impact of relevant decisions for CLA on both the CLA and the rest of the school community
- o know who are all the CLA in school, including those in the care of other authorities, and ensure the availability of all relevant details from school record-keeping systems as required
- o attend relevant training about CLA
- o act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to CLA, seeking advice from the CLA team when appropriate
- o ensure that CLA receive a positive welcome on entering school, especially mid year
- o and, if necessary, offer additional support and a pre-entry visit to help the new pupil settle
- o ensure that all CLA have an appropriate PEP that is completed within 20 days of joining the school or of entering care (see guidance on PEPs in Appendix 3) and ensure that the young person contributes to the plan
- o keep PEPs and other records up to date and review PEPs at transfer and at six
- o monthly intervals
- o convene an urgent multi-agency meeting if a CLA is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion
- o 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
- o act as the key adviser for staff and governors on issues relevant to CLA
- o ensure that care and school liaison is effective including invitations to meetings and other school events
- o actively encourage and promote out of hours learning and extra curricular activities for CLA
- o ensure a speedy transfer of information, records and coursework, where appropriate, when a CLA transfers to another educational pCLAement
- o contribute information to CLA reviews when required
- o report to the Governing body on CLA in the school and inform of relevant policy and practice development
- o agree with the social worker the appropriate people to invite to parents' evenings etc
- o prepare reports for Governors' meetings to include:
  - the number of CLA on roll and the confirmation that they have a Personal Education Plan - PEP.
  - their attendance compared to other pupils.



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- their attainment (PIPs, SATs) compared to other pupils.
- the number, if any, of fixed term and permanent exclusions.
- the destinations of pupils who leave the school.
- attend governor meetings as appropriate - such as the admission, disciplinary and exclusion of CLA.
- o ensure that any Special Educational Needs are addressed in conjunction with the SENCO and in accordance with the Code of Practice for SEN.

CLA are six to eight times more likely to have a statement of Special Educational Needs than the general school population.

**Good practice suggests that all school staff will:**

- o follow school procedures
- o keep the Designated Teacher/Adults informed about a CLA's progress
- o have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of CLA
- o positively promote the raising of a CLA's self esteem
- o ensure any CLA is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained
- o be familiar with the school's policy and guidance on CLA and respond appropriately to requests for information to support PEPs and review meetings
- o liaise with the Designated Teachers/Adults where a CLA is experiencing difficulties
- o give only official exclusions 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 pCLAement
- o contribute to regular liaison with social care colleagues and other appropriate professionals and keep carers fully informed at all times
- o keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to other professionals/ parents/carers/pupil as appropriate
- o make extra copies of reports available when required.

**Good practice suggests that the Governing Body will:**

- o ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritises CLA according to the DfES Admissions Code of Practice
- o ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for CLA
- o ensure there is a Designated Teacher/Adults for CLA
- o liaise with the Headteacher, Designated Teacher/Adults and all other staff to ensure the needs of CLA are met





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- o nominate a governor with responsibility for CLA who links with the Designated Teacher/Adults
- o receive regular reports from the Designated Teacher/Adults.
- o ensure that the school's policies and procedures give CLA equal access in respect of:
  - admission to school
  - National Curriculum and examinations, both academic and vocational
  - out of school learning and extra curricular activities
- o annually review the effective implementation of the school policy for CLA
- o ensure that the Designated Teacher/Adults are invited to the exclusion meetings of CLA