



# Manor Primary School Policy Document

## Children in Care Policy

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*‘Our vision is to create a school community where children grow into happy, confident and responsible individuals, who work hard together to achieve their full potential.’*

*"We want CiC to feel loved and cared for, able to achieve their potential, and given the best chances in life."* Devon Children and Young Person's plan 2008-2011

At Manor Primary School we believe that all Children in Care (CiC) should have equitable access to excellent educational provision and achieve at a similar level to all Devon children. We as a community aim to be champions for CiC and take a proactive approach to support their success, recognising that we have a vital role to play in promoting children and young people's social and emotional development.

## Who are our CiC?

The child or young person will either have been taken into Care by the Local Authority, or have been 'Accommodated' by the Local Authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most CiC will be living in foster homes but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even be placed back at home with their parent(s) sharing parental responsibility with the Local Authority.

## In Supporting CiC we will:

- Create a whole school ethos in which all staff understand their role and accept their responsibilities in supporting CiC (CiC)
- Provide a safe and secure environment, which values educational achievement and believes in the abilities and potential of all children regardless of background.
- Make sure that CiC have access to the same opportunities as all other children and that they achieve academically in line with their peers.
- Have a Designated Teacher (DT) for CiC who will act as their advocate and coordinate support for them, liaising with carers, parents (as appropriate) and social workers on a wide variety of educational and care issues.
- Commit to ensuring improved educational life chances for CiC by ensuring that the relevant personnel have reasonable support and time to compete tasks and responsibilities.
- Establish and maintaining appropriate reporting and monitoring procedures both within the school and with other agencies.

## In pursuit of this Policy we will:

- Nominate a Designated Teacher for CiC who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them.
- Nominate a school governor to ensure that the needs of CiC in the school are taken into account at a school management level and to support the Designated Teacher.
- Support the Designated teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend training on CiC.

## The Designated Teacher will:

- Be a qualified teacher or head teacher.
- Maintain a register of all CiC (this includes CiC to both Devon and other local authorities).

This will include a record of:

- Status i.e. care order or accommodated.
- Type of Placement e.g. foster, respite, residential, adoptive.
- Name of Social Worker, area office, telephone number.
- Ensure statutory documentation is kept up to date and is relevant to the child's needs and ability i.e. Personal Education Plan.
- Daily contact and telephone numbers of those who need to be contacted in an emergency or for any other concerns; e.g. name of child, name of parent or carer or key worker in children's home.
- Share Child Protection / disability information (if not appropriate to share, indicate the confidential nature of the information).
- Relevant health information.
- Baseline information and all test results.

- Named officers in the LA with regard to exclusion issues, attendance issues and transition issues.
- The child is entitled to decide who attends their CiC Statutory Reviews (6 monthly); if school do not attend they need to submit a written report that promotes the continuity and stability of their Personal Education Plan.
- Participate in appropriate DT training and joint agency training.
- If there are safeguarding concerns for a Child in Care, contact and advice should be sought from Education Safeguarding team.

The Designated Governor for CIC will know:

- Number of CIC on school roll.
- Number of CIC with up to date PEPs.
- Overall attainment of CIC in the school / performance compared to peers.
- Number of CIC with SEN and statements.
- Authorised and unauthorised absence levels of CIC.
- Number of CIC who have been excluded in previous 12 months.
- How LA supports educational achievement of CIC.

The Governing body will:

- Ensure the DT has opportunity to attend training and that school staff and governors are aware of the DCSF Statutory guidance.
- Have knowledge of the Duty on Local Authorities to Promote the Educational Achievement of CiC, under Section 52 of the Children's Act 2004.
- Make certain that there is a dedicated Governor or committee to champion and monitor the work of the school in supporting its CiC as a part of a larger group of vulnerable children.
- Take a proactive approach in co-operating with, and supporting, the relevant Local Authority with regard to the education of CiC attending the school.
- Ensure that Designated Teachers and staff are aware of and enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively with the full support of the head teacher.

Whole School approach:

- The voice of the child will be listened to and acted upon and we will celebrate their achievements.
- Our staff will have high expectations of the child, encouraging achievement and ambition.
- Our CiC will have a special, trusted adult in school that is able to take time to listen to them and have access to support and counselling in school if required.
- There will be clarity in relation to who is and is not allowed to collect them from school.
- Training will be provided so that all our staff understand the needs of CiC in order that they actively promote the child's best interests. They will be aware of a variety of issues that may undermine the child's ability to engage in the learning process - including feelings of loss, rejection, isolation, confusion and low self-esteem.
- Adults in our school will be sensitive to the child's wishes over what is known and by whom regarding their care status
- We will ensure that effective assessment, recording and reporting practices are established.
- There will be appropriate information sharing about individual CiC.
- Our DT will ensure that positive messages about behaviour and achievement are shared within our school and between school, carers, parents (as appropriate) and outside agencies. They will also ensure that high educational expectations are maintained.
- We will actively support and encourage the engagement of CiC in out of school hours learning.
- Our staff will work in partnership with carers, agencies and parents (where appropriate).
- We will support carers to value educational achievement and improve attendance
- Our staff will help our CiC to feel that they are fitting in and offer them a safe haven and a sympathetic ear in a crisis.

- Our staff will be aware that being or becoming 'in Care' has a major impact on children's lives and that when considering children's learning and or behaviour, due consideration will be given.
- We will make certain that our staff are aware of possible unresolved feelings the child may have about their own families and siblings, in addition to insecurity over their current homes and carers.

#### Special Educational needs:

- Any special educational needs will be quickly identified and appropriate provision will be made.
- We will have systems in place so that we can identify and prioritise when CiC are underachieving and have early interventions to improve this.
- If the child has a statement of special educational need, we will ensure the annual review coincides with one of the six monthly care planning reviews; dates can be obtained from the social worker.

#### Admissions and transition – we will:

- Prioritise CiC within our own admissions procedures and admit students as quickly as possible recognising the importance of re-establishing school stability for CiC.
- Ensure a warm welcome to our school by providing appropriate induction for all CiC so that there is a smooth and successful transition which includes carers and parents.
- Make sure that on admission or transfer all relevant information is obtained at the outset.
- Forward appropriate documents, in a timely fashion, to any receiving school at the point of transition where the receiving school is made known.
- Make every effort to provide continuity of schooling and educational experience.

#### Attendance - we will:

- Establish a first day of absence procedure where attendance is identified as a problem.
- Inform the Carer / EWO / Social Worker / Parents (if appropriate) if there are any concerns about attendance.
- We will acknowledge attendance in any education meetings, celebrating success and setting realistic targets if it is a concern

#### Exclusion - we will:

- Actively follow the DCC Eliminating the Exclusion of CiC Protocol.

#### Multi-agency liaison:

- We will support the child to engage fully in planning and decision making.
- The DT will liaise closely with carers, parents (if appropriate) and the pupil's social worker on a variety of issues, including homework, kit and equipment required. It is important that positive messages about behaviour and achievement are shared.
- There will be a well planned and co-ordinated approach to meeting the child's educational and social needs, for example, whether potentially disruptive changes in school can be prevented.
- There will be a clear understanding about the role and responsibility of staff in relation to the child and the roles and responsibilities of the other professionals involved.
- Our staff will share positive perceptions and high expectations of the child with other professionals but especially with the child.
- We will be aware of and sensitive to the appropriate role of the parents.
- Our DT will ensure that requests from the LA for statistical or other information held by the school are completed and returned on time to comply with statutory obligations.
- We will encourage each of our CiC to access out of hours learning activities realising the positive impact this could have on their self – esteem and learning.

The head teacher and/or DT will be responsible for briefing all staff on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.