

Looked after child

Definition of 'Looked after Children' (LAC): *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 LAC 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).*

Policy statement

Our nursery is committed to providing a quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. All practitioners are committed to doing all they can to enable 'looked after' children in their care to achieve and reach their full potential.

We recognise that there are a range of reasons for children to be taken in to the care of the local authority and that children who are being looked after may have experienced traumatic situations. Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that has impact on their emotional well-being. 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.

We also recognise a child who has been taken into care by the local authority can have a significant risk of developmental and learning delay. We have a responsibility to ensure appropriate early interventions and support is in place.

The persons with responsibility for Early Years Pupil Premium is Deputy Manager **Karen Walker**.

Procedures

- Every child is allocated a key person 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 looked after child's needs.
- The designated person and the key person liaise with agencies, professionals and practitioners involved with the child along with the family to ensure appropriate information is gained and shared.
- Our nursery 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 worker.
- At the start of a placement there is a professionals meeting that will determine the objectives of the placement and draw up a care plan that incorporates the child's learning needs. This plan is reviewed after two weeks, six weeks and three months. Thereafter at three to six monthly intervals.

- The settling-in process should be the same as for any other child, with the foster carer taking the place of the parent, unless otherwise agreed. 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 month after starting at nursery, 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 Early Years Foundation Stage.
- A Personal Education Plan will be developed in partnership with the Local Authority and implemented in the setting. Progress will be monitored and termly review meeting held. An application will be made for Early Years Pupil Premium funding to provide resources to support the EYPP.
- 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 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 looked after child's birth parents.

Managers signature

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