

MAPLE MEDICAL PRU POLICY FOR CHILDREN IN CARE

Purpose

To promote the educational attainment, achievement, progression and welfare of Children in Care in the care of Doncaster whether they attend a Doncaster school or an Out-of-Authority school and for all Children in Care in the care of other local authorities (LAs) who attend Doncaster LA schools. The DCST (Doncaster Children's Services Trust) has a statutory role to play for all children in its care and acts as a Corporate Parent.

Rationale

Children in Care (CiC) are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. The majority of CiC have suffered a disrupted childhood and experienced adverse events. It is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational under-achievement when compared to their peers. CiC often achieve poor exam success rates in comparison with the general population. Fewer Children in Care progress to Higher Education or follow progression pathways that will lead to future economic success and well-being.

Legal Framework

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by DCST 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 emergency orders for their protection (Sections 44 and 46)
- Children who are the subjects of a care order (Section 31) or interim care order (Section 38)
- Children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the DCST or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (Section 21)

Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are “accommodated” by the DCST under Section 20 of the Children Act – they may live in foster care, in a Children's Home or in a residential school.

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.

For all children who receive more than 75 days of 'short breaks' in every 12 months CiC status applies and an independent Reviewing Officer is appointed. As the care arranged is not continuous academic attainment does not have to be reported in the same way to the DfE.

All these groups are said to be “Children in Care” (CiC). They may be looked after by our DCST or may be in the care of another authority trust but living in ours.

The Name of the Designated Teacher for Children in Care is:

Daniel Shires

The Role of the Designated Teacher for Children in Care

Within School:

- To ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have an understanding of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by Children in Care and that staff understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them;
- To inform members of staff of the general educational needs of Children in Care, and to promote the involvement of these children in school homework clubs, extra curricular activities, home reading schemes, school councils, etc;
- To act as an advocate for Children in Care;
- To develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers, social workers, health professionals and the Doncaster C&YP in CES;
- To hold a supervisory brief for all Children in Care, e.g. to ensure all relevant education and care information is available to school staff and carer(s), and that this information is kept up-to-date. It is important to be aware that some children in care do not want all adults or peers to know about their accommodation or care status;
- To monitor the educational progress, attainment and attendance of Children in Care and report annually to the management committee on their attainment and progress – see the details below.
- To include targets on the performance of CiC within the School Development Plan.
- To intervene if there is evidence of individual under-achievement, absence from school or internal truancy;
- To celebrate the success of all Children in Care.

Work with Individual Children in Care

- To enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their care plan;
- To help ensure that each pupil has a Personal Education Plan (the PEP should be initiated by the young person’s social worker from the Authority responsible for them). The PEP sets out appropriate targets and support available;

- To ensure that the Pupil Premium Plus which applies to CiC is targeted at improving attainment and achievements of the individual children concerned. A summary of the impact of the Pupil Premium Plus should be included on the school website.
- To consult with the child or young person and ensure they have an appropriate adult who will attend school events e.g. parents' evenings; sports; drama events to provide support and encouragement.

Liaison with other Partners

- To liaise with the member of staff responsible for monitoring children on the Child Protection Register, ensuring all CiC in school are safeguarded;
- To help an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) co-ordinate education and Children in Care review meetings, so that the Personal Education Plan can inform the child's Care Plan;
- To attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or to contribute in other ways to Children in Care at care planning meetings and PEP meetings;
- To be the named contact for colleagues in the Doncaster Virtual School and other local authorities as appropriate;
- To ensure the speedy transfer of information and school records between agencies and other schools;
- To ensure the school admits Children in Care in line with the Admissions Code of Practice; schools should admit all CiC separate to 'In Year Fair Access Protocols'.
- To ensure that the Head Teacher adheres to the legislative entitlement to support CiC

Training

- To develop a knowledge of Vulnerable Children/Education inclusion procedures by attending training events organised by the DCST and other providers;
- To attend training for Designated Teachers as appropriate;
- To cascade training to school staff as appropriate.

The name of a Management Committee member with special responsibility for Children in Care

TBC

The role of that Management Committee member:

- The named Management Committee member, through liaising with the designated teacher, will report to the Management Committee on an annual basis (unless it will be easy to identify individual children whereby work on behalf of all vulnerable groups may be more appropriate):

Areas that may be reported;

1. A comparison of test scores for CiC as a discrete group, compared with the attainment and progress of other pupils;
 2. The attendance of pupils as a discrete group, compared with other pupils;
 3. The level of fixed term/permanent exclusions; and
 4. Pupil destinations.
- The named **Management Committee member** should be satisfied that the school's policies and procedure ensure that children in care have equal access to:
 1. The Curriculum;
 2. Public examinations;
 3. Careers guidance;
 4. Additional educational support;
 5. Extra-curricular activities;
 6. Work experience

Responsibility for Children in Care in School

It is important that all teaching staff who are in contact with the child or young person are aware that he/she is being looked after by the DCST. The responsibility for the transfer of this information should be that of the Head Teacher and/or the Designated Teacher for Children in Care.

It is appropriate for Teaching Assistants to have knowledge that the young person is being looked-after only when they are directly involved in the teaching of the young person or the direct supervision of them during breaks and lunch times.

In the absence of the usual class teacher, some information regarding the child's circumstances should be shared with the teacher covering the class. The extent of this sharing should be determined by the Head Teacher or the Designated Teacher for Children in Care.

Admission Arrangements

On admission, records (including the PEP) will be requested from the pupil's previous school and a meeting will be held with carer/parent/social worker. A date will be agreed for a new Personal Education Plan within 20 school days of a new CiC being admitted (15 in emergency placements). An appropriate school admissions meeting will take place. In some cases, it may be helpful to provide a key relational adult from within or external to the school community.

Involving the Young Person

It is important that a young person is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. How this is shared with them clearly depends on their age and understanding. It is good practice to consult and

share with a young person appropriate records that are held by school and the DCST. The explanation should emphasise that the school, the social worker, and their carer(s) are working together to help them achieve in school.

Communication with Other Agencies

Schools should ensure that a copy of all reports (eg end of year reports) should be forwarded to the young person's Social Worker in addition to the Foster Carer or Residential Social Worker. It should be agreed at the PEP meeting what information parents will receive, this needs to be in line with the legal framework. A Social Worker will be able to advise on correspondence with parents and approaches to normalise consent for routine school activities and record this in the PEP.

Assessment, Monitoring and Review Procedures

Each looked-after pupil will have a Care Plan that will include a Personal Education Plan (PEP) that the Social Worker takes a lead in developing. This will identify success, specific areas of concern and include achievable targets. See the PEP policy and guidance.

The PEP will be reviewed and updated termly in addition to the annual meeting, as part of the Statutory Reviewing process carried out by Children's Social Care. The PEP will be stored on the DCST ICS case management system and circulated to all key parties who attended the PEP meeting.

DCST contact details for the Education of Children in Care are:

The Virtual School
Children and Young People in Care Education Service
Learning and Opportunities: Children and Young People
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council
Floor 3
Civic Office
Waterdale
Doncaster
DN1 3BU

The generic phone number for all enquires is 01302 737880

Date of Policy – March 2022

Date of Review – March 2024

Signed

Head Teacher.....

Chair of Management Committee.....