

## **Crawshaw School Policy on Looked After Children**

Crawshaw School believes that as corporate parents we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of Looked After Children.

### **Aim:**

- ✓ To provide a safe and secure environment, which values education and believes in the abilities and potential of all children;
- ✓ To bring the educational attainments of our Looked After Children nearer to those of their peers;
- ✓ Identifying our school's role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our Looked After Children, asking the question, "Would this be good enough for my child?"

### **In pursuit of this policy we will:**

1. Designate a Nominated teacher for Looked After Children who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them. The nominated teacher is Mr N. Tones. (All PEP's and records will be kept with Miss Ann Hewitt).

The nominated teacher will ensure that:

2. A register of all Looked After Children is maintained. This will include a record of:
  - a) Status, i.e. care order or accommodated
  - b) Type of placement, i.e. foster, respite, residential
  - c) Name of Social Worker, area office, telephone number
  - d) Daily contact & telephone numbers, e.g. name of parent or carer or key worker in children's home
  - e) Stage of INRS when appropriate
  - f) Child protection information when appropriate
  - g) Baseline information & all test results.
3. There is a Personal Education Plan for each child to include targets. Appendix A. This will be compatible with the child's Social Services Care Plan and form part of any other school plan e.g. Statement, Transition Plan, Pastoral Support Programme. Social Services should contact the nominated person so joint planning can take place.
4. Someone attends Social Services Reviews on each child and /or always prepares a written report, which promotes the continuity and stability of their education.
5. On admission or transfer all relevant information is obtained at the outset. I suggest that we adopt an additional admission form for Looked After Children. Appendix B.
6. Systems are in place to identify and prioritise when Looked After Children are under-achieving and have early interventions to improve this.
7. Systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about Looked After Children.

### **All governors and staff will:**

- ✓ Work in partnership with parents and agencies especially Social Services and the Health Department to co-ordinate support for Looked After Children.

### **Monitoring & Evaluation:**

- ✓ The nominated teacher will oversee the preparation of an annual report for governors on the achievement of Looked After Children. This will include, where age appropriate, monitoring data, attendance figures, changes in home placements, reviews and interventions to raise achievement. These may include such things as study support, learning mentor support, home-school contracts, referrals to PRS, counselling support, etc.

### **Useful Information/ Advice for Staff:**

All children in care will experience feelings of loss, similar to those of bereavement. See Appendix C. School is one normal experience for them. Often they will have had multiple placements. This will result in gaps in

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learning so schools need to identify the gaps and offer support. It may be necessary to examine KS1 data as well as KS 2 in order to determine potential or recognise trends.

#### **Effects of Trauma:**

- ❖ Aggression against self
- ❖ Substance abuse
- ❖ Capacity to self-soothe impaired
- ❖ Listening difficulties
- ❖ Disassociation
- ❖ Problems reading social clues
- ❖ Clinging or detached

The only common factor identified as contributing to success is attitude, a positive attitude instead of one that dwells on what has happened to them. Although their behaviour may not seem normal, it is considered normal in these situations. It is for a school to decide how a child can be moved on. Information should help us to deal with Looked After Children. Teachers may have training needs and should take advice from those who have worked with the child. Leeds' policy is to maintain children in the home wherever possible so if a child is looked after, there will be complex issues involved. Less than 2% of children in care are there because of anything they have done. For teachers this means additional support/ consideration, for example in identifying gaps in learning, appreciating that they will not always be good at concentrating or able to reach their potential. Being taken into care is a traumatic experience for them.

It may seem like a contradiction, but teachers still have to try to have high expectations of Looked After Children. Our sympathy should not result in us saying/ thinking that they have done well considering their problems. Education is in a way more important for them because it would open opportunities for them. Social Services have prime responsibility for Looked After Children but everyone who works with them has a corporate responsibility. The Government states that these children are a priority and targets have been set to improve their educational results. It is more difficult because these children move more often.

“Education Protects” supports all agencies in the Authority. They are currently based at Blenheim Centre. There are only two people in the team at the moment but they are happy to offer training if we feel that that is appropriate.

Reviewed September 2009	–	N.Tones
Next Review	–	September 2010
Ratified by Governors	–	September 2009