

Developing a 'Looked after Children' Policy & Procedure

Definition of looked after children:

The Children Act (1989) introduced changes in terminology. The term 'in care' now refers solely to children who are subject to Care Orders. Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are 'accommodated' by the Local Authority (LA). Both these groups are said to be 'looked after' by the LA.

The policy and procedures should include:

- The name of the person designated to 'looked after children' (this may be the designated person for safeguarding children)
- How all staff are made aware of the difficulties and disadvantage faced by 'looked after' children and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them
- How staff are informed of the individual needs of 'looked after' children.
- How the setting ensure the registration forms of 'looked after' children are comprehensive and hold all required content, and that the information is updated on a regular basis
- The need for assessments to be completed regularly and appropriate support is offered where 'looked after children' are not making sufficient progress
- How systems ensure effective partnership working with outside agencies to ensure appropriate support is in place
- How absences of 'looked after children' are recorded and monitored and the strategies that are in place to address these issues, including early intervention
- The need to implement Personal Education Plans for 'looked after children'
- How 'looked after children' are admitted into the setting
- How the staff are expected to attend any TAC meetings or other meetings organised by outside agencies
- What is the settings purpose in relation to the Early Help Assessment (EHA - previously CAF) process

The policy should be reviewed:

- Following any occasion when any part of the procedure has been implemented.
- Whenever changes to legislation are produced.
- At least annually.
- The policy and procedure need to be signed by the registered person, include reviewed date and next review due date.
- If any changes are made to the policy when reviewed the staff and parents need to be informed.

Links to other policies & procedures

- Safeguarding Children
- Inclusion
- Confidentiality
- Key person
- Transition
- Behaviour
- Recording of Information
- Admissions
- Settling in

This information is provided for guidance only. It is your responsibility to ensure that all statutory legal guidance is adhered to. Consideration needs to be given to any changes in legislation subsequent to the production of this information.