



PLYMSTOCK SCHOOL

Children in Care Policy

Lead Officer: Mr W Sprenkel

Review Date: Autumn 2020

Abbreviations used in this policy

CiC – Children in Care

EPEP – Electronic Personal Education Plan

EWO – Education Welfare Officer

LA – Local Authority

SENCo – Special Education Needs Coordinator

Definition

Children in Care (CiC) is a term that refers to children in the care of the Local Authority. This can happen either with parental agreement or when a court makes a Care Order. The child may be: living with foster carers, in a residential unit, with family members, and sometimes with their parents. Plymstock School recognises that Children in Care may have very specific needs.

Plymstock School's Commitment to Children in Care

The educational achievement of looked after children as a group remains unacceptably low. There are five key reasons why children in care underachieve in education:

- Too many young people's lives are characterised by instability
- Young people in care spend too much time out of school or other place of learning
- Children do not have sufficient help with their education if they get behind
- Carers are not expected, or equipped, to provide sufficient support and encouragement at home for learning and development
- Children in care need more help with their emotional, mental or physical health and wellbeing.

Plymstock School is committed to helping every child achieve the highest educational standards he or she possibly can.

Children in Care are a priority for admission and Plymstock School will follow the LA's admission criteria.

Action Plan

Plymstock School is committed to enhancing the achievement and welfare of Children in Care.

Plymstock School will ensure equal access to a broad and balanced education and appoint a named governor for Children in Care.

The Designated Teacher for Children in Care is the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral).

However many of the day-to-day responsibilities towards Children in Care fall to the Year Leaders and include:

- Acting as a resource and advocate for children in care.
- Ensuring that the young person has a voice in setting his or her own learning targets.
- Record and monitor academic progress and attendance and report to the Plymouth Virtual School Headteacher for CiC and the Designated Governor for CiC.
- Monitor attendance and exclusions weekly and liaise with EWO/Deputy Headteacher (Behaviour), as appropriate.
- Maintain Electronic Personal Education Plans (EPEPs) along with the child's social worker and review as part of the care review process.
- Promote good communication between all those involved in the child's life and ensure staff are aware of all relevant information.
- Liaise pro-actively with Virtual School Team and Social Care Team.
- Take an active interest in the use funding to support Children in Care.
- Ensure that a member of staff attends care reviews, whenever possible.
- Provide additional support for transition between schools/key stages and liaise with new Designated Teacher.
- Link with SENCo to ensure any Special Educational Needs are assessed on arrival and met.
- Encourage engagement in school clubs or activities and ensure participation in school trips and curriculum enhancement activities.

Responsibilities

To ensure that Children in Care are given the best opportunities to succeed:

The Tutor will:

- Be aware of any students in their Tutor Group who are CiC.
- Be a friendly and welcoming face each day for the CiC.
- Monitor attendance of the CiC carefully and highlight attendance concerns to Head of Year.
- Monitor the student planner keeping track of homework set.
- Monitor rewards and sanctions that the CiC may receive and raise concerns with Heads of Year, if appropriate.
- Monitor progress data such as Progress Checks carefully and discuss these with the CiC.
- Ensure that the CiC is properly dressed for school and is carrying the correct equipment.
- Encourage the CiC to take part in the wider curriculum such as after school clubs and activities.
- Liaise with the carers of CiCs over any concerns related to the above.

The Head of Year will:

- Act as a resource and advocate for Children in Care.
- Record and monitor academic progress and attendance and report to the Plymouth Virtual School Team.
- Monitor attendance and exclusions weekly and liaise with EWO.
- Maintain EPEPs along with the child's social worker and review as part of the care review process.
- Promote good communication between all those involved in the child's life and ensure staff are aware of all relevant information.
- Liaise pro-actively with Plymouth Virtual School Team, Social Care Team and Virtual School Headteacher.
- Take an active interest in the use of funding to support CiC.
- Ensure that a member of staff attends care reviews, whenever possible.
- Link with SENCo to ensure any Special Educational Needs are assessed on arrival and met.
- Encourage engagement in school clubs or activities and ensure participation in school trips and curriculum enhancement activities.
- Lead the Assistant Head of Year to support in exercising the duties above.
- Conduct round-robins on CiC when required.

The Assistant Head of Year will:

- Add CiC to their caseloads.
- Attend the PEP meetings with the Head of Year.
- Assist the Heads of Year in maintaining EPEPs along with the child's social worker and review as part of the care review process.
- Meet with the CiC once every half term to discuss progress and wellbeing. A record of the meeting is kept (EPEP record form).
- Support the relevant Head of Year to ensure that CiC make the best possible progress in school – this may involve attending LAC review meetings, where appropriate.

The subject teacher will:

- Be aware of which students in their class are CiC.
- Ensure that CiC info is recorded in mark books.
- Highlight any general causes of concern to the Tutor and HOY.
- Ensure that CiC in their class are making 'expected progress' and if not, intervention strategies are put in place in conjunction with HOD.

The HOD will:

- Be aware of which students in each year group are CiC.
- Ensure that CiC in their subject are making 'expected progress' and if not, intervention strategies are put in place in conjunction with the subject teacher.
- Highlight any general causes of concern to the Tutor and HOY.

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure that designated teachers for CiC undergo appropriate training.
- Receive and consider an annual report from the designated teachers.
- Act, in conjunction with the school leadership team, on any issues raised in the annual report so as to support the designated teachers and maximise the impact of the role.

Review

The Designated Teacher will review this policy and present to governors every year from September 2019.

Policy History

Policy / Version Date	Summary of change	Contact	Implementation Date	Review Date
Summer 2017	Policy review	Deputy Headteacher Pastoral	September 2019	Bi-annual Review