

BRIZE NORTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Education of Children in Care

THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY

The Governing Body of Brize Norton Primary School is committed to providing quality education for all our pupils.

We recognise that, nationally, pupils in care have significantly underachieved compared with their peers. We intend, through this policy, to promote the inclusion, well-being and achievement of children in care at Brize Norton Primary School.

The Governing Body is committed in particular to implementing the joint guidance from the DfEE and Department of Health on the education of young people in care.

This sets out six principles:

- Prioritising education
- Having high expectations
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes
- Achieving stability and continuity
- Early intervention and priority action
- Listening to children

The guidance introduced two key measures to improve the educational life chances for children in public care:

- Designated teachers for every school
- Personal Education Plans for all pupils in care

The Governing Body will ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is able to carry out his or her responsibilities effectively.

The Designated Teacher has a key role to play here but we need to remember that all staff and all Governors have important and complementary parts to play as well.

THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

The DfEE and DoH Guidance says that the Designated Teacher should be "someone with sufficient authority to make things happen...(who) should be an advocate for the young people in public care, accessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them"

Governors should be aware that their own schools will have a Designated Teacher for pupils in care. Training is available through the Virtual School for Looked After Children.

Our Designated Teacher will:

- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer
- Ensure, in conjunction with the child's social worker, that a Personal Education Plan is completed in line with the statutory review process (i.e. initially within 1 month of a child coming into care)
- Ensure that the Personal Education Plan is reviewed every 6 months
- Ensure that each pupil in care has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher, but should be based on the child's own wishes
- Attend designated teacher meetings and training
- Attend Looked After Children (LAC) meetings

Members of staff who take on this role may need to be supported by someone from the wider staff team. They should be alert to any child protection issues, any disclosures that pupils may make, and know what action to take. They should link closely therefore with the school's Designated Teacher for Child Protection to:

- Co-ordinate any support that is necessary within the school
- Encourage pupils in care to join in extra-curricular activities and out of school learning
- Ensure as far as possible attendance at planning and review meetings
- Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training, and act as an advisor to staff and to Governors
- Set up urgent meetings with relevant parties where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion
- Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and- if the pupil changes school – to a new school

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF

All our staff will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of young people in care
- Ensure that all pupils in care are supported sensitively
- Respond positively to a pupil's request to be the named member of staff whom they can talk to when they feel it is necessary
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information
- Work to enable pupils in care to achieve stability and success within school
- Promote the self-esteem of all pupils in care; maintain confidentiality; and ensure that no child in care is stigmatised in any way.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GOVERNING BODY

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities
- Support the Head, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of the pupils in care are recognised and met
- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance on the education of pupils in care
- Nominate a Governor to take special interest in this area of the school's work.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE NOMINATED GOVERNOR

The Nominated Governor will liaise with the Designated Teacher and report to the Governing Body on an annual basis:

- The number of pupils in care in the school
- Their attendance as a discreet group, compared to other pupils
- Their SAT scores as a discreet group compared to other pupils
- The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions
- The destinations of pupils who leave the school

The information for this report will be collected and reported in-ways that preserve the anonymity, and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.

The Nominated Governor will also ensure that the school's other policies and procedures give children in care priority in line with national and Oxfordshire guidelines in relation to;

- Admission to school
- The national Curriculum and public examinations
- Additional educational support where this is needed

- Extra curricular activities
- Work experience and careers guidance

TRAINING

The head teacher/Designated Teacher for your school will ensure that all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

March 2009