

Looked After Children Policy

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| England: EYFS |
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1.1 Our nursery is committed to providing a welcoming and inclusive quality environment for all children and families.

The description 'looked after' is generally used to describe a child who is looked after by the local authority. This includes children who are subject to a care order or temporarily classed as looked after on a planned basis for short breaks or respite care. Most looked after children will be cared for by foster carers with a small minority in children's homes, looked after by family members or even placed back within the family home.

1.2 The legal framework for this policy is underpinned by or supported through:

- Childcare Act 2006
- Children Act (1989)
- Adoption & Children Act (2002)
- Children & Young Person Act (2002).

1.3 The term 'looked after child' means a child's current legal status. The nursery never uses this term to categorise a child as standing out from others or refers to a child using abbreviations such as LAC.

1.4 For young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled appropriately with their carer. At Muddy Boots Nursery School LTD we treat each child as an individual. Discussions will take place regarding the length of time the child has been with their carer before they start nursery to establish how secure the child feels and whether they are ready to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them.

1.5 We are aware that there a number of reasons why a child may go into care and these reasons may or may not include traumatic experiences or abuse. All practitioners are committed to doing all they can to support all children to achieve their full potential. The nursery staff team are all trained to understand our safeguarding policy and procedures. Additional training to support children's individual needs will be planned for where appropriate. Practitioners are supported by management at all times and we have an open door policy if they need to discuss any sensitive issues regarding the child.

1.6 The designated person for 'looked after children' is the manager of the setting (Overseen by Dani Bowen, Director)

1.7 Each child will be allocated a key person. The key person will support the child initially with transition and settling in and then continue to support and build up a relationship with the child, carers and any other agencies involved. Regular contact

will be maintained with the carers throughout the child's time at the nursery and with the social worker (where applicable).

1.8 Regular ongoing practice such as observations will be carried out to build up a picture of the child's interests, and activities will be planned accordingly to support the child's stage of learning and development and interests. This information will be shared with carers as well as any concerns surrounding their developmental stages.

1.9 If there is a CAF in place the nursery will contribute to this as appropriate and attend any case conferences and strategy meetings.

2.0 Where necessary a care plan will be developed with carers and professionals. This will include:

- The child's emotional needs and how they are to be met
- How any emotional issues and problems that affect behaviour are to be managed
- The child's sense of self, culture, language/s and identity - how this is to be supported
- The child's need for sociability and friendship
- The child's interests and abilities and possible learning journey pathway
- How any special needs will be supported.

2.1 In addition the care plan may also consider:

- How information will be shared with the foster carer and local authority (as the 'corporate parent') as well as what information is shared with whom and how it will be recorded and stored
- What contact the child has with his/her birth parent(s) and what arrangements will be in place for supervised contact. If this is to be in the setting, when, where and what form the contact will take will be discussed and agreed
- Who may collect the child from nursery and who may receive information about the child
- What written reporting is required
- Wherever possible, and where the plan is for the child to return to their home, the birth parent(s) should be involved in planning
- With the social worker's agreement, and as part of the plan, the birth parent(s) should be involved in the setting's activities that include parents, such as outings, fun days etc. alongside the foster carer.

2.2 Where applicable, a Personal Education Plan (PEP) will also be completed for 3-5 year olds in partnership with the social worker and/or care manager and carers. We will also attend all appropriate meetings and contribute to reviews.

Transition to school will be handled sensitively with the key person and designated 'looked after' person (manager), overseen by Dani Bowen (Director) working together with the child to ensure that this is as smooth as possible and all necessary information is shared. The child's individual file, including observations, photographs and pieces of art work and mark making will be passed on to the carer at this stage.



2.3 Key contact details:

| Organisation | Contact Number |
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| Bournemouth and Poole Local Safeguarding Children Board | 01202 458873 |
| BCP Childcare officer | Julie Welch – 01202 262274 |