Looked After Children Policy

Pippins & Bramleys Pre-school and Out of School Club Committee recognises that children and young people become 'Looked After' either if they have been taken into Care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most Looked After Children (LAC) will be living in foster homes but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even be placed back at home with their natural parent(s).

The setting recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of Looked After Children, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in DfEE Circular 0269/2000 and DfEE/DOH Guidance 2000, the Children Act (2004), Every Child Matters, A Better Education for Children in Care – Social Exclusion Unit Report September 2003 and Bedfordshire Children and Young People's Plan: ("2006-9) 'Children's Services – A New Direction.

The Children Act places a duty to safeguard looked after children, to promote their educational achievements and to ensure that they are able to "achieve to and reach their full potential". The Guidance recognises the collective responsibility of local authorities and Pre-schools to achieve good parenting and sets out six principles:

- Prioritising education.
- Having high expectations.
- Inclusion – changing and challenging attitudes.
- Achieving continuity and stability.
- Early intervention – priority action.
- Listening to children.

The Guidance also introduced two key measures:

- To ensure designated Looked After Child co-ordinators are nominated in every setting.
- To ensure Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are in place for all Looked After Children.
  The setting's Management Committee is committed to ensuring that nominated LAC co-ordinators are enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

5.1 Roles and Responsibility of the LAC Co-ordinator

The current nominated LAC co-ordinator is **Alice Redman**. The LAC co-ordinator should:

- Be an advocate for Looked After Children.
- Ensure a smooth and welcoming induction for the child and carer/s (and parent/s where possible). Note any specific requirements, including care status.
- Regular meetings will take place to assess, plan for achievement and action.
- We acknowledge that it is the social worker's responsibility to instigate a Statutory Looked after Children Review
- The setting accepts a responsibility to be pro-active in following this up, should it not occur. This should be prepared with the child and the carer/s (and parent/s if possible), in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies.
- Where appropriate, the PEP should take account of any Individual Educational Plan (PEP), Pastoral Support Plan (PSP), Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP), career plan or any other relevant plans. The PEP should inform and be reviewed and should include photos of the child in the setting.
- Ensure that each Looked After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to.
- Coordinate support for the child in the setting and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary.

- Ensure all staff and the Chair to the Management Committee receive relevant information and training. This will be done during regular staff meetings.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis. This information will be kept on the child's file.
- Provide written information to assist planning or review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible.
- Seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded.
- Ensure that all relevant information is passed onto a new setting to assist with transition.

5.2 Role and Responsibilities of all Staff

- As with all children, have high aspirations and celebrate the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children.
- Be familiar with the Guidance on Looked After Children and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings.
- Liaise with the nominated co-ordinator to assist in reviewing progress or implementing strategies.
- Liaise with the Educational Psychologist at Central Beds Council concerned with Looked After Children as and when necessary for advice or otherwise at all stages of the child's inclusion at Pippins & Bramleys Pre-school and After School Club.

This policy was adopted on:.....

Signed on behalf of the setting……..

Date of next review:.....