



# Children in Care Policy

Date	Revision & Amendment Details	By Whom
Summer 2024	Approved	Governing Body

## CONTENTS

1	Governing Body and School Commitment to Enhanced Support for Children in Care (CiC)	3
2	Aims for Our Children in Care	3
3	Admission to Our School	4
4	Inclusion and Allocation of Resources	4
5	Monitoring the Progress of Children in Care	5
6	Attendance and Exclusion	5
7	Record Keeping and Information Sharing	6
8	Appointments within Staff and Governing Body	6
9	Staff and Governors' Development and Training	6
10	Partnership Working	7
11	School Children in Care Policy Review and Evaluation	7
	Appendix 1 – Who are Children in Care / Looked After Children	8
	Appendix 2 – School Roles and Responsibilities	9
	Appendix 3 – Partnership with the Virtual School for Children in Care (VSCiC)	12
	Appendix 4 – Promises to our Children in Care	13
	Appendix 5 – Personal Education Plan (PEP) Guidance	16
	Appendix 6 – Our Children in Care say...	18

**Our designated teacher for children in care is: Mrs J Paterson**

**Our designated governor for children in care is:**

This policy describes Newborough CE Primary School's approach to meeting the requirements set out in: the Statutory Guidance of Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 (Duty on Local Authorities to Promote the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children).

The definition of who qualifies as a child in care is outlined in Appendix 1.

In line with our school ethos and principles, and our commitment to the Corporate Parenting role of being a 'good parent', our policy is to identify specific roles and responsibilities within school to promote the learning, progress and wellbeing of children in care.

The school recognises that the provisions outlined in this policy must be in place regardless of whether there are any Children in Care currently on the school roll. (*see Appendix 2 - Roles and Responsibilities; 'Rationale'*)

Any reference in this Policy to 'Principal' can mean Executive Principal, as appropriate.

## **1. Governing Body and School Commitment to Enhanced Support for Children in Care (CiC)**

The Governing Body recognises that it is the corporate parent (any and all adults working for the Council or a school) that has responsibility and accountability for the wellbeing and future prospects of looked after children in their care. A good corporate parent is expected to offer and expect everything that a good parent would.

We recognise that entering care represents a significant often negative change in a child's life. At this stage the State takes on an immense responsibility for these children by agreeing to undertake the parental role on a day to day basis. That means that all those working for the State at a local level in this school should demand no less for each child in care than they would for their own children.

The Governing Body and school:

- Will ensure that high quality learning opportunities and education are provided for all our pupils
- Will ensure equality of access to opportunities and learning outcomes for all
- Aim to support all pupils in achieving across all aspects of the wider curriculum, whatever their background or circumstances
- Recognise that CiC can be especially vulnerable and are sometimes 'at risk' of failure in the learning context.

Therefore, with specific reference to this cohort of children we will strive to achieve the following aims.

## **2. Aims for our Children in Care**

Our aims in supporting CiC in school are:

- To ensure all school policies and procedures are followed sensitively for CiC

- To ensure that all CiC have access to a broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum
- To subscribe to Peterborough City Council's Promise (Appendix 4, Summary of Promise) to its children in care to always promote their individual needs at all times
- To provide personalised learning & curriculum appropriate to needs and ability
- To support and monitor social progress; ensuring key adults prioritise respectful and responsive relationship building with individual children & provide appropriate support for social development within the peer group
- To ensure that wherever possible CiC receive a full 25 hours of education each week
- Ensure that the additional and targeted funding that children in care are entitled to (Pupil Premium) is used to its fullest extent to promote the educational achievement of the individual children for whom it is intended
- To ensure that CiC take as full a part as possible in all school activities and strive to reduce and eliminate any barriers that may stop them from taking part
- To ensure that Carers, Social Workers & Parents (as appropriate) of CiC are involved and kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment
- To ensure that wherever possible CiC are involved in decisions affecting their learning, the plans for progress and future provision
- To ensure that success is appropriately recognised, reinforced and celebrated
- To ensure that any emerging concerns are followed up in a timely way with skill and sensitivity (e.g. changes in patterns of behaviour & attendance)
- To liaise and cooperate with appropriate partners to ensure that all plans complement and support the promotion of the educational achievement and wellbeing of CiC.

### **3. Admissions to Our School**

- The Governing Body supports Peterborough City Council's approach to admissions giving CiC the highest priority for admission to the best school to meet their individual needs whenever point in their school career they are required to change schools
- Our school will ensure CiC are named as first priority within our school written admissions criteria
- Sometimes care placement changes lead to CiC entering school mid-term or mid-year if this is thought to be in the best interests of the child. This school will ensure that in these circumstances CiC will be admitted to the school without any delay, even if this would mean that this would increase class sizes above the recommended maximum. As necessary, we will give a positive welcome, plan entry, offer additional support and pre-entry visits to help CiC settle in school.

### **4. Inclusion and Allocation of Resources**

- Our policy recognises that all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broadly based, and stimulating curriculum & learning programme
- For CiC there can often be a need to develop additional learning opportunities emphasising personalised planning & inclusive approaches
- The Governing Body will ensure our school makes all appropriate learning provision for CiC pupils. Resources are allocated to support CiC in line with this policy and with our wider school teaching & learning policies and good practice
- The school will ensure that a Home to School agreement is signed by the primary carer and a copy is sent to the child's Social Worker

- The Governing Body will ensure that all CiC have access to the centralised funding provided by the government (pupil premium) to which they are entitled and that the funds are used to meet the learning needs of the individual child concerned.

## 5. Monitoring the Progress of Children in Care

- Progress for CiC pupils in school is monitored and supported and is guided by school policies for teaching and learning
- We will monitor and track the achievement and attainment of CiC pupils at regular intervals. This will be formally reported to the Virtual School for CiC (VSCiC) at termly intervals
- We will ensure that the school makes an assessment of the pupil's needs and attainment on entry, to ensure continuity of learning
- We recognise the importance of Personal Education Plans (PEP) and understand that they are statutory school documents
- The school will ensure that PEPs for CiC are completed within the statutory time scales as specified below by taking an active role in developing and reviewing the plan, including all stakeholders in the child's education
- Wherever possible the PEP will be based on the individual personal planning and target setting that occurs as best practice within the school, which will be amended according to the views of the partners involved in the meeting
- We will ensure that the statutory PEPs are supported and systematically delivered within the appropriate timescales
- The Social Worker for each child in care in school will initiate a PEP. VSCiC in partnership with our Designated Teacher for CiC will ensure that the initial planning meeting will take place within 20 days of the pupil joining the school or entering care
- Each PEP will be reviewed according to the needs of the pupil. The school will take the lead in reviewing the plan initially within 3 months of the first PEP meeting and subsequently at least within every 6 months
- The pupil's views are actively and sensitively sought by the appropriate key partner (Designated Teacher, Social Worker, Carer)
- The views of the pupil and Carers are noted within the PEP Form and shared sensitively at the meeting. We aim to include the pupil in selecting appropriate targets and with decisions relating to school and learning.  
(see Appendix 5 - PEP Guidance)

## 6. Attendance and Exclusion

- The school will take specific steps to monitor the attendance of CiC and will notify all appropriate partners at an early stage if there is an indication that problems with attendance might occur
- The school recognises that CiC are statistically much more likely to have a poor attendance record and are up to 5 times more likely to be excluded than their non-looked after peers
- The school will take all reasonable steps to ensure that exclusion is rarely used for CiC and then is always only as a last resort, after all other avenues have been explored
- The school will ensure that should a child in care be identified as at risk of exclusion, then contact is made with the L.A. Inclusion Officer, the child's Independent Reviewing Officer and the VSCiC, to enable early intervention/preventative strategies to be instigated
- The school will make arrangements for first day provision for any excluded CiC as it would for any pupil after day 6 of exclusion
- The school will organise a PEP meeting as part of the re admission process if appropriate.

## 7. Record Keeping and Information Sharing

- Our Designated Teacher will coordinate record keeping for of all CiC in school
- Records will include individual learning plans, up to date progress & attainment records, PEP planning records and personalised information relating to care context as appropriate
- These records will be maintained in a single place, having regard to the statutory nature of some of these documents and the confidential information that they contain
- CiC status is appropriately 'flagged' in school information management systems, ensuring information & planning records are readily available as required
- We will ensure there is ready access to information and up to date contact details for Carers, Parents (where appropriate), Social Worker and the named contact in the VSCiC
- All appropriate records will be forwarded to the new school promptly if there is a transfer to another school
- Sensitivity is a priority in sharing information with members of the school staff team. We are guided by best practice and on the 'need to know'. Wherever possible pupils' wishes are taken into account in sharing information within the staff team
- The Designated Teacher will attend, or arrange for someone else to attend, or contribute in other ways to the Statutory Child in Care review process.

## 8. Appointments within Staff and Governing Body

- The school recognises that there is a statutory requirement to appoint a Designated Teacher for CiC and a governor with responsibility for CiC (*see appendix 2*)
- All staff and governors share the corporate Parenting responsibility to act as a good parent of all CiC, wanting all professionals to act in a way that they would wish for their own children in similar circumstances
- All staff and governors have a responsibility for the educational achievement and wellbeing of CiC as a Corporate Parent. The work of the Designated Teacher and governor with responsibility for CiC is to lead in this area, but they do not hold sole responsibility.

## 9. Staff and Governors' Development and Training

- All staff and governors are encouraged to develop via reflective processes. We encourage ongoing engagement with relevant CPD to maintain and extend individual and team expertise in supporting CiC to progress
- The school recognises that a specific grant is made to support the role of the Designated Teacher for CiC within the formula funding policy. This amount contributes to allowing the teacher to discharge their duties
- Our Designated Teacher makes particular efforts to develop good awareness and understanding of issues, guidance and developments associated with the CiC context. The Designated Teacher disseminates knowledge and skills to colleagues in school as appropriate and necessary. Partnership working and collaboration with the LA & VSCiC is essential here (*see Appendix 3*)
- There is a specific statutory expectation that the Designated Teacher for CiC will be released to attend a programme of training each year to maintain and extend their personal expertise
- Our designated governor will attend appropriate briefings and relevant development opportunities provided by the LA & VSCiC.

## 10. Partnership Working

- Our school values the views of Carers & Parents. We firmly believe in developing strong partnerships with Carers/Parents & Residential Care Workers to enable pupils to achieve to their potential
- We will develop close relationships and collaborative work to promote the learning and wellbeing of individual children, both in and out of school
- PEP meetings, other school liaison & consultation processes and informal day to day dialogue are all seen as good opportunities to enhance our partnerships
- We recognise the essential contributions that external support services make in supporting CiC. We commit to developing positive partnerships with all involved. Our partnerships with community partners are extensive; some of our key partners for these children include:
  - **CiC Team** (*Foster Carers / Residential Key Workers, Social Workers, Family Support Workers, Virtual School for Children in Care, Head of the Virtual School*)
  - **Other Local Authority Services;** *Educational Psychologists; SEN Team; Behaviour Support; Learning Support; Medical Officers; School Nurses; CAMHS; Education Welfare Officers; Social Care Sessional Staff/ Community Care Worker/ Residential Care Staff; Youth Offending Service; Locality Team Workers; Independent Review Officers; Advocacy Services.*

## 11. School Children in Care Policy Review and Evaluation

- Our CiC policy is of highest importance.
- We will undertake a review of both policy and relevant best practices each year.
- The outcomes of this review are linked directly to school development processes and the School Development & Improvement Plan.

## Appendix 1 - Who are Children in Care / Looked After Children

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. Looked After Children may fall into one of following groups:

- Children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- Children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- Children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
- Children who are compulsorily accommodated - this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21).

The term 'in care' refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989; they may live with foster carers, in a Children's home, in a residential school, with relatives or with parents under supervision.

Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are 'accommodated' by the local authority under section 20 of the Children Act; they may live in foster care, in a Children's home or in a residential school. All these groups are said to be 'Looked After Children' (LAC). They may be Looked After by Peterborough City Council, or may be in the care of another Local Authority, but living in or attending a school in Peterborough.

In practice the terms Children in Care and Looked After Children are used interchangeably. It is Peterborough's preference that Children in Care is used to describe all of the children who fall into the categories above.



## Appendix 2 - School Roles And Responsibilities

### Rationale for Roles and Responsibilities

CiC are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and it is widely recognised that they underachieve in education & learning contexts compared to their peers. Evidence strongly suggests that poor outcomes and qualifications impact significantly on subsequent life chances. In particular, they experience:

- High level of instability, disruption and change in school placements
- Poor involvement in extra curricular activities / positive activity out of school
- Inconsistent attention paid to out of school learning & homework.

This can often result in:

- Poor attainment, exam success and qualifications gained in comparison with the general population
- Underachievement in further and higher education
- Low self esteem & confidence, disengagement from learning, training & subsequent employment.

Many children who remain in care are there because they have suffered abuse or neglect. To date the outcomes achieved by CiC have been unacceptably poor. Central Government, Peterborough City Council and schools are committed to addressing this disparity. Our role as corporate parents means that in school we all have a part to play mindfully applying the principles of good parenting by:

- Prioritising learning and achievement, and raising standards
- Ensuring we have high expectations and aspirations for each young person
- Skilled listening to children, ensuring young persons involvement in decision making
- Promoting inclusion and personalised approaches to learning
- Providing stability, continuity, consistency and building meaningful relationships across school and home contexts
- Taking our corporate responsibilities seriously
- Intervening early to support success and solve difficulties
- Promoting good practice in early years learning experience
- Celebrating success, reinforcing achievements, providing timely incentives & rewards.

### Principal & SLT Roles / Responsibilities

- To ensure that provision / outcomes for CiC are specifically recorded or mentioned in:
  - School Improvement Plan & the SEF
  - All appropriate school policies and procedures
  - Any issued reports on:
    - behaviour, sanctions, exclusions; praise and rewards; public examinations and SATs (analysis and entries); student progress in relation to targets & FFT; extra curricular; activities and successes; attendance; gifted and talented provision; admissions; student voice activities/school council; complaints; student destinations; work experience; CPD for staff.
- To provide an annual report on the provision for, and progress of, CiC to the Governing Body

- To make it clear to staff and other school stakeholders that many CiC require sensitivity and positive personalised planning above and beyond most peers and that school policy clearly supports this approach
- To give the Designated Teacher for CiC the time and facilities to carry out his / her job description fully and effectively, and to support them at all times in their work
- To show a personal commitment and involvement with CiC in the school
- To challenge negative stereotypes of CiC, and to insist on the highest of expectations in terms of Looked After Children achieving their potential
- To give CiC the highest priority, in terms of admissions to the school even when there is over subscription
- To provide CPD for staff on issues pertaining to CiC and to ensure that the Designated Teacher attends regular network meetings and training.

### **Designated Teacher Role / Responsibilities**

To be an advocate for CiC within school

- To be aware and build relationships with all CiC in school and ensure the availability of all relevant details/records from school record-keeping systems as required
- To attend relevant CPD and Networks about CiC
- To act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to CiC, seeking advice from the **ET** CiC & other professionals as appropriate
- To ensure that CiC receive a positive welcome on entering school, especially mid year and, if necessary, offer additional support and a pre-entry visit to help the new pupil settle
- To ensure that all CiC have an appropriate PEP that is completed within 20 days of joining the school or of entering care (see Appendix 3 PEP Guidance) and ensure that the young person contributes to the plan
- To keep PEPs and other records up to date and review PEPs at transfer and at statutory intervals
- To convene an urgent multi-agency meeting if a child in care is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion
- To ensure confidentiality on individual children, sharing confidential and personal information on a need to know basis, bearing in mind the wishes of the individual pupil
- To act as the key adviser for staff and governors on issues relevant to CiC
- To ensure that care and school liaison is effective including invitations to meetings, parents' evenings and other school events
- To actively encourage and promote out of hours learning and extra curricular activities for CiC
- To ensure a speedy transfer of information, records and coursework, where appropriate, when a child in care transfers to another educational placement
- To contribute information to CiC reviews when required
- To report to the Governing Body on a termly basis on CiC in the school and inform of relevant policy and practice development
- Reports to governors to include:
  - the number of CiC on roll
  - the number of CiC that have a PEP
  - attainment and progress of individuals/group of CiC
  - comparisons of attainment and progress of CiC to others in school
  - interventions implemented to address gaps/difficulties
  - attendance of CiC compared to other pupils
  - attainment (SATs) of CiC compared to other pupils
  - the number of suspensions and permanent exclusions of CiC
  - the destinations for CiC who leave the school
- To agree with the social worker the appropriate people to invite to parents' evenings etc

- To attend governor meetings as appropriate e.g. admission, disciplinary and exclusion of CiC
- To arrange a mentor or 'befriender' (adult and /or pupil) to whom the young person can talk particularly when the pupil is new to school
- To Ensure that any Special Educational Needs are addressed in conjunction with the SENCo and in accordance with the Code of Practice for SEN. (CiC are 6-8 times more likely to have an SEN Statement than other pupils in school).

### **School Staff Roles / Responsibilities**

- To follow school procedures, policies and best practice in line with the school's mission and principles
- To keep the Designated Teacher informed about CiCs' progress
- To have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of CiC
- To positively promote the raising of CiCs' self-esteem
- To ensure any CiC are supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained
- To be familiar with the school's policy and guidance on CiC and respond appropriately to requests for information to support PEPs and review meetings
- To liaise closely with the Designated Teacher where a child in care is experiencing difficulties
- To contribute to regular liaison with social care colleagues and other appropriate professionals and keep carers fully informed at all times
- To keep appropriate records and maintain appropriate confidentiality; to make these available to the Designated Teacher, other professionals, parents / carers & the young person as appropriate.

### **School Governing Body Roles / Responsibilities**

- To use official exclusions for CiC **only** as the very last resort and in line with the school's Exclusion Policy, and relevant national guidance, being mindful to the difficulties this may create in the care placement. CiC should have 'first day' provision following any exclusion
- To ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritises CiC according to the latest Admissions Code of Practice
- To ensure all governors are fully aware of the statutory duties and requirements to promote learning and achievement for CiC
- To ensure that an appropriately qualified and experienced Designated Teacher for CiC is appointed and has a job description in line with the Statutory Guidance for Designated Teachers
- To liaise with the Principal, Designated Teacher and all other staff to ensure the needs of CiC are met
- To nominate a governor with responsibility for CiC who liaises regularly with the Designated Teacher
- To read and respond appropriately to regular reports from the Designated Teacher
- To ensure that the school's policies and procedures give CiC equal access in respect of: admission to school, National Curriculum and examinations (academic and vocational), out of school learning and extra curricular activities
- To review the effective implementation of the school policy for CiC annually
- To ensure that the Designated Teacher is invited to any exclusion meetings of CiC.

### **School Improvement Partner Role / Responsibility**

- To specifically check on progress of CiC and systems in place to support them at each of their liaison meetings in school.

## APPENDIX 3 - PARTNERSHIP WITH THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN IN CARE (VSCiC)

School & the Designated Teacher for CiC will develop positive partnerships with the VSCiC by:

- Contributing to termly Designated Teachers meetings which involve sharing of good practice & information, CPD linked to the CiC context and valuable opportunities for Designated Teacher networking
- Engaging in other relevant LA CPD programmes and following 'sign posts' provided to relevant training opportunities
- Accessing support via coaching, reflective practitioner support as requested or necessary
- Working with LA to ensure every child in care on a school roll has an appropriate PEP as early as possible; certainly within 20 days of coming into care or being placed in Peterborough
- Ensuring every PEP is reviewed in line with best practice
- Collaborating to help Designated Teachers access Social Care Teams and multi-agency support (where necessary VSCiC acts as a conduit for information flow both ways, as appropriate)
- Seeking advice and support to find alternative approaches to exclusion within the LA for CiC 'at risk'; arranging 'first day' provision for 'last resort and unavoidable' suspensions
- Establishing good working relationships, developing regular liaison routes between Designated Teacher and the VSCiC; engaging in collaborative problem solving
- Taking a proactive approach in identifying SEN & additional needs; working collaboratively with LA in line with SEN policy to ensure needs are met
- Working with LA partners to provide smooth transitions between key stages, schools and providers, including mid-phase transfers & appropriate alternative provision.

Our Designated Teacher and staff will work with the VSCiC to remain up to date on relevant issues relating to CiC on a continuous and regular basis. The VSCiC will provide broker support to school as appropriate, but the school will seek appropriate support from other universal teams (e.g. Behaviour Support Service, Educational Psychology, SEN Assessment Team, Learning Support Service, other advisors/specialists & provision, CAMHS).

**N.B.** Given the geographical barriers and vulnerability of 'Out of Authority' CiC, the role of Designated Teacher is again very important for those pupils placed by other LAs in Peterborough. The Virtual School of the 'placing LA' should develop close links with Designated Teachers, with visits and all appropriate phone/email support. The Peterborough VSCiC can provide support with liaison if barriers or difficulties emerge here, but the role of the Peterborough VSCiC is in supporting schools in the city.

### **Local Authority contact details for the VSCiC are:**

Brian Roberts Head of Virtual School

01733 863909 / 07920 160773 [brian.roberts@peterborough.gov.uk](mailto:brian.roberts@peterborough.gov.uk)

01733 863677 [virtualschool@peterborough.gov.uk](mailto:virtualschool@peterborough.gov.uk)

## Appendix 4 - Promises to our Children in Care



We want children in care, like every child and young person in Peterborough to have high aspirations about what they can and will achieve. Therefore we have listened carefully to the views of our children in care and the Corporate Parenting Panel to develop our pledge.

Peterborough City Council promises the children that we take into our care that:

- We will always be honest with you and only promise the things we know we can make happen.
- Children are at the centre of everything that we do and therefore your views are important. We expect that all adults working with you are committed to listening to you and giving your views high priority in every decision that is made.
- We promise that all adults who work with children in care will always act in the child's best interests in the same way as they would expect parents to treat their own children. This means that they will want the best outcomes for you and will always try to involve you in the decision making process, but will also explain why something that you might have wanted to happen cannot.

We believe that being taken into care should not hold anyone back. Peterborough City Council will always have high expectations of what children in care can do and what they can achieve. The Council is committed to supporting children in care to achieve their full potential.

### Health Promises

#### ***This means that Peterborough City Council will***

- Work with Doctors, Nurses, Dentists, Opticians and other health professionals to ensure that they understand the challenges that children in care face so that they can give the best possible support and treatment to you
- Expect your carers to encourage you to eat healthily and to have regular health and dental checks
- Expect your carers to support you to attend your health assessment and medical appointments
- Expect your carers to support and encourage you to take part in at least 2-3 hours sport or exercise that you enjoy each week

## Day to Day Promises

### ***This means that Peterborough City Council will***

- Give written information about where you are going to live before you meet the carers and make sure that you have a proper introduction to your new home
- Avoid moving you if at all possible
- Try to keep you and your brothers and sisters together, but if its not possible, make sure you see each other regularly and know where everyone is living, if appropriate
- Expect you to be treated equally, as one of the family
- Make sure that carers understand how to help you to feel just like anyone else and ask how you want to explain your living arrangements to other people
- Make sure you have a holiday at least once a year
- Make sure that you have a bank account and Children's Trust Fund set up for you
- Ensure that you can follow your own religion if you choose to do so
- Support you to stay in care up to the age of 18 if that is what you wish, and beyond 18 if continuing onto higher education or training
- Make arrangements for you to stay in touch with or stay on with your carers after 18
- Make arrangements for you to take an active role in positive community activities
- Give you the opportunities to undertake cultural and leisure activities
- Put plans in place to discourage you from becoming involved in anti social behaviour or crime.

## Education Promises

### ***This means that Peterborough City Council will***

- Make sure that younger children can attend a nursery at the age of 3 or 4
- Make sure that you get a place at the school which best meets your individual needs
- Make a personal education plan with you, your carers, your social worker and the school that gives you the help and support you need to learn and achieve your full potential
- Expect carers to take an active interest in your education, attend consultations with teachers and other school activities. They will also need to encourage and support you to complete homework and coursework to the best standard you can
- Work with Teachers, schools and other education professionals to ensure that they understand the challenges you face so that they can give you the best possible support and advice
- Meetings should be arranged that don't involve you missing lessons or always having the meeting in school
- Make sure that you have access to a computer and other equipment, experiences and visits that you need as part of your education or training
- Support all young people financially and practically onto college and university if they are able
- Organise events that celebrate your achievements on a regular basis.

## Participation Promises

### ***This means that Peterborough City Council will***

- Help you run a Children in Care Council to give everyone the opportunity to have their say
- Encourage you to contribute to improving how things work for all children in care
- Develop a website that allows you to communicate with other children in care safely & securely.
- Work with young people and community organisations to provide information about volunteering and give you access to opportunities to help others.
- Give you support to develop your interests and talents

## Economic Promises

### ***This means that Peterborough City Council will***

- Ensure that you can stay in care until you are at least 18 if you want and we will stay in touch with you until you are 21 and up to 24 in some circumstances
- Require Carers to help you to know how to budget, cook and learn the skills needed to live independently like any other young person
- Provide opportunities for you to learn life skills away from your home
- Provide a named worker to support you into independent living and develop and review plans and provide written information about your rights and financial entitlements
- Carers, named workers and other staff will be available if you need someone to talk to.

## Care Promises

### ***This means that Peterborough City Council will***

- Give you clear information and contact details of who you can contact in an emergency
- Make arrangements for adults to see you at least as regularly as legally required and give you the time to get to know them by spending quality time together
- Ensure the workers plan meeting times with you and attends them punctually
- Makes and supports the arrangements for you to see and keep in touch with your family and friends if appropriate
- Check with you to assess the quality of what we do
- Involve you in all decisions affecting your life
- Celebrate your success and achievement
- Support you by giving information on how to get an independent advocate/visitor and ensure that we have a clear complaints procedure.

## Appendix 5 – PEP Guidance

In order to meet our obligations and support the children in our care our practice reflects the following.

### The Initial Personal Education Planning Process

The initial PEP is written to present to the 28 day review. Therefore a meeting needs to happen within 21 days of a child being taken into care.

To initiate the PEP the Social Worker will inform the VSCiC of the fact that a child has been taken in to care. The VSCiC (ATCiC) who will attempt to chair the initial PEP meeting. The VSCiC distributes the pre-filled template of a PEP document to the school. (*Within five working days of being notified of that the child has come into care*).

The Designated Teacher for Children in Care (DTCiC) in our school is responsible for the completion of Section 2 Schools evaluation of the PEP as far as they are able. This can be delegated if the school feels that this is appropriate. Section 2 aims to identify the teaching & learning needs of the child. A planning meeting is held within 21 days of the child coming into care and is co-ordinated by the VSCiC. This initial PEP is normally chaired by the VSCiC, but must include the Designated Teacher or school representative, the Social Worker and the Carer / Residential Key worker. The young person should be encouraged to attend (if appropriate), but their views about their education must be obtained. There are documents that may aid Carers / Residential Key Workers and children to make a more considered response to the process and official documents for both the Social Worker and School to fill in.

The short term & long term aspirational educational targets are written up as a formal plan which will form the formal Personal Education Plan for the child (Initial PEP document Section 3a). It is this document that is reviewed. The short term educational targets should use bullet points to record the decisions made. These will normally reflect the normal school targets that are provided for all pupils and provide guidance to the carers, social workers and the children themselves about how to achieve the targets. The short term educational targets should naturally support the long term aspirational targets. In the initial PEP meeting many of the short term targets are likely to be actions aimed at ensuring that the child is coping with the experience of being in care. At this stage there is no requirement that all areas of the plan documentation or all actions are completed.

It is accepted that the long term aspirations may not change much from one review to another.

It is suggested that the date of the review meeting is agreed at the end of the initial PEP meeting, giving time to make sure that the formal review can be presented to the 3 month care plan review. This practically means that the initial review meeting should be booked approximately 2 ½ months after the date of the initial PEP meeting. Best practice would encourage all review meeting dates to be agreed at the end of the preceding meeting.

The completed PEP documents must be distributed to the Young Person, carer, school, social worker and the VSCiC and any other significant participant.

### The PEP Review Meeting

The purpose of a formal review meeting is to consider the educational needs of the child concerned and allows all partners a formally opportunity to understand how they can best support the young



person to achieve the best possible educational outcomes. At a minimum the attendance at the PEP review meeting should be the DTCiC or school representative, the social worker, the carer / residential key worker and the young person if appropriate. The VSCiC would attend if their attendance would serve to improve the decisions that were made relating to the education of any young person. This may well be the case, but the attendance of the VSCiC is not a prerequisite for the meeting to go ahead and it will be impossible for them to be expected to attend every meeting. With this in mind the responsibility for co-ordinating all of the review meetings and distributing the completed documentation is transferred from the VSCiC to the DTCiC in the school concerned. If a young person changes schools then it is likely that this is a significant change and the VSCiC would normally attempt to attend the subsequent PEP meeting. Whether a new PEP is started or the existing PEP is review will vary from individual to individual.

The review and evaluation of the plan occurs when:

- The formal review which must happen within three months of the PEP being drawn up and then at six monthly intervals. If the child has Special Educational Needs then one of the PEP reviews needs to coincide with the Annual Statement Review. This will mean that the frequency of one meeting will need to be altered so that one of the PEP's coincides with the annual review meeting. The frequency of one PEP meeting may also be altered to work around school holidays when school staff may not be available to co-ordinate the meeting. In any case when the timings of a meeting is altered then the meeting should always be brought forward so that the PEP reviews are held within the statutory time scales.
- The PEP can formally be reviewed at any point if there is a significant threat to the placement and / or a change in the educational needs of the child concerned. A period of exclusion is likely to be a significant episode as this is likely to indicate that the plan may not be working as planned.

At any PEP review the participants should consider how the Pupil Premium / Post 16 Bursary will be used. There are spaces on the forms to record any decisions about this.

We need to make sure that we take into account the concerns of the young person and their aspirations. The children's view forms are currently being piloted by the VSCiC to help children to express their views. These sheets do not need to be used if there are other mechanisms in place to collect and record their views. There is also a sheet to brief a young person who wants to discuss their education at a meeting rather than filling in a form. In the new guidance for DTCiC they are expected to help the young person communicate their views, but in practice the adult with the best relationship with the child should support them in expressing their views.

The review documentation (PEP document Section 3b) should be completed at the formal meeting. All other sections of the PEP need to be altered only if there is a change in circumstances. It would be unlikely that the long term aspirations for any Child in Care would change from PEP to PEP review and from review to review. All targets really need to be based on measurable outcomes. Each PEP review should evaluate the Pupil Premium/16-19 Bursary use provision and / or make suggestions for additional support that would be appropriate to increase the educational achievement of the Young Person concerned.

The DTCiC is then responsible for completing the documentation (although the work might be delegated) and the completed forms are then sent to the VSCiC to place on the system. The VSCiC will distribute the documents to partners so that the team is aware that a PEP review has been completed.

## Appendix 6 - Our Children in Care Say...

- “I would like to have a say as to whether I move school or not.”
- “Money should not be the most important thing when deciding if I should move schools.”
- “I would really like to have a chance to visit the school before I start.”
- “I would like my school work and achievements to be passed on to my new school and not forgotten about.”
- “I would have liked a buddy or peer mentor when I moved to my new school to help me get settled.”
- “We want to be treated as normal. We don’t want to be pitied or treated differently.”
- “I’d like to be able to choose a particular teacher to talk to – not just the designated teacher.”
- “I want to keep my life private. I don’t want people knowing everything about me unless I say so.”
- “I don’t want my teachers hearing embarrassing/personal details about me and my family at review meetings.”
- “I want my own copy of school reports and I want my parents to have a copy.”
- “The head of year is extremely important in passing on ‘need to know’ information to individual subject teachers.”

**N.B.** *The above is intended as an example; schools may like to use feedback from their pupils to replace these statements.*