



# Blatchington Mill School

## **Blatchington Mill School Policy for the Education of Children Adopted from Care (AFC) or a Special Guardian Order (SGO)**

Date Policy Created:

Date of Last Amendment: December 2016

Date to be Reviewed: Currently Under Review





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# 1. Policy Creation

Initiated:

Groups Consulted:

Governors  
Staff

Date Reviewed:

December 2016

Audience

Parents  
Staff  
Governors

Policy located:

Portal (Staff and Parents)

Policy Format:

Full

Lead Member of Staff:

Jason King



## 2. Policy Statement

Blatchington Mill School has a major part to play in ensuring that children in care are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being, in line with Every Child Matters.

This policy aims to clarify responsibilities for Blatchington Mill School regarding support for children adopted from care.

‘Adopted children should have an enjoyable childhood, and benefit from excellent parenting and education, enjoying a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and skills, which in turn will lead to a successful adult life’. (Adoption National Minimum Standards 2011).

Education staff in schools, working in partnership with the child’s adoptive parents will play a vital role in helping adopted children achieve positive outcomes in their education, as well as assisting in their social and emotional development.

Adopted children share many characteristics with their non-adopted peers. However in common with other children who have experiences that have precipitated them coming into care, and prevented return to their family of origin, they can suffer from a similar range of emotional and behavioural difficulties. The All Party Parliamentary Group for Children In Care and Care Leavers (Education Matters in Care, UK Parliament November 2012) has recommended that the Government looked closely as to how the educational needs of adopted children can be better and earlier assessed so as to provide them with the right support, educational and otherwise. Amendment has been made to the Schools Admissions code to ensure children adopted from care retain priority schools access from 2013.

The education and achievement of adopted children is to be actively promoted as valuable in itself and as part of their preparation for adulthood (Adoption National Minimum Standards 2011). This requires an effective partnership between the adoptive parent, the adoption agency and schools, which will be supported by Virtual School Brighton and Hove (VSBH).

Helping children in care to succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority for East/West Sussex/Brighton and Hove and other LAs. This policy takes account of:

- Promoting the Education of Looked After Children : Statutory guidance for local authorities July 2014
  - The Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006.
  - Relevant DfES guidance to Governing Bodies (*Supporting Looked After Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors*).
  - Brighton and Hove Virtual School guidance.
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- Blatchington Mill School’s approach to supporting the educational achievement of Children adopted from Care and SGO is based on the following principles:
    - Prioritising education.
    - Promoting attendance.
    - Targeting support.
    - Having high expectations.



- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes.
- Achieving stability and continuity.
- Early intervention and priority action.
- Listening to children.
- Promoting health and wellbeing.
- Reducing exclusions and promoting stability.
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals.

Protocol for AFO/SGO 2016-2017

- Phase 1: AYTLs will look at young person's data/progress each term. Interventions if required will be discussed with parent.
- Phase 2: AFC funds can be applied for after these meetings have established a need.
- A PEP meeting must be held every term and is set up by AYTL. The PEP must be circulated to the DT and YTL. All funding requests are made through the PEP.



### 3. Implications

As for all our pupils, Blatchington Mill School is committed to helping every Child adopted from Care and SGO to achieve the highest standards they can, including supporting aspirations to achieve in further and higher education. This can be measured by improvement in their achievements and attendance.

The Governing Body of Blatchington Mill School is committed to providing quality education for all pupils and will:

- Ensure Children in Care are prioritised in the school's oversubscription criteria, in line with the Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006. (These require admissions authorities to give top priority for admission to CIC in their oversubscription criteria.
- Ensure a Designated Teacher for Children in Care is identified and enabled to carry out the responsibilities set out below
- Ensure a Personal Education Plan is put in place, implemented and regularly reviewed every term for every Child in Care, in line with Brighton and Hove guidance on Personal Education Plans.
- Identify a governor as Designated Governor for Children in Care.

The school will champion the needs of Children adopted from Care and SGO, raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them, in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible.



## 4. Children Adopted from Care and SGO Policy Attachments

### 4.1 Responsibility of the Headteacher

- Identify a Designated Teacher for Children adopted from Care and SGO, whose role is set out below. It is essential that another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take sick leave.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusion of Children adopted from Care and SGO and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of Children in Care. OFSTED now select a number of Children adopted from Care and SGO, tracking their results and the support they have received.
- Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

### 4.2 Responsibility of the Governing Body

- Identify a nominated Governor for Children adopted from Care and SGO.
- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Children adopted from Care and SGO.
- Ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Children adopted from Care and SGO.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of Children adopted from Care and SGO.

### 4.3 Procedures: the Governing Body will:

- Oversee the academic progress of Children adopted from Care and SGO, through an annual report (see below).
- Ensure that Children in Care are given top priority when applying for places in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria.
- Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school, by ensuring the school implements policies and procedures to ensure Children adopted from Care and SGO achieve and enjoy their time at the school, by recognising the extra problems caused by excluding them and by not excluding them except as a last resort.
- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Support the Headteacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of Children adopted from Care and SGO are recognised and met.
- Receive a report once a year setting out:
  1. The number of looked-after pupils on the school's roll (if any).
  2. Their attendance, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils.
  3. Progress data summary for KS3/4 and 5
  4. The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any).





5. The destinations of pupils who leave the school.
6. The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.

#### 4.4 The role of the Designated Teacher

Government Guidance says that the Designated Teacher should be “someone with sufficient authority to make things happen...[who] should be an advocate for Children adopted from Care and SGO, assessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them.”

Governors should be aware that all schools are already required to have a designated teacher for Children in Care and Children adopted from Care and SGO. It is strongly recommended that this person should be a member of the Senior Management Team. Training for Designated Teachers has been and will continue to be available through the Virtual School Brighton and Hove. Governors should also be aware that OFSTED will focus on Children in Care and Children adopted from Care and SGO, monitoring how the School has promoted their inclusion and attainment and the effectiveness of joint working with other services involved with them.

Our Designated Teacher will:

- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan to plan for that transition in consultation with the child’s social worker and VSB&H.
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed by the AYTL with the child, the social worker (if required) and any other relevant people.
- Ensure that each Child adopted from Care and SGO has an identified member of staff that they can talk to if appropriate. This need not be the Designated Teacher, but should be based on the child’s own wishes. *Members of staff who take on this role may need to be supported by someone from the school’s pastoral staff. They should also be alert to any child protection issues, any disclosures that pupils may make, and know what action to take. The deputy designated teacher is also the deputy delegated safeguarding lead.*
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately
- Co-ordinate any support for the child in care that is necessary within school.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
- Encourage Children adopted from Care and SGO to join in extra-curricular activities and out of school learning where appropriate.
- Ensure, as far as possible, attendance at planning and review meetings.
- Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of Children adopted from Care and SGO.
- Set up timely 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.
- Be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately.
- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life.



- Be aware that a high number of Children adopted from Care and SGO say they are bullied, so will actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy.
- Raise awareness in secondary schools that Children in Care are automatically entitled to an allowance (the Bursary) if they go into the sixth form.

#### 4.5 The responsibility of all staff

All our staff will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Children adopted from Care and SGO, as for all pupils.
- Maintain confidentiality with regard to Children adopted from Care and SGO and ensure they 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 Children adopted from Care and SGO stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all Children adopted from Care and SGO.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of Children adopted from Care and SGO.
- Be aware that many children in care say they are bullied so work to prevent bullying in line with the School's policy.

This policy was agreed and adopted at a Governors' Meeting held on *date*:

The policy will be formally reviewed on *date*:

The Headteacher / the Designated Teacher / the Staff Development Officer *as appropriate for your own school* will ensure that all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

Advice and support is available from Virtual School Brighton and Hove. [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/children-and-education/local-offer/virtual-school-children-care](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/children-and-education/local-offer/virtual-school-children-care)