



Children in Care Policy

September 2024

Approved by the Governing Body Strategy Group 19/09/24

**This Policy is due for renewal in Term 1
2025–26**

CHILDREN IN CARE POLICY

OF

GODINTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

SECTION ONE – INTRODUCTION

Nationally, Children in Care (CIC), previously known as Looked After Children significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that CIC are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being. The school will champion the needs of CIC, raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them, in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible.

Helping CIC succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority for Kent County Council and for schools. This policy takes account of:

- The County Council's duty under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children (LAC).
- The Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006.
- Relevant DCFS guidance to Governing Bodies (*Supporting Looked After Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors*).

Further information was obtained in the development of this policy from the following sources:

Kent County Council's Looked After Children Education Adviser team. KCC now has support for CIC through its Virtual school <https://virtualschool.lea.kent.sch.uk/>

The CIC Adviser for Mid Kent and is based at Kroner House, Ashford Tel: 01233 898696

Information about the education of CIC is also available on Kent Education Learning and Skills Website <http://www.kelsi.org.uk/> (under support for children and young people).

SECTION TWO – AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Godinton Primary School's approach to supporting the educational achievement of CIC 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.

We also promote the six principles of Nurture within our school through a dedicated Teaching assistant trained in the Nurture principles and how to deliver a nurture group or 1:1 support and through our whole school ethos and practises. The six principles of nurture are:

Children’s learning is understood developmentally

The classroom offers a safe base

The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing

Language is a vital means of communication

All behaviour is communication

The importance of transition in children’s lives

As for all our pupils, Godinton Primary School is committed to helping every CIC 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 Godinton Primary School is committed to providing quality education for all pupils and will:

- Ensure a Designated Teacher for CIC 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 for every CIC, in line with Kent’s guidance on Personal Education Plans.
- Identify a governor as Designated Governor for CIC.

SECTION THREE – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Responsibilities of the Headteacher

- Identify a Designated Teacher for CIC, 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 exclusions of **CIC** and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of **CIC**. **OFSTED** now select a number of **CIC**, 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.

3.2 Responsibilities of the Governing Body

- Our nominated Governor for **CIC** is Kelly Holden– Smith.
- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of **CIC**.
- Ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of **CIC**.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of **CIC**.
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.

3.2.1 Procedures: the Governing Body will:

- Monitor the academic progress of **CIC**, through the Headteacher's reports to the **FGB**.
- Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school, by ensuring the school implements policies and procedures to ensure **CIC** 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 **CIC** are recognised and met.
- Receive regular updates in the Headteacher report about the number of children in care, and other relevant information for example their attendance and performance data and how this compares with children not in care. The information for this report will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.

3.3 Role of the Designated Teacher

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

3.3.2 The Designated teacher for **CIC** is Sarah Stein.

3.3.3. 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
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people, at least two weeks before the Care Plan reviews.
- Ensure that each CIC 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. *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. They should link closely therefore with the school's Designated Teacher for Child Protection.*
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately
- Co-ordinate any support for the CIC that is necessary within school.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
- Encourage CIC to join in extra-curricular activities and out of school learning.
- 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 CIC.
- 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.
- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life.
- Be aware that 60% of CIC say they are bullied, so will actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy.
- Attendance and numbers are returned to the CIC Education Adviser (Virtual School Kent) through the EPEP online every 6 months to Virtual School Kent and social workers.
- EPAC (Education Plan Adopted Children) meetings will be held for CIC who have been recently adopted as a matter of good practice to ensure that there continues to be productive relationships between the pupil, parents and school. This will be arranged in response to the adoptive parents' wishes.

3.4 Responsibilities of all School Staff

All our staff will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of CIC, as for all pupils.
- Maintain CIC's confidentiality 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 CIC to achieve stability and success within school.

- Promote the self-esteem of all **CIC**.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of **CIC**.
- Be aware that 60% of **CIC** say they are bullied so work to prevent bullying in line with the School's policy.

SECTION FOUR – LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy links with a number of other school policies and Governors will have regard to the needs of **CIC** when reviewing them:

- Behaviour Policy.
- Discipline Policy.
- Home School Agreement.
- Anti-bullying Policy.
- Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Policy on Racial Incidents.
- Child Protection Policy.
- Special Educational Needs Policy.

SECTION FIVE – EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

At Godinton Primary School, we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all members of our school community irrespective of race, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy or maternity, marriage and civil partnership or socio-economic background. We are determined to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and ability to participate fully in school life.

We tackle discrimination through the positive promotion of equality by challenging stereotypes and by creating an environment that champions respect for all. At Godinton Primary School, we believe that diversity is a strength that should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit us.

All school policies have an explicit aim of promoting equality and will be reviewed in terms of their contribution and effectiveness in achieving this aim.

SECTION 6 – POLICY REVIEW

The Strategy Group of the governing body monitors our **CIC** policy on an annual basis. This committee reports its findings and recommendations to the full governing body, as necessary, if the policy needs modification.

This policy will be available to all staff, governors and parents / carers.

