



Safeguarding Children – Looked-After Children

Policy statement

JPAC Ltd settings are committed to providing quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. All staff are committed to doing all they can to enable 'looked after' children in their care to achieve and reach their full potential.

Definition of 'Looked after Children' (LAC): *Children and young people become 'looked after' if they have either been taken into care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most LAC will be living in foster homes, but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even placed back home with their natural parent(s).*

We recognise that children who are being looked after have often experienced traumatic situations; physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. However, we also recognise that not all looked after children have experienced abuse and that there are a range of reasons for children to be taken into the care of the local authority. Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that has impact on their emotional well-being.

In our setting, we place emphasis on promoting *children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to*. Our policy and practice guidelines for looked-after children are based on these two important concepts, *attachment and resilience*. The basis of this is to promote secure attachments in children's lives as the basis for resilience. These aspects of well-being underpin the child's responsiveness to learning and are the basis in developing positive dispositions *for learning*. For young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled enough with their carer to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them.

Principles

- The term 'looked after child' denotes a child's current legal status; this term is never used to categorise a child as standing out from others.
- Where a child who normally attends our setting is taken into care and is cared for by a local foster carer, we will continue to offer the placement for the child.

Procedures

- The designated person for looked-after children is the designated safeguarding/child protection co-ordinator.
- Every child is allocated a key person before they start and this is no different for a looked after child. The designated person ensures the key person has the information, support and training necessary to meet the looked after child's needs.
- The designated person and the key person liaise with agencies, professionals and practitioners involved with the child and his or her family and ensures appropriate information

is gained and shared. A care plan will be drawn up for any child known by JPAC Ltd Clubs to be 'looked after'

The care plan needs to consider such issues for the child as:

- 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; and
- how any special needs will be supported.

In addition, the care plan will also consider:

- How information will be shared with the foster carer.
- Concerns about the child will be noted in the child's file and discussed with the foster carer.

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