



# Darlinghurst

## ACADEMY

### Child in Care Policy

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# Darlinghurst Academy

## Child in Care Policy

Darlinghurst Academy recognises that all pupils are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum and aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in public care. The school welcomes Children in Care (CiC) who may be looked after by our local authority or those who may be in the care of another authority but living in Southend-on-Sea.

This policy includes requirements set out in "Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004" and associated guidance on the education of Children in Care.

Darlinghurst Academy's approach to encouraging and supporting the educational achievement of CiC is based on the following principles:

- providing education set within an inclusive context which makes reasonable adjustments to ensure a personalised curriculum
- listening to the child
- working closely with the placement, voluntary and statutory agencies
- promoting attendance, through a programme of early intervention, priority action, reducing exclusions and promoting stability within a positive learning environment
- identifying need, including social and emotional as well as learning needs
- targeting support, including accessing resources from other agencies as well as provision from school resources
- having high expectations

### **Rationale – Every Child Matters**

Many children and young people who are in care have suffered abuse or neglect. Despite having as broad a range of abilities as their peers, CiC are particularly vulnerable to underachievement. Barriers to their progress include a high level of disruption and change in school placements, lack of motivation or involvement in extra-curricular activities.

Darlinghurst Academy believes that the educational experience of all children should be positive and powerful and aims to provide a learning environment in which every child can be successful. We believe that we have a major part to play in ensuring that CiC are able to be healthy, safe, enjoy, achieve to the best of their ability and make a positive contribution to society.

### **Admission arrangements**

We recognise that due to care arrangements a child in care may enter school mid-term and that it is important that they are given a positive welcome and where appropriate additional support and pre-entry visits to help them settle. The school recognises that CiC are an 'excepted group' and will prioritise them in the school's oversubscription criteria following the DCSF Admissions Code (Admissions of Looked after Children (England) Regulations 2006)

## **Support and resources**

The school will ensure that the school allocates resources, including professional time and expertise, to support appropriate provision for CiC, meeting the objectives set out in this policy.

## **Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Staff**

The duties of the Designated Teacher will include:

- ensuring that Children in Care are welcomed into the school, necessary meetings are held and arrangements are put in place to ensure their needs are identified and met. This may include providing basic equipment and resources if necessary and providing appropriate support in meeting uniform requirements if needed
- maintaining an up-to-date record of the child, including those in the care of other authorities and ensuring all necessary information is passed to other staff as required
- monitoring and tracking progress of the child in school and intervening if there is evidence of individual underachievement
- holding a supervisory brief for all children being looked after and acting as advocate for the child in school
- liaising with teaching and non-teaching staff in school to ensure they are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage the child may face
- establishing and maintaining regular contact with carers and parents
- ensuring Personal Education Plan (PEP) review meetings are held regularly and information passed to all those concerned, including the Local Authority
- attending training as required to keep fully informed of latest developments and policies regarding children in care

## **Record keeping and information sharing**

The Designated Teacher will keep an up-to-date record of Children in Care in school and will ensure that relevant information is made known to appropriate staff. A Personal Education Plan (PEP) will be initiated within 20 school days of the child starting at the school or being taken into care and will be reviewed regularly and as necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the child. The PEP will provide a regular opportunity to review progress, note any concerns and ensure all relevant parties are informed accordingly. Copies of reports and appropriate documentation will be sent to authorised carers and agencies involved with the child as well as any receiving school at point of transition.

It is vital that the child is aware of information being recorded, in what circumstances and who will have access to it. How this is shared with them will depend on their age and level of understanding.

## **Exclusions**

Darlinghurst Academy recognises that those in care are particularly vulnerable to exclusions. Where a child is at risk of exclusion the school will try every practicable means to maintain the child in school. A multi-professional meeting will be arranged, bringing together all those involved with the young person to discuss strategies to minimise the risk of exclusion. The child or young person's PEP will reflect strategies to support the child.

All relevant measures and resources will be considered to provide support and provide alternative educational packages to prevent an exclusion from happening.

## **Staff development and training**

Arrangements will be made to ensure that the Designated Teacher is kept up to date with developments relating to the education and attainment of CiC. Other staff will receive relevant training and support to enable them to work sympathetically and

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productively with Children in Care, including those who are under achieving or at risk of underachieving or those who have additional needs. These may include EAL or having learning or physical needs. The teacher with responsibility for Special Educational Needs provision will be informed of those CiC who have learning needs and will work with them appropriately.

### **Home-school liaison**

The school recognises the value of a close working relationship between home and school and will work towards developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable CiC to achieve their potential. Consultation evenings as well as PEP and Care Plan review meetings provide opportunities to continue to develop this partnership working.

### **Links with other agencies**

The school recognises the value of working together with other agencies and organisations and will work closely with colleagues from services involved with the CiC including Social Care teams, Educational Psychologist, Health services, Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service (EWMHS), Youth Offending Teams etc.

### **Racial Equality & Equal Opportunities Statement**

All staff and children have equal access and inclusive rights to the curriculum regardless of their gender, race, disability or ability. We plan work that is differentiated for the performance of all groups and individuals. Darlington Academy is committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment and to achieve their full potential.



