



Safeguarding children

1.3 Looked after children

Policy statement

The Bumblebee Children's Charity is 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 in to 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.

At The Bumblebee Children's Charity, 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. We do not refer to such a child using acronyms such as LAC.
- Where a child who normally attends who The Bumblebee Children's Charity 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 child protection co-ordinator.
- The designated person ensures staff has the information, support and training necessary to meet the looked after child's needs.
- The designated person and the staff liaise with agencies, professionals and practitioners involved with the child and his or her family and ensures appropriate information is gained and shared.
- The Bumblebee Children's Charity recognises the role of the local authority social care department as the child's 'corporate parent' and the key agency in determining what takes place with the child. Nothing changes, especially with regard to the birth parent's or foster carer's role in relation to The Bumblebee Children's Charity without prior discussion and agreement with the child's social worker.
- The settling-in process for the child is agreed. It should be the same as for any other child, with the foster carer taking the place of the parent, unless otherwise agreed.

- Concerns about the child will be noted in the child's file and discussed with the foster carer.
- If the concerns are about the foster carer's treatment of the child, or if abuse is suspected, these are recorded in the child's file and reported to the child's social care worker according to The Bumblebee Children's Charity safeguarding children procedure.
- Transition to school will be handled sensitively and the designated person and or the staff will liaise with the school when required, passing on relevant information and documentation with the agreement of the looked after child's birth parents.

Further guidance

- Guidance on the Education of Children and Young People in Public Care (DfEE 2000)
- Who Does What: How Social Workers and Carers can Support the Education of Looked After Children (DfES 2005)
- Supporting Looked After Learners - A Practical Guide for School Governors (DfES 2006)

This Policy was adopted by	
The Bumblebee Children's Charity in	September 2015.....
Signed on behalf of the Management Committee	September 2016.....
	September 2017.....
	September 2018.....
Name of signatory	
Role of signatory	