

SINCLAIR HOUSE SCHOOL

Safeguarding Children - Child in care

This policy applies to both the Montessori Nursery and the Prep school including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is publicly available on the school website and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office.

Document Details

Information Sharing Category	Public Domain
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Authorised by (if required)	Carlotta O'Sullivan
Review/Update Date	January (annually) - unless earlier review is required as per. DfE guidance update
Responsible Area	Safeguarding Team

This Policy is publicly available on the School's website and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible formats if required) may be obtained from the School Office. All who work, volunteer or supply services to our school have an equal responsibility to understand and implement this policy and its procedures, both within and outside of normal school hours, including activities away from school.

All employees and volunteers should read this policy in conjunction with:

- Part 1 of the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE, 2020)
- Sinclair House School Admissions Policy
- Sinclair House School Children Missing from Education Policy
- Sinclair House Child Safeguarding – Child Protection Policy.

Monitoring and review: This policy is subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by Sasha Gibson who is the Headmistress and Safeguarding Lead and Francesca Monti who is the Deputy DSL. The Headmistress will undertake a full annual review of this policy and procedures annually in January, inclusive of its implementation and the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. This discussion will be formally documented in writing and shared with the Advisory Board at the end of Spring Term. The Headmistress recognises the expertise staff build by undertaking safeguarding training and managing safeguarding concerns. As such, staff have the opportunity to contribute to and shape our safeguarding arrangements and child protection policy. Any deficiencies or weaknesses recognised in arrangements or procedures will be remedied immediately and without delay. All staff will be informed of the update/review and it is made available to them in either a hard copy or electronically.

Signed:

Date: 25th January 2021



Mrs Carlotta T.M O'Sullivan (Principal and Proprietor)
2021

Date of next review: January 2022

Context

The terms 'Looked After Children' and 'Children in Care' are often used to define the same group of young people.

When a child or young person is taken into Care by a local authority under a Court Order, the key feature is a change in parental responsibility, which is then undertaken by the local authority – who become their ‘Corporate Parent’. Young people can also be in Care under a voluntary arrangement with parents (a status known as Accommodated) where parental responsibility remains with birth parents, but this arrangement is monitored and supported by social services. Most children in care will be living in foster homes but some may be in a children’s home, living with a relative or even be placed back at home with their birth parent(s). It is important the school attended by the child is aware of their Care status, as many children and families are supported by social care without the use of Care Orders. Foster carers will very rarely hold parental responsibility – this is assumed by the social worker. Children placed for adoption remain looked after by the local authority until the Final Order.

A Personal Education Plan is required for every Child in Care and forms part of their overall Care Plan. The Care Plan should be in place within 20 days of entering Care and thereafter reviewed at least every term.

The Children Act (2004) places a duty to safeguard Children in Care, to promote their educational achievement and to ensure they are able to ‘achieve to and reach their full potential’. The collective responsibility of local authorities and schools to achieve this are set out under six principles;



The role of a Virtual Headteacher for Children in Care is now statutory for every local authority. Virtual Headteachers will scrutinise, challenge and support schools with their teaching and learning for all children in care and assist each other in this task where children cross physical borders to live and attend education provision.

ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HEADMISTRESS OF PREP SCHOOL, SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM OF PREP SCHOOL AND NURSERY MANAGER

We will promote a culture in which children in care believe they can succeed and aspire to further and higher education, without being labelled or singled out

We will appoint a Designated Teacher for Children in Care (CiC)

We will empower the Designated Teacher to fulfil their role and responsibilities

(This will include the provision of time to undertake the role; supporting training needs and providing opportunities for the cascade of training to all staff and Advisory Board members in the school)

We will ensure all staff, both teaching and non-teaching have an understanding of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by children in care and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them

(A young person’s ability to engage in learning can be undermined by feelings of loss, rejection, confusion, insecurity and low self-esteem – being or becoming ‘in Care’ has a major impact on children’s lives)

We will recognise the particular circumstances of CiC and provide for these in all other School Policies and the school's Development Plan

(For example, in Admission, Inclusion, Extended School and Visits, and Staffing and Partnership working. Behaviour Management is another area where prevention and measures may be the same as those for all other pupils, but sometimes those in care may need additional support. It is particularly important to ensure any child at risk of exclusion is identified to the Virtual School)

We will ensure the day-to-day management of information provides sufficient access to promote an understanding of, and provide safeguards for individual children

(Sufficient access to ensure staff who are in contact with the child are aware of their Care status on a need to know basis, including staff cover where appropriate and day-to-day arrangements such as the collection of younger children from school and automated texting to carers from school information systems)

We are committed to working with local authority Virtual Headteachers to promote the achievement of children in care For Hammersmith & Fulham, the virtual Headteacher is Amelia Steel.

ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR CiC

To have high expectations of looked after children's involvement in learning and educational progress.

To monitor the educational progress of all Children in Care in order to ensure they are reaching their potential and feel a part of the school community.

To intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy, taking action to communicate any difficulties as soon as possible.

To act as an advocate for Children in Care.

To inform members of staff of the general educational needs of children in care.

To promote the involvement of these children in out of school hours learning.

To be the named contact for and develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers, local authority children's services and the Virtual School of the caring authority, to ensure the speedy transfer of information between key partners.

To ensure every child in care has a current Personal Education Plan (PEP) that includes appropriate educational targets and encourages the 'voice of the child' to be heard.

To attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or to contribute in other ways to care planning meetings.

To provide a programme of transition support, as appropriate.

To present regular Reports to Advisory Board when necessary, including an Annual Report when necessary, with a report sent to Hammersmith & Fulham virtual Headteacher, Amelia Steel.

To access statutory training events organised by Hammersmith & Fulham Virtual School.

To cascade training to school staff and the board as appropriate

The name of our Designated Teacher for CiC at Sinclair House School is: Francesca Monti

ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HEADMISTRESS

We will ensure the appointment of a Designated Teacher in accordance with the Regulations

We will ensure the Designated Teacher is given the appropriate level of support in order to fulfil their role.

We will monitor the school's policies and ensure they are effective in reflecting the needs of children in care

We will ensure all members of Sinclair House School SLT and Nursery Management are fully aware of legal requirements and guidance on the education of children in care

We will monitor the effectiveness of the role, the board should, as a minimum, receive an annual report from the Designated Teacher when necessary, as part of the annual Safeguarding audit and review.

We will examine whether the school is making the fullest possible use of all available resources, in order to provide the maximum opportunity for CiC to achieve at least two levels of progress within a key stage.

We will scrutinise the school's admission procedures to ensure students are admitted into the school as quickly as possible recognising the importance of re-establishing school stability for children in care. We will champion the needs of those in care and support the work of the Designated Teacher on a more regular basis the board may choose to identify a nominated director for Children in Care

The Headmistress, Safeguarding Leadership Team and Designated Teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in the policy and, following KCSIE 2020 guidance, information will be shared with appropriate staff.