

Pound Hill Pre-School Policy and Procedures

1.3 Looked after children



Policy statement

Pound Hill Pre-School is committed to providing quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. All staff in our provision are committed to doing all they can to enable 'looked after' children in their care achieve and reach their full potential.

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 an impact on their emotional well being.

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 two important concepts, attachment, and resilience. The basis of this is to promote secure attachments in children's lives, as the foundation for resilience. These aspects of well-being underpin the child's responsiveness to learning and enable the development of 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 offer places for funded children aged from 2 years to 5 years that are in care to ensure they receive their entitlement to early education. We expect that a child will have been with a foster carer for a minimum of one month and that they will have formed a secure attachment to the carer. We expect that the placement in the setting will last a minimum of six weeks.
- We will always offer 'settling session' for a child who is still settling with their foster carer, or who is only temporarily being looked after.
- 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 co-ordinator.
The designated Safeguarding Co-ordinator at Pound Hill Pre-School is ***Katy, Caroline, and Amelia***
- 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 ensure that appropriate information is gained and shared.
- Pound hill Pre-school recognises the role of the local authority children's 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 setting, without prior discussion and agreement with the child's social worker.
- At the start of a placement there is a professionals meeting to determine the objectives of the placement and draw up a care plan that incorporates the child's learning needs, this is reviewed at regular intervals.
- 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 setting's safeguarding children procedure.
- Regular contact should be maintained with the social worker through planned meetings that will include the foster carer.
- The transition to school will be handled sensitively. The designated person and/or the child's key person will liaise with the school, passing on relevant information and documentation with the agreement of the looked after child's birth parents.

This policy was adopted by

K Platt

Role of signatory

Manager

Date

July 2021

Date to be reviewed

01/09/2022
