

Policy/Procedure Title	APN011 - Looked After Children	
Review Cycle (<i>*Delete as appropriate</i>)	Biennial	
Responsible Department	Science & Public Sector Services – Applewood Nursery	
Procedure *Owner (<i>*Overall responsibility</i>)	Head of Faculty – Science & Public Sector Services	
Responsible *Person (<i>if different to above</i>) <i>*responsibility for communicating changes and staff training where appropriate</i>	Nursery Manager	
Types of provision this procedure applies to: (<i>delete as appropriate</i>)	Support Department	
Revision Record		
Rev. No.	Date of Issue	Details and purpose of Revision:
0	June 2018	New Procedure
1	September 2020	Biennial Review
2	February 2026	Review and update

Equality Impact Assessment

Whenever a policy is reviewed or changed, its impact assessment also must be updated. The Equality Act 2010 seeks to simplify discrimination law and introduced statutory duties to promote equality whereby The College of West Anglia must, in the exercise of its functions, pay due regard to the need to promote equality in relation to the protected characteristics.

Could any staff or students be adversely impacted by this policy/process? If yes give details and how this will be mitigated:

Date:	Action and Monitoring:
20.2.26	Update and review

E, D & I Statement

This procedure has been reviewed in line with the Equality Act 2010 which recognises the following categories of individual as Protected Characteristics: Age, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex (gender), Sexual Orientation and Disability. We will continue to monitor this procedure to ensure that it allows equal access and does not discriminate against any individual or group of people.

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1 Purpose

Applewood Nursery 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 to achieve and reach their full potential.

2 Procedures

Children 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 looked after children 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 may have 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.

Most local authorities do not place children under five with foster carers who work outside the home; however, there are instances when this does occur or where the child has been placed with another family member who works.

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.

3 Definitions

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.

For babies and children who are in care we offer a prolonged settling in period to enable a child to play and engage with other children where their carer stays with the child, to ensure the transition and attachment with the key person are secure.

Where a child who normally attends our Nursery is taken into care and is cared for by a local foster carer we will continue to offer the placement for the child.

4 Actions and Responsibilities

The designated person for looked after children is the designated Safeguarding Lead Practitioner (SLP).

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 who are involved with the child and his or her family to ensure appropriate information is gained and shared.

Applewood 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 Applewood without prior discussion and agreement with the child's social worker.

At the start of a placement there is a professionals meeting that will determine the objectives of the placement and draw up a care plan that incorporates the child's learning needs. This plan is reviewed after two weeks, six weeks and three months. Thereafter at three to six monthly intervals.

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 – and 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 and local authority (as the 'corporate parent') as well as what information is shared with whom and how it will be recorded and stored;
- what contact the child has with his/her birth parent(s) and what arrangements will be in place for supervised contact. If this is to be Applewood, when, where and what form the contact will take will be discussed and agreed;
- what written reporting is required;
- wherever possible, and where the plan is for the child's return home, the birth parent(s) should be involved in planning; and
- with the social worker's agreement, and as part of the plan, the birth parent(s) should be involved in Applewood's activities that include parents, such as outings and fun days, alongside the foster carer.

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. It is even more important that the 'proximity' stage is followed until it is visible that the child has formed a relationship with his or her key person sufficient to act as a 'secure base' to allow the gradual separation from the foster carer. This process may take longer in some cases, so time needs to be allowed for it to take place without causing further distress or anxiety to the child.

In the first two weeks after settling-in, the child's well-being is the focus of observation, as well as their sociability and their ability to manage their feelings with or without support.

Further observations about communication, interests and abilities will be noted to form a picture of the whole child in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage prime and specific areas of learning and development.

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 Applewood's safeguarding children procedure.

Regular contact should be maintained with the social worker through planned meetings that will include the foster carer.

Transition to school will be handled sensitively and 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.

5 Associated Documents

- Safeguarding and child protection policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality and diversity Policy
- Guidance on the Education of Children and Young People in Public Care (DfEE 2014) [Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children - GOV.UK](#)
- Who Does What: How Social Workers and Carers can Support the Education of Looked After Children (DfES 2005)
- [NSPCC Information on Looked After Children in Care](#)