



**LADYBIRDS**  
NURSERY

## Looked After Children

2021/2022

### Safeguarding

#### Policy Statement

Ladybirds Nursery is committed to providing quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. All our 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 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 parents(s).

We recognise that children who are being looked after often 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 impact on their emotional well-being.

At Ladybirds Nursery we place emphasis on promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to. Our policy and practise 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 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 the 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' denoted 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 Looked after Child.

## Procedures



The designated people for looked after children are the designated safeguarding officers.



Every child is allocated a key person 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 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 appropriate information is gained and shared.



The designated person will still liaise with all other professionals but over the telephone or e-mail and not face to face.



The nursery 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 parents or foster carer's role in relation to the nursery without prior discussion and agreement with the 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 and the child's learning needs. This plan will be reviewed at intervals arranged by all parties. (The care plan is incorporated with the core group and other professional meetings)



The care plan needs to consider issues for the child as, the child's emotional needs and how they are to be met, how any emotional issues and problems that effect behaviour are to be managed, the child's sense of self, culture, language/s and identity - 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 made for contact, what written reporting is required, wherever possible, and when the plan is for the child to return home to his/her birth parent(s) who should be involved.



The settling in process for the child 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 key worker makes a strong connection with the child in order to make a 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 of settling in the observations will be focused on the child's well-being, sociability and the ability to manage their feeling 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 EYFS.



Any concerns about the child will be noted and discussed with the child's foster carer.



If the concerns are about the foster carer's treatment of the child, or if abuse is suspected, the normal channels of our safeguarding referral procedures will be followed.



Regular contact with the child's social worker will be maintained 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 parent(s).



All meetings, conference reviews and core group meeting will be attended.



Meetings will no longer be face to face in groups for the time being, but nursery will attend any 'zoom' or alternative virtual meeting that is required.

Issue Date January 2016

Date to be Reviewed January 2017

Date Reviewed May 2017

Date to be Reviewed May 2018

Review Date May 2018

Date to be Reviewed May 2019

Date Reviewed April 2019

Date to be reviewed April 2020

Date reviewed June 2020

Date to be Reviewed August 2020

Date Reviewed September 2021

Date to be Reviewed September 2022

Date Reviewed December 2021

Date to be Reviewed December 2022

Date Reviewed March 2022 (Covid information Removed)

Date to be Reviewed March 2023

Date Reviewed

This policy will be reviewed sooner than the review date should any new information become available