



Ashbridge

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL & NURSERY

SAFEGUARDING LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Approved by: SMT

Approved date: September 2022

Review date: September 2023

Accessibility: Available on the school website and paper copy on request

Scope: Ashbridge Independent School and Nursery, Ashbridge-on-Ribble Nursery, Ashbridge Nursery at Maxy Farm, The Fledglings Nursery

We are committed to providing quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. (See also Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedures). To reflect this all members of the Ashbridge team are committed to enabling 'looked after' children in their care to achieve and reach their full potential.

Under the [Children Act 1989](#), a child is legally defined as 'looked after' by a local authority if he or she:

- gets accommodation from the local authority for a continuous period of more than 24 hours
- is subject to a care order (to put the child into the care of the local authority)
- is subject to a placement order (to put the child up for adoption)

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.

We recognise that children who are being looked after have often experienced traumatic situations 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. Although some children who are 'looked after' remain in their family home, they may still experience changes in routine and expectations and as such still require additional support.

When a child is 'looked after' we place even more emphasis on strong attachments with practitioners at school or nursery to ensure the child feels safe and secure and are able to continue to learn and develop despite changes experienced in their home lives.

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 and work with the foster carer and local authority to ensure the child's wellbeing remains paramount.

Procedures

- The designated people for looked after children is the Lead DSL, Headteacher, Karen Mehta at Ashbridge School, Ashbridge Nursery and Ashbridge on Ribble; DSL, Alice Turner and Maxy Farm and DSL, Grace Cole at The Fledglings.
- 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 ensures appropriate information is gained and shared.
- The company comply with aspects of the child's care plan once agreed and follow the Local Authority guidance in such circumstances.