

Mortimer Hall Pre-school



Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children.

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2 **1.3 Looked after children**

3 **Policy statement**

4 We are committed to providing quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and
5 their families. All staff in our provision are committed to doing all they can to enable 'looked after'
6 children in our care to achieve and reach their full potential.

7

8 Children become 'looked after' if they have either been taken into care by the local authority, or have
9 been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most looked after children
10 will be living in foster homes, but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or
11 even placed back home with their natural parent(s).

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13 We recognise that children who are being looked after have often experienced traumatic situations;
14 physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. However, we also recognise that not all looked after
15 children have experienced abuse and that there are a range of reasons for children to be taken in to
16 the care of the local authority. Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family
17 signifies a disruption in their lives that has an impact on their emotional well-being. Most local
18 authorities do not place children under five with foster carers who work outside the home; however,
19 there are instances when this does occur or where the child has been placed with another family
20 member who works. It is not appropriate for a looked after child who is under two years to be placed in
21 a day care setting in addition to a foster placement.

22

23 We place emphasis on promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to. Our policy and
24 practice guidelines for looked after children are based on two important concepts: attachment and
25 resilience. The basis of this is to promote secure attachments in children's lives, as the foundation for
26 resilience. These aspects of well-being underpin the child's responsiveness to learning and enable the
27 development of positive dispositions for learning. For young children to get the most out of educational
28 opportunities they need to be settled enough with their carer to be able to cope with further separation,
29 a new environment and new expectations made upon them.

30

31 *Principles*

- 32 ■ The term 'looked after child' denotes a child's current legal status; this term is never used to
33 categorise a child as standing out from others. We do not refer to such a child using acronyms such
34 as LAC.

- 35 ▪ We cannot offer placements for babies and children under two years who are in care. However, we
36 would be more than happy to signpost them to other services within the area.
- 37 ▪ In exceptional circumstances, we offer places to two-year-old children who are in care. In such
38 cases, the child should have been with the foster carer for at least two months and show signs of
39 having formed a secure attachment to the carer, and the placement in the setting will last a
40 minimum of three months.
- 41 ▪ We offer places for funded three and four-year-olds who are in care to ensure they receive their
42 entitlement to early education. We expect that a child will have been with a foster carer for a
43 minimum of one month and that they will have formed a secure attachment to the carer. We expect
44 that the placement in the setting will last a minimum of six weeks.
- 45 ▪ We will always offer 'stay and play' provision for a child who is two to five years old who is still
46 settling with their foster carer, or who is only temporarily being looked after.
- 47 ▪ Where a child who normally attends Mortimer Hall Pre-school is taken into care and is cared for by
48 a local foster carer, we will continue to offer the placement for the child.

49 **Procedures**

- 50 ▪ The designated person for looked after children is the Manager/Deputy Manager.
- 51 ▪ Every child is allocated a key person before they start and this is no different for a looked after
52 child. The designated person ensures the key person has the information, support and training
53 necessary to meet the looked after child's needs.
- 54 ▪ The designated person and the key person liaise with agencies, professionals and practitioners
55 involved with the child and his or her family and ensure that appropriate information is gained and
56 shared.
- 57 ▪ The setting recognises the role of the local authority children's social care department as the child's
58 'corporate parent' and the key agency in determining what takes place with the child. Nothing
59 changes, especially with regard to the birth parent's or foster carer's role in relation to the setting,
60 without prior discussion and agreement with the child's social worker.
- 61 ▪ At the start of a placement there is a professional's meeting to determine the objectives of the
62 placement and draw up a care plan that incorporates the child's learning needs. This plan is
63 reviewed after two weeks, six weeks and three months. Thereafter at three to six monthly intervals.
- 64 ▪ The care plan needs to consider issues for the child such as:
- 65 - their emotional needs and how they are to be met;
- 66 - how any emotional issues and problems that affect behaviour are to be managed;
- 67 - their sense of self, culture, language(s) and identity – and how this is to be supported;
- 68 - their need for sociability and friendship;
- 69 - their interests and abilities and possible learning journey pathway; and
- 70 - how any special needs will be supported.
- 71 ▪ In addition the care plan will also consider:

- 72 - how information will be shared with the foster carer and local authority (as the ‘corporate
73 parent’) as well as what information is shared with whom and how it will be recorded and stored;
74 - what contact the child has with his/her birth parent(s) and what arrangements will be in place for
75 supervised contact. If this is to be at the setting, when, where and what form the contact will
76 take will be discussed and agreed;
77 - what written reporting is required;
78 - wherever possible, and where the plan is for the child to return home, the birth parent(s) should
79 be involved in planning; and
80 - with the social worker’s agreement, and as part of the plan, the birth parent(s) should be
81 involved in the setting’s activities that include parents, such as outings and fun-days etc
82 alongside the foster carer.
- 83 ■ The settling-in process for the child is agreed. It should be the same as for any other child, with the
84 foster carer taking the place of the parent, unless otherwise agreed. It is even more important that
85 the ‘proximity’ stage is followed until it is visible that the child has formed a sufficient relationship
86 with his or her key person for them to act as a ‘secure base’ to allow the gradual separation from
87 the foster carer. This process may take longer in some cases, so time needs to be allowed for it to
88 take place without causing further distress or anxiety to the child.
 - 89 ■ In the first two weeks after settling-in, the child’s well-being is the focus of observation, their
90 sociability and their ability to manage their feelings with or without support.
 - 91 ■ Further observations about communication, interests and abilities will be noted to form a picture of
92 the whole child in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage prime and specific areas of learning
93 and development.
 - 94 ■ Concerns about the child will be noted in the child’s file and discussed with the foster carer.
 - 95 ■ If the concerns are about the foster carer’s treatment of the child, or if abuse is suspected, these
96 are recorded in the child’s file and reported to the child’s social care worker according to the
97 setting’s safeguarding children procedure.
 - 98 ■ Regular contact should be maintained with the social worker through planned meetings that will
99 include the foster carer.
 - 100 ■ The transition to school will be handled sensitively. The designated person and/or the child’s key
101 person will liaise with the school, passing on relevant information and documentation with the
102 agreement of the looked after child’s birth parents.

103

104 **Further guidance**

- 105 ■ Guidance on the Education of Children and Young People in Public Care (DfEE 2000)
- 106 ■ Who Does What: How Social Workers and Carers can Support the Education of Looked After
107 Children (DfES 2005)
- 108 ■ Supporting Looked After Learners - A Practical Guide for School Governors (DfES 2006)

This policy was adopted by

Mortimer Hall Pre-school

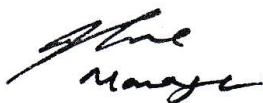
On

23rd January 2019

Date to be reviewed

January 2020

Signed on behalf of the provider



Name of signatory

Janet Crane

Role of signatory

Pre-School Leader

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