



Governors Monitoring Visit Report - 2021/2022

"I have come in order that you might have life – life in all its fullness."

John 10:10

Christ taught us that his purpose was to give life in all its fullness. Through our Christ like attitude we seek to do the same. This is at the heart of all we do.

Focus Monitoring Area: Looked After Children (LAC) & Previously Looked After Children (PLAC).

Name of Link Governors: Jane Springham

Names of Staff and Student Council member (if applicable): Nikki Green

Date of Visit: 19/11/21 – 3.45pm (via Zoom)

Reference to School improvement Plan:

Whilst there is not a specific item within the SOP – the needs of all Looked After and Previously Looked After Children need to be remembered and considered throughout the whole plan to ensure any specific barriers to learning are addressed.

Documents looked at in preparation for visit:

- Kingsholm Looked after Children Policy
- HT report Sept 21/ Looked After Children Report to governors (Summer/Autumn 21)
- Children in Care Checklist for Governors (GCC Virtual school for Children and Young People in Care)

Follow-up points from last visit:

- Continue to monitor how much extra work the school is doing to protect our LAC children considering the inadequate rating Social Care received from OFSTED.
- Continue to cover the questions suggested by the Virtual School Checklist to help us see a fully rounded picture of all the work that Nikki and the school do for our LAC and PLAC children.

Initial Planned Questions for this visit:

Termly update & reference to Virtual School Checklist – particularly questions 5,11,19,23

Findings/ Evidence/ impact seen and discussed:

Update/numbers of children in school who are LAC/PLAC.

NG noted our numbers of children in care have increased since the summer and school is expecting 2 more children to join the school shortly.

Currently 6 children in care and 8 children previously in care.

Children who join us have very different experiences of moving into care or becoming PLAC – therefore the approach to each child must be individually focused. We discussed the level of shock/disruption in a child's life when they experience becoming a child in care and any subsequent changes.

Noted also the very different systems different LAs use for LAC and PLAC children, so NG is often working with different sets of paperwork. This obviously has an affect on workload for NG as children arrive and NG works with children's original LAs. Highlights the complexity of the Social Care landscape.

Talked about how NG works with children's carers/new families so school can provide the best possible experiences for children.

- We discussed monitoring of mental health issues being undertaken across school (see SOP for actions this year) and how mental health is an area of concern for some of our LAC children. Any issues are addressed via individual trackers and PEP.

-NG also talked again about the role of the school having to mitigate against the gaps that occur within Social Care and consequent safeguarding concerns. Our LA is still considered to be inadequate. School often having to follow-up issues that should have

been dealt with quicker, missed meetings, coping with missing minutes of meetings etc. School is very conscious of those children who we consider to be 'on the edge of care' – NG and Inclusion Team ensure issues are followed up. The teams weekly meetings and TLC list ensure these children are kept 'visible' in school.

- All Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are up to date (a PEP is reviewed every 12 weeks). Each child in care (LAC) is allocated £3000 in their PEP and this money is held by the Virtual School to be used as directed through their PEP. Children previously in care (PLAC) are allocated £2,300 and this money comes directly to school. LP allocates this money for the children through their Individual PP+ tracker. Some of our LAC and PLAC children will have other funds of money from EHCP's or PP money.

NG's reports to governors show how funding is used to enable the children access the full curriculum through interventions/addressing needs/widening opportunities. Reports also show children's progress in school so that governors can see the impact of the work/interventions school uses for each child. These therefore show the individual focus for each child and the holistic approach to learning for each child. NG was awaiting the information from AP2 for this term to update report to governors for FGB 2 to see levels of progress and attainment (see secure website for report).

NG hopes that wider opportunities for children will be more accessible soon, if COVID allows, by ensuring children have access to more after school clubs/ outside opportunities again.

Questions from the Virtual School checklist:

Q5. How does the designated teacher contribute to the deeper understanding of everyone in the school who is likely to be involved in supporting children in care to achieve?

NG attends all Pupil Progress meetings with class teachers for LAC/PLAC, alongside their PP trackers.

Ensures that any attachment/ trauma/ social/ emotional/ health issues are considered, so we can look at addressing individual needs.

Working this year with teachers/support staff on looking at how learning is scaffolded for individuals to help remove barriers to accessing the full curriculum.

NG can ensure that staff are signposted for further help e.g. Nicola Hopper from the virtual School can offer CPD for staff on areas pertinent to our LAC/PLAC children.

Q11. Do PEPs help everyone gain the clear and shared understanding about the teaching and learning provision necessary to ensure academic progress and meet the child's educational needs, describing how that will be provided?

NG thinks the school process could be improved here to close the circle of information sharing. NG initially gets input from the class teacher for the school's input into a PEP plan before PEP meeting. The document when complete is shared electronically. NG sees that she could re-meet teachers after PEP is completed to keep them up to date. NG did note that she needs to ensure class teachers are not overloaded with information/ targets for these children as they do have a range of plans monitoring their progress: PEP; Individual Pupil Premium tracker; My Plan; Child in Care reviews (this refers to status in the care system).

Q19. Does the designated teacher take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand the things which can affect how children in care learn and achieve and how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils (including having high expectations and attachment awareness?)

Yes, we considered how this is firstly embedded within the School Vision – aspirational, diverse, supporting, and inspiring. We spoke again of the individual and holistic approach for the children to break down barriers for learning, NG attending individual meetings with

class teachers and families to ensure all individual circumstances are understood. NG also mentioned the recent example of training undertaken by staff in trauma and attachment.

Q23 Are the school's policies sensitive to the needs of children in care e.g. in accessing out of hours learning, respecting the children's wishes and feelings about their care status or generally meeting their needs as identified in their PEPs?

School policy covers all the above areas and clearly lays out roles and responsibilities of all in school.

This is reflected in NG's approach with the focus on individual needs. NG works with both the children and their carers – e.g. ensuring common frame of language is used across school and home environment for the children. Pupil voice is also included in writing PEPs .

Evidence of School Vision/values:

As mentioned above the school vision is inclusive and has high expectations for all. The holistic approach of the Kingsholm Family is also key for children who are or have been in care as a consistent and loving element in their lives.

School values of Respect, Love and Perseverance are also key with our approach to enabling our children who have experience of the Care system to reach their potential, by ensuring we work with them as individuals and fully understand their individual circumstances.

Questions/follow-up points for discussion with headteacher and for future visits:

- Continue to use/update Virtual School Checklist
- Continue to monitor school mitigating issues within GCC Social Care and its impact on children/families in school.
- We will try and find out more about the Virtual Schools 'Celebration of Success' to ensure our children will be able to take part.
- Follow up on closing the information circle re PEPs.

Dates for next visits:

Provisional Date for Spring visit – 23/2/22 10am – TBC (liaise with new link governor MS to ensure they can attend next meeting).