



Looked After Children Policy

At Elite SF, we are committed to providing a **welcoming and inclusive quality environment** for all children and families.

Definition and Legal Framework

The term '**looked after**' generally describes a child who is **looked after by the local authority**. This includes children who are:

- Subject to a **care order**
- Temporarily classed as looked after for **short breaks or respite care**

Most looked after children are cared for by foster carers. A smaller number may be in children's homes, looked after by family members, or placed back within the family home.

The term '**looked after child**' denotes a child's current legal status. The nursery never uses this term to make a child stand out or uses acronyms such as LAC.

The legal framework for this policy is supported by:

- Childcare Act 2006
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Adoption and Children Act 2002
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017

Our Policy

Elite SF treats each child as an **individual**. We recognise that for young children to benefit fully from educational opportunities, they must be appropriately settled with their carer.

We discuss with the child's **carer and social worker** (where applicable) for details to learn:

- How secure the child feels
- Whether they are ready to cope with **separation, a new environment, and new expectations**

We are aware that children may enter care for a variety of reasons, which may include **traumatic experiences or abuse**.

Elite SF are committed to supporting children to achieve their **full potential**. Coaches are trained in our **safeguarding policy and procedures**, with additional training provided where necessary.

Assessments and Multi-Agency Work

Where applicable, the nursery contributes to assessments, including:

- Local authorities' assessment frameworks
- Early Help Assessment (EHA)
- Multi-agency meetings, case conferences, and strategy meetings

The **designated person for looked after children** (LSO) and/or the child's key person will be informed of updates and any changes.

Key Person and Support

Each child is allocated a **key person** who:

- Supports the child during **transition and settling in**
- Builds ongoing relationships with the child, carers.
- Carries out **observations** to monitor the child's interests, learning, and development
- Shares information with carers and professionals as needed

Where necessary, the **key person/designated person/manager** will develop a **care plan** with carers and relevant professionals.

Care Plan Includes

- The child's **emotional needs** and how they will be met
- Management of **emotional issues and behavioural challenges**

- Support for the child's **sense of self, culture, language, and identity**
- The child's **need for sociability and friendships**
- The child's **interests and abilities**, including their learning journey
- Support for any **special educational needs and/or disabilities**

The care plan may also include:

- How information will be shared with the **carer, local authority, and other professionals**
- Contact arrangements with **birth parent(s)**, including supervision and location
- **Collection arrangements** for the child and access to information
- Written reporting requirements
- Involvement of birth parent(s) in planning and activities, where appropriate

Where applicable, a **Personal Education Plan (PEP)** will be completed for children aged **two to five** in partnership with carers and social workers.

Transition Support

The **key person** and LSO work together to ensure smooth **transition to school or nursery**, sharing necessary information.

The child's individual file, including where possible:

- Observations
- Photographs
- Artwork and mark-making

will be passed to the carer at transition.

Key Contact Details

Organisation	Contact Number
Local Authority	On Important Contact List
Children's Social Care Team	On Important Contact List
Named Social Worker	Please see LSO

Private Fostering

Private fostering is an arrangement between a parent and a private foster carer, who becomes responsible for the child's welfare.

A privately fostered child is:

- Under **16 years old** (or 18 if disabled)
- Cared for and provided accommodation for **more than 28 days**
- Cared for by someone **other than:**
 - The parents
 - A person without parental responsibility
 - A close relative
 - The local authority

It is a **statutory duty** for Elite SF to inform the local authority if a privately fostered child is identified, by contacting the **children's social care team**.

This policy was adopted on: 29th December 2025

Signed on behalf of the nursery: C Hayward

Date for review: 29th December 2026