



Looked-After and Previously Looked- After Children Policy

Approved by the Governing Body

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1. Policy Statement

This policy outlines the school's commitment to promoting the educational achievement, wellbeing, and inclusion of looked-after children (LAC) and previously looked-after children (PLAC). It reflects statutory duties and current guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE), including *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, *Promoting the Education of Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children*, relevant provisions of the Children Act 1989 and 2004, and the School Admissions Code.

The school recognises that children who are or have been in care may experience trauma, disrupted learning, attachment needs, or emotional challenges. We are committed to providing a stable, nurturing, and ambitious environment in which these pupils can thrive academically and socially. This policy applies to all pupils who are subject to a care order or interim order, accommodated by the local authority, or who have left care through adoption, special guardianship, or child arrangements orders.

2. Definitions

A looked-after child is defined as a child who is in the care of a local authority in accordance with the Children Act 1989. Previously looked-after children are those who were formerly in care but are no longer looked after as a result of adoption, special guardianship, or a child arrangements order. Each looked-after child has a Personal Education Plan (PEP), which forms part of their statutory care plan and sets out educational targets and support strategies. The Virtual School Head (VSH) is the local authority officer responsible for promoting educational outcomes for these pupils and works in partnership with schools.

3. Aims

The school seeks to create a culture of high expectations, stability, and inclusion. We aim to remove barriers to learning, ensure access to a broad and balanced curriculum, and promote participation in enrichment opportunities. By working collaboratively with carers, social workers, and local authority professionals, we strive to ensure that pupils feel secure, valued, and able to achieve their potential.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

The governing body ensures that statutory duties are met and that the school actively champions the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children. Governors are responsible for ensuring that an appropriate policy is in place, that a trained Designated Teacher is appointed, and that provision and outcomes are monitored effectively. Through

strategic oversight, they ensure resources such as Pupil Premium Plus funding are used appropriately and that practice demonstrates accountability and impact.

Headteacher

The headteacher holds overall responsibility for implementing this policy and embedding a culture of aspiration and sensitivity across the school. This includes ensuring staff awareness of pupils' looked-after status where information sharing is appropriate, supporting professional development, and promoting effective partnership working. The headteacher also ensures that provision is evaluated and improved so that the needs of vulnerable pupils are addressed.

Designated Teacher

A qualified Designated Teacher (DT) is appointed to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children. The DT acts as the key professional contact for carers, social workers, and the Virtual School, ensuring effective communication and coordinated planning. They oversee the completion and review of PEPs, monitor academic progress and wellbeing, guide staff in trauma-informed and attachment-aware practice, and manage the allocation of Pupil Premium Plus funding. Through careful record keeping, advocacy, and monitoring, the DT plays a central role in ensuring compliance with statutory duties.

Staff

All staff share responsibility for supporting these pupils through maintaining high expectations, demonstrating sensitivity to emotional needs, and fostering inclusive classroom environments. Staff are expected to understand how trauma or instability may influence behaviour or learning and to respond accordingly. Concerns relating to wellbeing or safeguarding are reported promptly through established procedures.

5. Admissions and Priority

In accordance with the School Admissions Code, the school gives the highest priority to looked-after and previously looked-after children within oversubscription criteria. Admission arrangements are handled with urgency and care to ensure minimal disruption and continuity of education. Where pupils join the school, induction arrangements are tailored to their needs, providing reassurance, stability, and careful transition support. These arrangements demonstrate the school's commitment to inclusion and fair access.

6. Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

The school works closely with the local authority and other professionals to develop and review Personal Education Plans. These plans set out achievable academic targets, identify barriers to learning, and outline interventions designed to secure progress and wellbeing. Reviews take place within statutory timescales and inform teaching strategies and resource

allocation. Where appropriate, pupils' views are incorporated to ensure their voice is recognised.

7. Support

The school acknowledges the lasting impact that trauma, loss, or instability may have on children's development. A nurturing ethos underpins our practice, supported by consistent routines, positive relationships, and targeted pastoral support. Access to extracurricular and enrichment activities is encouraged to foster belonging and self-esteem. These practices contribute to pupils' personal development and emotional security, key areas of evaluation in inspection.

8. Reducing Exclusions

Exclusion can have a profound and destabilising impact on looked-after children. The school therefore prioritises preventative and restorative approaches, ensuring behaviour support strategies are explored thoroughly before exclusion is considered. The Designated Teacher is involved in planning and reviewing behaviour interventions, and collaboration with external agencies is sought when needed. This approach demonstrates commitment to inclusive practice and equitable treatment.

9. Attendance Monitoring

Attendance is monitored closely by senior leaders and the Designated Teacher to ensure barriers are identified early and addressed effectively. Where attendance concerns arise, the school works collaboratively with carers and professionals to resolve issues and support engagement. This proactive approach reflects the school's safeguarding responsibilities and its commitment to securing consistent access to education.

10. Funding – Pupil Premium Plus

Additional funding provided through Pupil Premium Plus is used strategically to address individual needs and support progress. Decisions about expenditure are informed by the PEP process and may include academic interventions, pastoral support, or enrichment opportunities. The impact of spending is evaluated regularly to ensure value for money and demonstrable outcomes.

11. Safeguarding and Confidentiality

Information about a pupil's care status is handled sensitively and shared only where necessary to support their welfare or learning. All procedures comply with safeguarding and data protection requirements. Looked-after children are recognised as a priority within

safeguarding arrangements, and staff maintain vigilance to ensure concerns are identified and addressed promptly.

12. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed by the governing body, with updates reflecting changes in statutory guidance or inspection expectations. Reports from the Designated Teacher inform evaluation of provision and outcomes, enabling continuous improvement. Through systematic monitoring and reflective practice, the school demonstrates accountability, responsiveness, and commitment to high standards for vulnerable learners.

13. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside safeguarding, behaviour, SEND, admissions, and equality policies, ensuring coherence across the school's approach to inclusion and wellbeing.



