



**THE DISTRICT**  
CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

# Looked After Children Policy

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|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Chair of Governors</b>        | Mr F Maguire                    |
| <b>Headteacher</b>               | Mrs L Shelford                  |
| <b>Date adopted:</b> Summer 2024 | <b>Review Date:</b> Summer 2025 |

*The caring path to achievement, reflecting the values of Christ.*

## **Introduction**

The District CE Primary School's Christian Vision Statement

**"I am the vine; you are the branches." John 15:5**

Just as the branches need the vine to grow and bear good fruits, so we need each other. Within the District family, each person is valued and loved, reaching out throughout our school, homes, families and the wider community for a stronger future. Our Christian vision statement permeates through everything we do at The District and this policy was developed to reflect togetherness, inclusion and supporting all pupils to achieve the best possible outcomes.

## **Definitions**

Looked after Children (LAC) are defined as:

- Children or young people who are the subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989.
- Children who are placed in foster care, children's residential homes, with relatives or friends, in semi-independent or supported independent accommodation.
- Children are subject to a Care or Interim Care Order whilst placed with a parent, where the LA has parental responsibility.
- Children who are not subject to an order, but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents or respite care.

Previously - Looked after Children (PLAC) are defined as:

- Children who are no longer looked after by an LA in England and Wales because they have either been adopted or are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order.
- Children who were adopted outside England and Wales from 'state care' (care that is provided by a public authority, religious organisation, or other organisation whose main purpose is to benefit society).

This policy includes requirements set out in statutory guidance on the duty of local authorities to promote the educational achievements of children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004 and associated guidance on the education of Looked after Children including Previously Looked after Children.

Governor Responsible: Frank Maguire

Designated Teacher: Mrs Claire Ryder

## **Aims**

- To provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children.
- To support our looked after children and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential, enjoy learning and take as full a part as possible in all school activities.
- To ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for LAC as for all children.
- To work with the Virtual School and ensure that carers and social workers of LAC pupils are kept fully informed of the child's progress and attainment.
- To fulfil our schools' role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our Looked after Children, by asking the question, 'Would this be good enough for my child?'

Our school's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked after Children is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education
- Promoting attendance
- Targeting support
- Having high expectations
- Promoting inclusion
- Raising aspiration
- Early intervention and priority action
- Listening to children
- Promoting health and well-being
- Reducing exclusions and promoting stability and continuity
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals

## **Rationale**

Many children and young people who are in care have suffered abuse or neglect. Despite having as broad a range of abilities as their peers, Looked after Children are particularly vulnerable to underachievement. Nationally, Looked After Children (LAC\*) significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Their academic and social progress is likely to be affected by their experiences and compounded by instability in their personal circumstances. 75% of LAC leave education with no formal qualifications. Only 12% go on to further education compared with 68% of the general population. Helping LAC succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority in our school.

The District C E Primary School recognises that LAC can experience specific and significant disadvantages within a school setting and is committed to ensuring that they reach their potential in all areas. We are aware that LAC may have specific difficulties with transport and attendance, doing homework, getting parental consent for activities, obtaining funding for extra activities, obtaining correct uniforms and equipment, as well as stigma about their circumstances. The District C E Primary School recognises that LAC may have very specific needs and may be coping with trauma, abuse or rejection, and are likely to experience personal distress and uncertainty.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The Role of the Head Teacher**

- Identify a Designated Teacher for Looked after Children, whose role is set out below.
- It is essential that another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take sick leave.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusion of LAC and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of LAC to all parties involved.
- Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

### **The Role of the Governing Body**

- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of LAC.
- The Education (Admission of Looked After Children England) Regulations 2006. Relevant DfE guidance to Governing Bodies (Supporting Looked after Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors).
- Ensure that the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Looked after Children.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of LAC.
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.
- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Support the Headteacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of LAC are recognised and met.

### **Receive a report setting out:**

1. The number of LAC pupils on the school's roll.
2. Attendance, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
3. Teacher Assessment, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
4. The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any).
5. The destinations of pupils who leave the school.
6. The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.

### **The Role of the Designated Teacher**

- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan to plan for that transition in consultation with the child's social worker and arrangements are put in place to ensure their needs identified and met.
- This may include providing basic equipment and resources if needed.
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people, at least two weeks before the Care Plan reviews.

- Maintaining an up-to-date record of the LAC in school, including those in the care of other authorities and ensuring all necessary information is passed to other staff as required.
- Ensure that each LAC has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher, but should be based on the child's own wishes.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately.
- Co-ordinate any support for the LAC that is necessary within school liaising with teaching and non-teaching staff in school, including the person responsible for Child Protection as well as pastoral and subject staff to ensure they are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage they may face.
- Establish and maintain regular contact with home, statutory and voluntary agencies.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need-to-know basis.
- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life and encourage LAC to join in extra-curricular activities and out-of-school learning.
- Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of LAC.
- Set up meetings with relevant parties where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion.
- Ensure the rapid transfer of information between individuals, agencies and if the pupils change school to a new school.
- Be proactive in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education.
- Ensure that attendance is monitored.
- Attending training as required to keep fully informed of the latest developments and policies regarding LAC.

#### **The responsibility of all staff**

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of LAC, as for all pupils.
- Maintained Looked after Children's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- Work to enable LAC to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all LAC.
- Understand the key issues that affect the learning of LAC.

#### **Confidentiality**

- Information on looked after children will be shared with school staff on a "need to know basis"
- The Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with which school staff at the PEP meeting. Once this has been agreed with the social worker, carer, young person, and other parties, complete confidentiality is to be maintained.

## **Training**

The Head Teacher and/or the Designated Teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practices outlined in this policy.

The Designated Teacher will attend the St Helens Designated Teacher Forums every term to receive local updates, share practice, review ways of working and access specific cpd.

## **Personal Education Plan (PEP) Completion**

- Social worker informs the school of a child becoming looked after (or a looked after child entering the school)
- Date is set for the completion of a Personal Education Plan (PEP).
- A copy of the form is sent to the school to enable the completion of educational data. The PEP meeting must take place within 20 days, involving the social worker, designated teacher (or other appropriate staff), carer and young person if appropriate.
- A date is set for the next PEP meeting Personal Education Plan is taken to the child's statutory review and discussed within the wider context of the child's life.
- PEP sent by the social worker to the Virtual School Head.

Copies of reports and appropriate documentation will be sent to authorised carers and agencies involved with the child as well as any receiving school at the point of transition.

## **Links with other agencies**

The school recognises the value of working together with other agencies and organisations and will work closely with colleagues from services involved with LAC including Social Care teams; Educational Psychologists; Health Services, CAMHS; Youth Offending Teams, etc.

## **Racial Equality & Equal Opportunities Statement**

All children have equal access and inclusive rights to the curriculum regardless of their gender, race, disability or ability. We plan work that is differentiated for the performance of all groups and individuals. The District C E Primary School is committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment and to achieve their full potential.

\*LAC includes Previously Looked after Pupils (PLAC)