



Looked After Children (LAC) Policy

**Supporting the Educational Outcomes for Children in
Care and Previously Looked After Children**

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Governing body signature:	

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Statement of Intent

Educational achievement and subsequent life chances for Looked After Children (LAC) and previously Looked After Children (PLAC) are of real concern. Pupils who are looked after often require additional support and attention in order to improve their situation.

William Reynolds Primary School and Nursery endeavours to provide positive experiences and offer stability, safety, and individual care and attention for all our pupils. With this in mind, we aim to:

- Encourage pupils to reach their potential and to make good progress in relation to their academic achievements, as well as their social and emotional development.
- Ensure that pupils enjoy high quality teaching and a curriculum which meets their needs and the requirements of legislation.
- Plan support for LAC realistically and use the school's resources efficiently to ensure the school meets their needs.
- Promote a positive culture in all aspects of school life.
- Help pupils develop their cultural, moral and social understanding.
- Provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and of an excellent standard.
- Ensure there is a shared belief in the abilities and potential of all pupils.
- Ensure there is a Designated Teacher (DT) for LAC who will act as their advocate and coordinate support for them.
- Work with the wider corporate parenting team to maintain education stability, adhere to an individual care plan, promote inclusion and celebrate success.
- We recognise that in meeting the needs of Children in Care, we will also be providing the additional care and support many other children also need; the needs of children in care often mirror those of other children too.

1. Legal Framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children Act 1989
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE (2018): Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children
- DfE (2018) 'The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2022) Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement
- DfE (2023): Keeping children safe in education, statutory guidance for schools and colleges (consultation document)
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2022) Promoting the education of children with a social worker (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- SEND COP June 2014 - Updated April 2020 SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- SEND Review 2022 - Special educational needs publication June 2022 (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- School Attendance Guidance September 2022 - Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Mental Health & Behaviour in Schools November 2018 - Mental health and behaviour in schools (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- Education Inspection Framework September 2019 updated July 2022 - Education inspection framework (EIF) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Early Years inspection framework September 2019 updated July 2022 - Early years inspection handbook - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-eif/school-inspection-handbook-for-september-2023>

2. Definitions

2.1. "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 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.

2.2. "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).

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Ensuring the school has a coherent policy for LAC and PLAC.
- Reviewing the school's policies and procedures in conjunction with legislation and statutory guidance.
- Ensuring the designated teacher for LAC and PLAC has received the appropriate training.
- Support the Headteacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of LAC and PLAC are met.
- Nominate a governor, who links with the Designated Teacher and who takes a special interest in this area of the school's work.

3.2. The Nominated Governor - [Mrs Jane Tranter](#) - is responsible for:

- Ensuring that there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying and reporting possible safeguarding or mental health concerns amongst LAC and PLAC.
- Ensuring LAC and PLAC have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and that reasonable adjustments are made, if necessary.
- Reviewing the annual report to evaluate the progress of LAC in the school.
- Ensuring they receive feedback from the headteacher regarding the effectiveness of the policy on an annual basis.

3.3. The virtual school head (VSH) is responsible for:

- Monitoring the attendance and educational progress of the children their authority looks after.
- Ensuring that arrangements are in place to improve the education and outcomes of the authority's LAC, including those placed out-of-authority.
- Building relationships with health, education and social care partners, as well as other partners, so they and the designated teachers understand the support available to LAC and PLAC.
- Working with the school to ensure all LAC in attendance are fully supported in reaching their full potential.
- Acting as the educational advocate for LAC.
- Acting as a source of advice and information to help parents of PLAC as effectively as possible.
- Managing the school's allocation of pupil premium plus (PP+) for LAC.

Ensuring there are effective systems in place to:

- Maintain an up-to-date roll of the LAC who are in school settings, and gather information about their educational placement, attendance and progress.
- Inform the headteacher and designated teacher if they have a pupil on roll who is looked after by the LA.
- Ensure social workers, schools, designated teachers, carers and independent reviewing officers understand their role and responsibilities regarding a pupil's PEP.
- Ensure that up-to-date and effective PEPs that focus on educational outcomes are maintained for all LAC.
- Avoid delays in providing suitable educational provision.

- Ensure the education achievement of LAC is seen as a priority by everyone who has responsibilities for promoting their welfare.
- Report regularly on the attainment, progress and school attendance of LAC through the authority's corporate parenting structures.

3.4. The headteacher is responsible for:

- Appointing the designated teacher for LAC and PLAC.
- Allowing the designated teacher the time and facilities to succeed in carrying out their duties.
- Overseeing this policy and monitoring its implementation, feeding back to the governing board annually on the following:
 - The number of LAC and PLAC in the school
 - An analysis of assessment as a cohort, compared to other pupil groups
 - The attendance of LAC and PLAC, compared to other pupil groups.
 - The level of fixed term and permanent exclusions, compared to other pupil groups
- Ensuring all members of staff are aware that supporting LAC is a key priority.
- Ensuring PP+ for PLAC is managed effectively.
- Promoting the advantages of actively challenging negative stereotypes of LAC.

3.5. The designated teacher - [Mrs Joanne Shephard](#) - for LAC and PLAC is responsible for:

- Acting as the main contact for social services and being available to attend LAC reviews/Care Planning meetings.
- Being responsible for building relationships with health, education and social care partners and other partners so that they and the VSH understand the support available to LAC and PLAC.
- Promoting the educational achievement of LAC and PLAC at the school; this includes those that left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.
- Ensure that LAC are listened to and have access to pastoral support in school.
- Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations.

- Ensuring LAC are involved in setting their own targets and sharing their achievements through the use of pupil voice.
- Liaise with the Virtual School Team on a regular basis with regard to the performance, attendance and attainment of LAC and PLAC.
- Leading on how the child's PEP is developed and used in school to ensure the child's progress towards targets is monitored.
- Liaising with the SENCO to ensure all pupil needs are met.
- Being vigilant in observing any potential safeguarding concerns that could arise surrounding LAC and PLAC due to their increased vulnerability to harm and acting upon these as soon as they arise.
- Working with the Virtual School and social worker to develop and implement their PEP.
- Working with the Virtual School to discuss how funding can be used to support the child's progress and meet the needs identified in their PEP.
- Working with the headteacher to submit an annual report to the governing board, which details the progress of all LAC and PLAC.

3.6. The DSL is responsible for:

- Keeping up-to-date records of LAC's respective social worker and VSH.
- Promoting amongst staff the importance of recognising and reporting safeguarding concerns surrounding LAC and PLAC as soon as possible due to their increased vulnerability to harm.
- Where a child ceases to be looked after and becomes a care leaver, keeping up-to-date contact details of their LA personal advisor and liaising with the advisor as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

3.7. The SENCO - [Miss Emma Shankland](#) - is responsible for:

- Ensuring they are aware of PEP and care plans for LAC and PLAC.
- Liaising with the class teacher, designated teacher, specialists and parents when considering interventions to support the progress of LAC and PLAC.

3.8. Staff are responsible for:

- Being aware of LAC and PLAC and providing them with support and encouragement.

- Preserving confidentiality, where appropriate, and showing sensitivity and understanding.
- Being vigilant for any signs of bullying towards LAC and PLAC.
- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievements of LAC and PLAC.
- Respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of Personal Education Plans and other documentation needed as part of review meetings.
- Contribute to the designated teacher's requests for information on educational attainment and needs, as appropriate.
- Collaborate with other staff involved with the child on a regular basis to share experiences, approaches and seek support if required.
- Being vigilant for any safeguarding concerns and reporting these to a DSL using the school concern form.
- Promoting the self-esteem of LAC and PLAC.

4. Personal Education Plan (PEP)

- 4.1. All LAC must have a care plan; PEPs are an integral part of this care plan.
- 4.2. The PEP is an evolving record of what needs to happen for a pupil to enable them to make the expected progress and fulfil their potential.
- 4.3. The PEP will reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning which meets the identified educational needs of the child.
- 4.4. The PEP will be reviewed termly.
- 4.5. The school with other professionals and the child's carers will use the PEP to support the child's educational needs, raise the child's aspirations and improve their life chances.
- 4.6. All relevant bodies, such as the LA, the designated teacher and carers, will involve the child in the PEP process.
- 4.7. The PEP will address the pupil's full range of education and development needs, including:
 - Access to nursery provision that is appropriate to the child's age.
 - Suitable education provided by the LA, where the child is not in school because of suspension or exclusion.

- Transitional support where needed, such as if a child is moving to a new school.
 - School attendance and behaviour support, where appropriate.
 - Support to help the child meet their aspirations.
 - Support to achieve expected levels of progress.
- 4.8. The VSH and the designated teacher will ensure that information is included within a LAC or PLAC's PEP surrounding how they are benefitting from any use of PP+ funding to improve their attainment.
- 4.9. Any interventions supported by PP+ will be evidence-based and in the best interests of the pupil.

5. Working with Agencies and The Virtual School (VS)

- 5.1. The school will ensure that copies of all relevant reports are forwarded to the LAC social workers, in addition to carers or residential social workers.
- 5.2. The school will work with other agencies to exchange information, such as changes in circumstances, exclusions or attendance issues, taking prompt action, where necessary, to safeguard LAC and PLAC.
- 5.3. Behaviour management strategies will be agreed between the VS and the school, to ensure challenging behaviour is managed in the most effective way for that individual child.
- 5.4. The designated teacher for LAC and PLAC will communicate with the VS and child's social worker to facilitate the completion of the PEP.
- 5.5. Through the designated teacher, the school will work with the VS, social worker and other relevant agencies to monitor any arrangements in place so that actions and activities recorded in the child's PEP are implemented without delay.
- 5.6. The designated teacher will communicate with the VS and agree on how PP+ can be used effectively to accommodate the child's educational attainment and progress.
- 5.7. PP+ for PLAC will be allocated directly to, and managed by, the school.
- 5.8. The school will work with the VS to manage allocation of PP+ for the benefit of our cohort of LAC, or PLAC, according to their needs.
- 5.9. The designated teacher will ensure consistent and strong communication with the VS regarding LAC who are absent without authorisation.

- 5.10. The school will share their expertise on what works in supporting the education of LAC and PLAC.

6. Training

- 6.1. The designated teacher and other school staff involved in the education of LAC and PLAC have received the appropriate training, this includes information about the following:
- School admissions arrangements
 - SEND
 - Supporting SEMH
 - Attachment and the impact of trauma
 - Attendance
 - Suspensions and Exclusions
 - Homework
 - Managing, understanding and responding to behaviours which challenge
 - Promoting positive educational and recreational activities
 - Supporting pupils to be aspirational for their future education, training and employment
 - Safeguarding
- 6.2. All training will ensure staff are equipped with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep LAC and PLAC safe.

7. Safeguarding

- 7.1. The school recognises that many LAC or PLAC have experienced trauma, abuse or complex family circumstances that have led to them being placed in care, and will ensure that all staff are aware that experiences of adversity such as these can leave pupils vulnerable to further harm or exploitation.
- 7.2. All staff will be trained to recognise signs and indicators of safeguarding concerns and will ensure that extra vigilance is practiced in observing and identifying these indicators amongst LAC and PLAC as soon as possible.
- 7.3. Where a LAC or PLAC has a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding, e.g. responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks.

- 7.4. The headteacher will implement appropriate pastoral support services in place throughout the school to ensure that the welfare of LAC and PLAC can be adequately protected to the extent that reflects their increased vulnerability.
- 7.5. Staff will be encouraged to report to the DSL any concerns they have over LAC or PLAC in line with the processes outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- 7.6. Staff will remain vigilant around any signs of bullying and report these to the designated teacher, if they believe a LAC or PLAC is being bullied, as this can have a particularly negative impact on pupils who have early experiences of rejection or abandonment.

8. Pupil Mental Health

- 8.1. LAC and PLAC are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues which can impact their behaviour and education. Designated teachers will have awareness, training and skills regarding a child's needs and how to support them in relation to behaviour management and mental health.
- 8.2. The designated teacher will work with the VS to ensure the school is able to identify signs of potential mental health issues, understand the impact issues can have on LAC and PLAC, and knows how to access further assessment and support, where necessary.
- 8.3. The school understands that the increased frequency of mental health problems amongst LAC and PLAC may present a barrier to adequately identifying when mental health problems are indicative of a safeguarding concern. For this reason, the designated teacher will ensure that they, and all staff who maintain regular contact with LAC or PLAC are vigilant surrounding any changes in the mental health, behaviour, social inclination or mood of these pupils.
- 8.4. A strengths and difficulties questionnaire will be used regularly to help social workers and other relevant professionals to form a view about LAC and PLAC's current emotional wellbeing. These will be completed in line with the expectations of different local authorities.
- 8.5. The school's senior mental health lead will work alongside the designated teacher to promote the wellbeing and mental health of LAC and PLAC, and

will always either be a member of, or be supported by the senior leadership team and could be the pastoral lead, SENCO, or DSL.

9. Suspension and Exclusion

- 9.1. Past experiences of LAC and PLAC will be considered when designing and implementing the school's Behaviour Policy, and Suspension and Exclusion Policy.
- 9.2. The school will have regard to the DfE's statutory guidance and, as far as possible, avoid suspension or permanent exclusion of LAC or PLAC. ['Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement'](#) and recognises that suspending or excluding LAC can make them more vulnerable to harm due to not having the protection and opportunities school provides. The headteacher will balance this recognition alongside the need to ensure calm and safe environments for all staff and pupils, devising strategies that take both into consideration.
- 9.3. Where the school has concerns about a child's behaviour, the VSH will be informed at the earliest opportunity.
- 9.4. As far as possible, the school will engage proactively with the social worker or carer of a LAC to provide appropriate support for underlying issues that may be causing poor behaviour and improving this behaviour.
- 9.5. As part of the termly review of a pupil's PEP, any concerns about their behaviour will be recorded, alongside information on how they are being supported to improve this and reduce the likelihood of exclusion.
- 9.6. Suspension or permanent exclusion will only be used as a last resort. Permanent exclusion will only occur where there has been serious and/or persistent breaches of the school's Behavioural Policy or where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others.
- 9.7. School will consult the 'Exclusion Reduction Team' on 07816 372 459 when an exclusion is being considered to look at alternative support.
- 9.8. Where a suspension is considered, the school will consult with the VS prior to the suspension, to consider what additional support can be provided to prevent suspension.

- 9.9. The school will inform parents and carers that they can seek the advice of the VSHT on strategies to support their child to avoid suspension.

10. Pupils with SEND

- 10.1. Support for LAC with SEND, who do not need an EHC plan, will be covered as part of the child's PEP and care plan reviews.
- 10.2. The SENCO, class teacher, designated teacher and specialists will involve parents when considering interventions to support their child's progress.
- 10.3. If appropriate, the VSH will be invited to comment on proposed SEND provision for PLAC.
- 10.4. The designated teacher and the SENCO will ensure that LAC and PLAC with SEND are supported in line with the SEND Policy.

11. Information sharing

- 11.1. Appropriate and specific arrangements for sharing reliable data are in place to ensure that the education needs of LAC and PLAC are understood and met.
- 11.2. The arrangements set out include:
- Who has access to information on LAC and previously LAC and how data will remain secure.
 - How pupils and parents are informed of, and allowed to challenge, information that is kept about them.
 - How carers contribute to and receive information.
 - Mechanisms for sharing information between the school and relevant LA departments.
 - How relevant information about individual pupils is passed between authorities, departments and the school when pupils move.

12. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed on an **annual** basis by the designated teacher and the headteacher.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2024.

Appendix A

Designated Teacher's Annual report to Governing Body on Children in Care

This report proforma fulfils the statutory guidance requirement for the annual Designated Teacher's (DTs) report to governors regarding the support and progress of Children in Care (CiC), also referred to as Looked After Children (LAC). This report is underpinned by The Education of Children in Care Policy and handbook.

- To protect confidentiality, it is important to ensure that the report does not mention individual children by name.
- The Virtual school must ensure that statutory requirements are met, so when completed, please

email a copy to virtualschool@telford.gov.uk

Name of school			
This report covers the period	From (date)	To (date)	
Name of Designated Teacher (DT)for Children in care			
Name of the Nominated Governor (NG) for Children in Care			

A. Roles and Responsibilities

1. What is the position of the Designated Teacher within the school's structure? What other roles does he/she fulfil?				
2. Has the school adopted the Telford Virtual School Education of Children in Care Policy?	YES		NO	
	Date adopted by Governing Body		If NO please comment	
3. What specific training has been undertaken and by who?	Training / by whom			Date(s)
4. How often does the DT meet with the NG regarding CiC?	Termly?	More Often?	Less Often?	
5. Has the Designated Teacher (or other nominated person) attended the Virtual School's termly network meetings?	YES		No	
	Comment:		Comment:	
	Number of Children	Year Group	Number of Children	Year Group

6. How many Children in Care attend the school and in what year groups				
7. How many Children in Care are from local authorities other than Telford & Wrekin	Local authorities (Number of Children) Eg. Staffordshire (2)			
8. How many Children in Care have statements of SEND or EHCPs	Number of Children	Areas of need		
		Communication, Language, Interaction		
		Cognition, Learning		
		Behavioural, Emotional, Social		
		Physical, Sensory		
9. Do all Children in Care have up to date, high quality Personal Education Plans (PEPs)?	YES		NO	
	Comment:			
10. Have there been any issues with completing PEPs?	YES		NO	
	Comment:			

B. Attainment and Progress

11. Do Children in Care have good achievement in English and Maths (How many perform <u>Below Age Related Expectations, At Age Related Expectations</u> or <u>Exceed Age Related Expectations</u>)	Number of Children	Achievement Indicator
		Achieving below age related expectations in E&M
		Achieving at age related expectations in E&M
		Achieving above age related expectations in E&M
		Achieving below age related expectations in E
		Achieving at age related expectations in E
		Achieving above age related expectations in E
		Achieving below age related expectations in M
		Achieving at age related expectations in M
		Achieving above age related expectations in M
12. Do Children in care make good progress in English and Maths? (<u>Not Achieving Expected Levels of</u>	Number of Children	Progress Indicator
		Not Achieving Expected Levels of Progress in E&M
		Achieving Expected Levels of Progress in E&M

<u>Progress, Achieving Expected Levels of Progress or Exceeding Expected Levels of Progress</u> Given their respective starting points?			Exceeding Expected Levels of Progress in E&M
			Not Achieving Expected Levels of Progress in E
			Achieving Expected Levels of Progress in E
			Exceeding Expected Levels of Progress in E
			Not Achieving Expected Levels of Progress in M
			Achieving Expected Levels of Progress in M
			Exceeding Expected Levels of Progress in M
13. Have there been any in-year admissions or in-year transfers for Children in Care	Number of Children		Admission types
			In-year admissions
			In-year transfers
14. What number of Children in care achieved 90+% Attendance in the last year	Number of Children		Attendance
			90+%
			Below 90%
15. How many Children in care would be categorised as having persistent absence (below 85%)	Number of Children		Comment:
16. How many Children in Care have been excluded from school? Was work provided from the first day of exclusion?	No. of Children	Total no. of days excluded	Comment:
17. How many Children in Care have been excluded for more than 5 days consecutively? What provision was made for their education from day 6?	Number of Children		Comment:
18. Do all Children in care receive their full educational entitlement of 25 hours per week?			Comment if NO:
	YES	NO	

C. Pupil Premium

19. What is the total amount of Pupil Premium Grant received for Children in care (PPG+)	LA	Number of Children	PPG received
	Telford & Wrekin		
20. How has this Pupil Premium been used to support Children in Care in raising their level of academic achievement / aspiration? (please provide a brief commentary with amounts spent)	Commentary:		
21. What have been the outcomes from the interventions funded through PPG? How effective were they in raising achievement / improving progress?	Commentary:		

D. Evaluation of Support for CiC

22. How effective has support and guidance been from T&W agencies and services?	Agencies and Services	Excellent				Poor
	Social workers / Other care professionals	1	2	3	4	NA
	Education Psychology	1	2	3	4	NA
	CAMHS	1	2	3	4	NA
	Virtual School	1	2	3	4	NA
	Other:	1	2	3	4	NA
	Comment:					

23. How effective has support and guidance been from other LA agencies and services?	Agencies and Services	Excellent				Poor
	Social workers / Other care professionals	1	2	3	4	NA
	Education Psychology	1	2	3	4	NA
	CAMHS	1	2	3	4	NA
	Virtual School	1	2	3	4	NA

	Other:	1	2	3	4	NA
	Comment:					

Signature of Designated Teacher	
Signature of Nominated Governor	
Date	
For Virtual School Use	
Date report received	

email to virtuelschool@telford.gov.uk

