Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children Policy

St Luke's Primary School

'Love God. Love your neighbour as yourself: be the Good Samaritan. Luke 10:25-37

Reviewed by Monica Dickman
September 2023

Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children Policy 2023-2024

Our approach at St Luke's Primary School to supporting the achievement of looked-after children and those children who have subsequently been adopted or subject to special guardianship (previously Looked-after children) is based on the following principles:

- Understanding the needs of each child that is looked- after or has been previously looked after
- Having high expectations
- Effective education planning
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes.
- Promoting attendance and reducing exclusions
- Targeting support
- Achieving stability and continuity.
- Early intervention
- Listening to children.
- Promoting good social, emotional, mental health and wellbeing.
- Working in partnership with the Virtual School Head, carers, social workers and other professionals.

Reviewed by Monica Dickman
September 2023

Governor Responsible: Ruth Grant

Designated Lead: Monica Dickman

Definition

Under the Children's Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if s/he is in their care provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They include the following with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They include the following:

i. Children who accommodated by their local authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
ii. Children who are subject of care order (section 31 (1) or an interim care order (section 38)
iii. Children who are subject of emergency protection orders for the protection of the child (section 44)

A previously looked-after child is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales; and • a child is in 'state care' outside England and Wales if s/he is in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.

Rationale

Many children and young people who are in care or are previously looked after have suffered abuse or neglect. Despite having as broad a range of abilities as their peers, Looked After Children and those Previously Looked After are particularly vulnerable to underachievement. Nationally, Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) 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.

Helping LAC and PLAC succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority in our school. St Luke's Primary School recognises that Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children

can experience specific and significant disadvantage within a school setting, and is committed to ensuring that they reach their potential in all areas. We are aware that Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children may have specific difficulties in transport and attendance, doing homework, getting parental consent for activities, obtaining funding for extra activities, obtaining correct uniform and equipment, as well as stigma about their circumstances. St Luke's Primary School recognises that Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children may have very specific needs and may be coping with trauma, abuse or rejection, and are likely to experience personal distress and uncertainty.

St Luke's Primary School believes that the educational experience of all children should be positive and powerful and aims to provide a learning environment in which every Looked After Child and those Previously Looked After can be successful. We believe that this school has a major part to play in ensuring that LAC and PLAC are able to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic wellbeing.

The Role of the School Governing Body

Statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Designated Teacher for looked-after children and previously looked-after children was revised in February 2018. Statutory guidance from the Department for Education was issued under sections 20(4) and 20A (4) of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008. This guidance is intended to ensure schools put in place policies, procedures and practice to support these children achieving well.

This means that the Governing Bodies of maintained schools, academy proprietors and the designated staff member at maintained schools and academies must have regard to it when promoting the educational attainment of looked-after and previously looked-after children

All schools must follow the guidance; it is responsibility of the Governing Body that the guidance is followed by their schools. The Governing Body must hold the school to account how the guidance is

implemented and the how looked-after children and previously looked-after children are supported to achieve.

In St Luke's Primary School, the governing body is committed to recognising and taking account that children's early life experiences can affect well-being, behaviour and learning and that this is particularly the case for children who are or who have been in care. St Luke's Primary School is committed to helping these children to achieve the highest standards they can. This includes developing aspirations to achieve in further and higher education. This can be measured by improvement in their achievements, well-being and contribution they make to school in general.

We are committed to providing quality education for all pupils and will:

- Ensure the Admissions Code (2014) where is relates looked-after children and previously looked-after children is strictly adhered to.
- Ensure a Designated Teacher for looked-after children and previously looked-after children is identified and enabled to carry out the responsibilities set out below and in accordance the statutory guidance
- Ensure a Personal Education Plan for looked-after children is put in place, implemented and regularly reviewed in line with the local authority's guidance on Personal Education Plans.
- Identify a governor who is prepared to be to take the lead as Designated Governor for looked- after children and previously looked-after children.
- The school will raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about looked-after children and previously looked-after children in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible.

The Governing Body will:

- Monitor the progress of looked-after children and previously looked-after children (where they are identified) as part of their vulnerable group tracking.

- Ensure that looked-after children and previously looked-after children are given top priority when applying for places in accordance with the School's Admission Code.
- Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school. This will be achieved by ensuring the school implements policies and procedures to ensure looked-after children and previously looked-after children achieve and enjoy their time at the school, by recognising the extra problems caused by excluding them and by not excluding them except as a last resort.
- Ensure that the school has a suitably qualified Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Support and challenge the Head teacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of looked-after children and previously looked-after children are recognised and met.
- Receive a report once a year, setting out:

1. The number of looked-after children and previously looked-after children on the school's roll.

2. Their attendance and exclusions as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.

3. Their end of year attainment, levels, grades, GCSE results, and other qualifications achieved, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.

5. The destinations of pupils who leave the school.

6. How the role of the Designated Teacher is being carried out

7. Any areas of concern or development.

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 Designated Teacher

The statutory guidance (2018) says that the Designated Teacher must:

- be *"appropriately qualified and experienced member of staff",* who undertakes the responsibilities within the school to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children on the school's roll.
- Take lead responsibility for raising attainment of looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- undertake training that is appropriate to carrying out their role.
- have appropriate seniority and professional experience to provide leadership, training, information, challenge and advice to others that will influence decisions about the teaching and learning needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- have appropriate seniority and skills to work with the school's senior leadership and governing body to help ensure school policies and approaches appropriately reflect the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children and act as a champion for them

The Designated Teacher will:

- Act as the first point of contact for agencies and professionals outside of school on matters relating to looked-after children and previously looked-after children.
- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer. For looked-after children use the Personal Education Plan to plan for that transition in consultation with the child's social worker, carer and Virtual School.
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan for looked-after children is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer, Virtual School and any other relevant people in line with Local Authority policy on Personal Education Plans.
- Ensure that the focus of Personal Education Plan meetings is on securing appropriate progress and that the review clearly identifies needs, targets and the support necessary for the pupil to achieve. The Designated Teacher should ensure that information about the

pupils needs, targets and effective interventions is shared sensitively and appropriately with staff so all staff understand how to effectively support these pupils.

- Ensure that each looked-after child or previously looked-after child has an identified member of staff that they develop a trusting relationship with. 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 pupils need that is necessary within school.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information sensitively respectfully and on a need to know basis.
- Encourage pupils to join in extra-curricular activities and out of school learning.
- Work effectively with the Local Authority Virtual School Head and Virtual School, which recognises the statutory role of Virtual School Head and their importance in improving outcomes for looked-after children and previously looked-after children
- Act as an advisor and support to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of looked-after children and previously looked-after children.
- Recognise the different arrangement for managing Pupil Premium Plus for the looked-after children and previously looked-after children.
- Liaise with the Virtual School Head regarding the use of Pupil Premium Plus for looked-after children so there are effective decisions about how Pupil Premium
  Plus will support improving the child's educational outcomes.
- Help raise previously looked-after children's parents' and guardians' awareness of the Pupil Premium Plus and play a key part in decisions on how the Pupil Premium Plus is used to support previously looked-after children.

Reviewed by Monica Dickman
September 2023

Responsibilities of the Executive Head Teacher and Head of School

- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusions of looked-after children and previously looked-after children and act where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Ensure that appropriate and effective actions are taken to close any gaps in the attainment of looked-after children and previously looked-after children and that their outcomes are in line with those of their peers.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of looked-after children and previously looked-after children
- Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance
- Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and – if the pupil changes school, the new school.
- Be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education.
- Be aware that a high proportion of looked-after children and previously looked-after children have experienced bullying so will actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy.
- Ensure that Personal Education Plans, attendance and attainment data and other requested information are returned to the Local Authority Virtual School as requested.
- Develop an awareness of most recent developments in the education and support of looked-after children and previously looked-after children and seek any necessary support and guidance from the local authority's Virtual School Head.

The responsibilities of all staff

All our staff will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of looked-after children and previously looked-after children, as for all pupils.
- Maintain looked-after children's and previously looked-after children's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond positively to a pupil's request to be the named member of staff whom they can talk to when they feel it is necessary.
- Understand the role of Designated Teacher and the requirements of the Statutory Duty
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- Be aware that a high proportion of looked-after children and previously looked-after children have experienced bullying so work to prevent bullying in line with the School's policy.
- Develop support and effective interventions for looked-after children and previously looked-after children school based on an understanding of the pupil experiences and needs.

Reviewed by Monica Dickman
September 2023