



POLICY FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

2021/22

Document Control	
Committee:	Full Board of Governors
Approved By Trustees On:	September 2021
Review Cycle:	Annual
Date of Next Review:	September 2022

Statement of Intent

With the right support and influence, effectively co-ordinated between local partnerships, children in care are capable of achieving as well as their peers. St Gilbert's C of E Primary School is committed to giving all Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children the same life chances as any other child, in that we want them to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being. Schools and teachers are at the very heart of this process, so that we can provide a good education in order to unlock a bright future and increase life chances of vulnerable pupils.

We have received the Gold Award for the Caring2Learn Project, which focuses on ensuring the full inclusion of LAC and PLAC, and the improvement of a wide range of outcomes for them and other vulnerable children and young people. This award fully reflects our aim to be confident in nurturing vulnerable children and young people so they achieve better than expected progress, feel safe and to belong in their home and school, which will provide them with a solid foundation to have the confidence to go on to learn, be aspirational and achieve their full potential.

We recognise our responsibilities as governors and teachers, and we actively want to ensure that Looked After and Previously Looked After Children succeed in education, that we champion their needs, raise awareness and challenge negative assumptions at all levels.

Aims

The Governors and Staff of St Gilbert's C of E Primary School aim to

- Make a real difference in helping to provide the best possible education for Looked After Children as much as any other child.
- Seek to give our young people in care professional help, encouragement and support so they find our school a welcoming and friendly place.
- Be fully inclusive and challenge negative views and stereotypes.
- Offer support to, and work with, their foster carers on how to assist the young person's learning, whilst enhancing educational opportunities.
- Work with the LACES team (Looked After Children Education Team), Virtual School and social workers to establish fluent and consistent communications regarding support for Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC).

Purpose

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

- 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 (2017) 'Exclusions from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England'
- The Education Act, 2002, HM Guidance;
- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education, 2006;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021

Roles and Responsibilities

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
- ensuring all members of staff are aware that supporting LAC and PLAC is a key priority
- actively challenging negative stereotypes of LAC and PLAC.

The Designated Teacher for LAC and PLAC:

In order to fulfil our responsibilities as a school to all Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children, we have a Designated Teacher to undertake the recommendations. In our school, the Designated Teacher is Ms F Dicker - Headteacher.

The Designated Teacher is the central point of contact at this school for all professionals and agencies working with, and supporting all LAC and PLAC on roll. They will undertake relevant updated training and cascade information for staff development. All staff will ensure that personal information is handled carefully and sensitively, and that the child's wishes and preferences are taken into account. They will establish good working relationships and communications with foster carers, ensuring information is received and early notification is provided for them to attend meetings and reviews. We believe that all staff provide support and sanctuary to help settle pupils into the school, and at other times to ensure they all feel safe, know who to trust and who to go to if they feel the need for support.

Key responsibilities of the Designated Teacher are:

- Reporting the following to SLT on a termly basis:
 - the number of LAC and PLAC in the school
 - an analysis of assessment scores as a cohort and individual, 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
- Building relationships with health, education and social care partners and other partners so that they and the Virtual School Head (VSH) understand the support available to LAC and PLAC
- Liaising with the DSL to ensure details from the termly report are presented for the school's annual audit
- Promoting the educational achievement of LAC and PLAC at the school
- Ensuring they receive equal access to all areas of the curriculum and that permission will be sought as required
- Acting as the main contact for social services and the education department
- Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations
- Ensuring LAC are involved in setting their own targets
- Advising staff on teaching strategies for LAC
- Ensuring that LAC are prioritised for one-to-one tuition and support
- 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 SENDCo to ensure all needs are met and deciding who will make referrals to appropriate external agencies when situations require external support
- Working with the child's VSH and social worker to develop and implement their PEP
- Working with the Headteacher to submit an annual report to the governing board, which details the progress of all LAC and PLAC
- Ensuring the safe transfer of records if a Looked After Child moves school, alongside the SENCO if appropriate

Staff responsibilities

Teachers and support staff assist in the implementation and support of this policy by ensuring that they:

- Maintain sensitivities and confidentiality.
- Are familiar with, and respond appropriately to requests for progress and/or attainment information in order to compile the E-PEP and other documentation necessary for reviews.
- Respond positively to any request by a child to be the person they want to talk with.

- Ensure that no child in care becomes a victim of stigmatisation at any time and that any such attitudes are swiftly reported and eradicated.
- Ensure that all Looked After Pupils and Previously Looked After Children are monitored in line with our PREVENT, Safeguarding and Child Protection policies so that they do not become victims of prejudicial behaviour or abusive behaviour.
- Positively promote the pupils' self-esteem with the support structure of pastoral/emotional interventions within school – please see the SEND Information Report in the SEND section of the school's website for more information.
- Convey high aspirations for their educational and personal achievement.

The Head of Safeguarding 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
- Ensuring that the DSL and designated teacher have scheduled meetings at least termly with the Governor responsible for monitoring LAC and PLAC
- Ensuring LAC and PLAC have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and that reasonable adjustments are made, if necessary

The governor link for LAC and PLAC is responsible for

- Ensuring that the needs of LAC and PLAC are considered at the improvement planning and policy level through to monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes
- Ensuring they meet three times a year with the Designated Teacher and SENDCo if required to monitor progress, attainment and well-being
- Receiving the annual report for LAC and PLAC and reporting to Governors which will include:
 - The number of Looked After Children on roll.
 - Attendance statistics for any authorised and unauthorised absence.
 - The frequency, circumstance and reasons for any recorded exclusion.
 - How they are performing in core subjects, their progress and any value added measure when compared against initial baseline assessment.
 - The frequency of them taking part in extra-curricular activities.
 - The attainment relative to the targets set in core and foundation subjects.
 - The provision arrangements for additional support identified, including 1:1 tuition at school and any externally added booster work provided in the care home.
 - The quality and updating of the educational targets recorded in the E- PEP.
 - The school will also report annually to the Board of Governors.

The name of our appointed Designated Governor is: Mrs J Marshall

Responsibilities of the Virtual School Head

- 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 and PLAC, 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 children.
- 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.
- 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, careers and IROs 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.

Admissions and Induction Arrangements

Looked after children and Previously Looked after Children are a priority for admission and will be admitted in line with the school's admissions policy which prioritises LAC and PLAC children in the oversubscription criteria.

On admission, the child will meet with the designated teacher and their named member of staff. Staff will discuss any relevant issues, academic or pastoral, and ensure the child is made to feel comfortable in our school.

Records will be requested from the child's previous school if possible and as soon as practicable after they are received, a meeting will be held with the carer / parent, social worker, and other relevant professionals, and child as appropriate. This will provide information to inform the child's new Personal Education Plan, and ensure that communication systems are established early.

In the first PEP meeting, the designated teacher will seek clarification from the social worker as to who requires school reports and who may give permission for school trips or other such activities. At this meeting, any means of communication to aid the fluid exchange of information between statutory meetings will be discussed and agreed.

Pupil Premium

Evidence shows that disadvantaged pupils, perform less well on average than non- disadvantaged pupils, at all levels of school education. Slower progress may be seen due to many factors. The pupil premium is additional funding available to schools in England to raise the attainment of Looked After Children and close the gap between them and their peers. The Lincolnshire Virtual School holds a nominal £2300 for each LAC and PLAC belonging to Lincolnshire and this money will be allocated using the online form according to identified needs.

As a school, we are aware that the Ofsted inspection framework considers the provisions that we, as a whole school, have put in place to support LAC and PLAC. We understand that a judgement will be made within the Ofsted framework in terms of how far this school is able to support LAC and PLAC. The formal report will include comments about the progress and support provided to vulnerable young people.

Personal Education Plans

All LAC must have a care plan; PEPs are an integral part of this care plan.

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 progress.

The PEP will reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning which meets the identified educational needs of the child.

The school will work with other professionals and the child's carers to use the PEP to support the child's educational needs, raise the child's aspirations and improve their life chances.

All relevant bodies, such as the LA, the designated teacher and carers, will involve the child in the PEP process at all stages.

The PEP will address the pupil's full range of education and development needs, including:

- On-going catch-up support, which will be made available for children who have fallen behind with work
- 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, which includes:
 - Support to achieve expected levels of progress for the relevant national key stage and to complete an appropriate range of approved qualifications.
 - Out-of-school hours learning activities, study support and leisure interests.

Working with agencies and the VSH

The school will work with other agencies to exchange information such as changes in circumstances, exclusions or attendance issues.

Behaviour management strategies will be agreed between the social worker and the school, to ensure challenging behaviour is managed in the most effective way for that individual child.

The designated teacher for LAC and PLAC will communicate with the child's social worker to facilitate the completion of the PEP.

Through the designated teacher, the school will work with the 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.

The designated teacher will communicate with the social worker or VSH and agree on how pupil premium plus (PP+) can be used effectively to accommodate the child's educational attainment and progress.

Pupil premium plus for PLAC will be allocated directly to, and managed by, the school.

The school will work with the VSH to manage allocation of PP+ if required for the benefit of our cohort of LAC, or PLAC, and according to their needs.

If deemed necessary, the school will allocate an amount of funding to an individual to support their needs.

The designated teacher will ensure consistent and strong communication with the VSH/Social Worker regarding LAC who are absent without authorisation.

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

Training

The designated teacher and other school staff involved in the education of LAC and PLAC will receive regular and appropriate training pertinent to the role or to the specific needs of a LAC or PLAC.

Exclusions

- The school considers exclusion as the last resort when considering a child's behaviour and will take experience of LAC and PLAC into account when implementing the school's Behaviour Policy.
- Where exclusion is considered, the school will work with the VSH, and others, to consider what additional support can be provided to prevent exclusion, and any additional arrangements that can be made to support the pupil's education in the event of exclusion.
- The school has regard to the DfE's statutory guidance 'Exclusions from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England' and, as far as possible, avoids excluding any LAC.
- Where the school has concerns about a child's behaviour, the VSH will be informed at the earliest opportunity.
- The school will inform parents/carers that they can seek the advice of the VSH on strategies to support their child to avoid exclusion.

Pupil Mental Health

LAC and PLAC are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues, which can affect 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.

The designated teacher will work with the social worker, parents/carers and class teacher and Lead for Mental Health 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 know how to access further assessment and support, where necessary.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

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. The SENDCo, class teacher, designated teacher and specialists will involve parents/carers/social workers as appropriate when considering interventions to support the LAC's/ PLAC's progress.

Information Sharing

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. Staff will be advised verbally or through the PEP about the following arrangements:

- who has access to what information and how the security of data will be ensured
- 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 local authority departments
- how relevant information about individual pupils is shared between authorities and the school when pupils move.

Annex 1

Definitions Term	Meaning
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
DTLAC	Designated Teacher Looked After Children
EHC	Education, health and care plan
IRO	Independent Reviewing Officer
Looked after Children (LAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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, as the LA has parental responsibility• children who are not subject to an order, but are accommodated by the local authority under an agreement with their parents.
Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• children no longer looked after by a local authority in England and Wales because they 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 or other organisation).
PEP	Personal education plan
SEND	Special educational needs and Disabilities
SENDCo	Special educational needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator
VSH	Virtual School Head