



POLICY – DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR LOOKED AFTER AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

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Author:	DHT	Committee responsible for Review:	FGB
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CHANGES SINCE LAST REVISION	WB advised that 'Looked After Children' are now called 'Children in Care' in West Berks and that this change has come from the children themselves. The statutory guidance though, still talks about 'LAC' - used both terms in the policy.		

Office use only:

Who are our Looked After Children (LAC)?

Children and young people become 'Looked After Children' (referred to as 'Children in Care' in West Berkshire) if they have been taken into Care by the local authority, either via a legal route under The Children's Act 1989 or where a voluntary agreement has been reached with the birth family. Most LAC will be living in foster homes, but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even be placed back at home with their birth family.

Who are Previously Looked After Children?

Previously looked-after children are those who are no longer looked after by a local authority because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order.

The school believes that in partnership with West Berkshire District Council as Corporate Parents we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of Children in Care and previously looked after children.

Intent

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 previously looked after children and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential and enjoy learning.

To fulfil our school's role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our looked after children and previously looked after children, by asking the question, '*Would this be good enough for my child?*'

Implementation

- Nominate a Designated Teacher who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them. Our nominated Teacher is Mrs R Chambers.

St Paul's whole school community (all staff, governors, parents and volunteers working in the school) are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our children. At St Paul's we recognize our duties under the Equality Act 2010. Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

- Nominate a school governor to ensure that the needs of looked after children and previously looked after children in the school are taken into account at a school management level and to support the Designated Teacher. Our nominated Governor is Mrs R Fernandes.
- Support the Designated Teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend any Designated Teacher Network meetings and any specific training on LAC which is required to ensure that they have the most up to date information.
- Review all policies and procedures regularly to ensure that they adequately address the needs of LAC and previously looked after children and that those children have access to all aspects of education, particularly with regard to admissions, curriculum, examinations, extra support, extracurricular activities, work experience and careers guidance (where applicable).
- Have a clear and consistent plan for attendance at all PEP meetings (Designated Teacher/Head of Key Stage/ class teacher etc) to ensure coherence and efficiency in planning and attaining targets. The members of staff attending need to be free or made free from teaching commitments to attend PEP meetings.
- Ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when looked after children or previously looked after children are underachieving and have early interventions to improve this in line with existing school policy, including access to 1:1 tuition.
- Ensure that systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about looked after children or previously looked after children where and when appropriate.
- Ensure that looked after children or previously looked after children, along with all children, are listened to and have equal opportunity to pastoral support in school.
- Ensure that they keep the school up to date with current legislation and its implication for the school in respect of looked after children or previously looked after children.
- Report to the governing body annually on the academic performance, attendance and exclusions of the looked after children or previously looked after children who are on the role of the school.
- Ensure that the school evaluates the performance data for all looked after children or previously looked after children and that it is recorded in the school's self-evaluation documentation.

All staff will:

As with all children, have high aspirations and celebrate the educational and personal achievement of looked after or previously looked after children;

- ensure entry to examinations for looked after or previously looked after children;

- be familiar with the guidance on looked after or previously looked after children and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings;
- liaise with the Designated Teacher where a looked after child or previously looked after child is experiencing difficulty. These may be academic; pastoral; behaviour and/or attendance issues

All governors will:

- ensure that admission criteria (Aided and Foundation) prioritise looked after or previously looked after children, according to the Code of Practice on Admissions
- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for looked after or previously looked after children;
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for looked after or previously looked after children: Mrs R Chambers
- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body –
- for child protection and confidentiality reasons, ensure that information will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity, and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.
- review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years.
- ensure that the school's other policies and procedures give looked after or previously looked after children equal access in respect of:
 - Admission to school
 - The National Curriculum and public examinations
 - Additional educational support where this is needed.
 - Extracurricular activities
- Support the local authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of looked after or previously looked after children.
- Ensure that appropriate systems and procedures are in place in the school even if there are no looked after or previously looked after children on roll at the time and that the Designated Teacher continues to attend training and is up to date in regards to the legal processes.

Impact

- Academic progress and well-being of LAC will be continually monitored throughout the school year. Firstly, by the class teacher who will liaise regularly with guardians/ carers as needed.

- Progress and achievement will be discussed at the Pupil Progress meetings that take place with the head teacher every half term. Here, individual education plans are adapted to meet the changing educational and emotional needs of the child as necessary.
- At the end of each term, class teachers write a short, written report on progress and well-being of LAC children ensuring strategies in place are being continuously monitored to support and promote the learning, confidence and happiness of the individual children.
- Looked-after children and previously looked-after children feel happy and secure in school and are well supported in their individual needs so that they will achieve to their full potential academically, spiritually and socially. They will have experienced all St Paul's has to offer to help them become confident, resilient, creative and independent young people ready to move forwards to the next phase of their lives at secondary school.

Additional Information:

West Berkshire Virtual School aims to support young people, schools, social workers and other key people in raising the attainment of children in care.

For more information please contact VirtualSchool@westberks.gov.uk

Virtual School Headteacher

The service is led by the Virtual School Headteacher, who maintains an overview of the Virtual School and the local authority's strategic direction. Key responsibilities are:

- To support CYP in the care of WB District Council in educational and preschool settings within the district or outside of the area and to offer support to those in the care of other authorities but placed in West Berkshire schools or settings.
- To raise the educational attainment and achievement of Children in Care and other previously looked after children.
- To ensure that the services are responsive to and informed by the voice and needs of Children in Care and those from other vulnerable groups.

Virtual School Consultants

Virtual School Consultants for looked after children support children and young people from preschool right through to the end of statutory education. Their aim is to support the academic outcomes of Children in Care by:

- Chairing and minuting Personal Education Planning Meetings
- Contributing to the training programme for foster carers and social workers

- Providing guidance and training on issues relating to Children in Care, e.g., separation, trauma and loss, the significance of early attachments, etc
- Advising social workers on the education of looked after children.

The Pupil Premium funding for Looked After Children

The Pupil Premium Plus grant is to support Children in Care (adopted children are also eligible for the Pupil Premium but this funding is not managed by the local authority).

The PPP grant **MUST** be used to provide additional support for looked after children to reach their full potential. It can be used to support academic, social and emotional needs, as long as these are linked to the pupil's progress. The use of the Pupil Premium for Children in Care will be discussed at the Personal Education Plan meetings where the support can be identified and evaluated for impact. The Virtual School team will provide advice and guidance on the use of the Pupil Premium. It is a requirement of the grant that the use of the funds is published on the school website with a commentary on the impact of the funding on a child's educational outcomes. The child **MUST NOT** be able to be identified, so schools should be careful about the information that is made available to meet this requirement.