



Nurturing **Ambition
Through a Living Faith**

School Ethos & Vision

Mission Statement: Nurturing ambition through a living faith.

Vision Statement: Our academy delivers a purposeful curriculum through its living Christian faith. We nurture ambition in all of our learners in order for them to become positive citizens of tomorrow.

Bible Verse: *"Let us not love with words or speech alone, but with actions and truth."* — John 3:18

Within this mission, our overriding value is love and nurture. We treat all children as individuals, striving to meet their specific educational, emotional, and social needs while offering equal opportunities to grow and flourish.

1. Policy Aims & Definitions

Darwen St James' C of E Primary Academy actively fulfills its shared corporate parenting responsibilities by working collaboratively with Virtual School Heads (VSHs) and local authorities, including Blackburn with Darwen and Bolton.

- **Children Looked-After (CLA) / Looked-After Children (LAC):** Children accommodated by a local authority under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989, or subject to a care order (Section 31) or interim care order (Section 38). This includes children in foster care, residential settings, or placed with birth parents/relatives under a care order.
- **Previously Looked-After Children (PCLA) / PLAC:** Children who are no longer looked-after because they were adopted, left care under a Special Guardianship Order (SGO), or left care under a Child Arrangements Order (CAO).
- **Children with a Social Worker (CWSW):** In alignment with updated DfE statutory expectations, our pastoral frameworks and Designated Teacher oversight extend support principles to children open to social care involvement.

2. Legal Framework & Statutory Guidance

This policy has due regard to national legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- DfE Statutory Guidance: **The Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children**
- DfE Statutory Guidance: **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)**
- DfE Statutory Guidance: **Promoting the Education of Looked-After Children and Previously Looked-After Children**
- **Children and Social Work Act 2017**

- **Children Act 1989 & 2004**
- **Equality Act 2010**
- **Data Protection Act 2018 & UK GDPR**

3. Key Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. The Designated Teacher

Designated Teacher: Miss Peckson | **Supported by:** Ms Earp

The Designated Teacher leads the educational and pastoral strategy for CLA and PCLA. Key responsibilities include:

- **Record Keeping & Confidentiality:** Maintaining up-to-date, secure records (status, placement, social worker details, contact info, SEND, safeguarding status, attendance, and progress data) while respecting confidentiality.
- **Personal Education Plans (PEPs):** Coordinating termly ePEP reviews for every CLA, working closely with the child, social worker, Virtual School, and carers.
- **Trauma-Informed & ACE Practice:** Embedding trauma-informed and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) practice across the academy to support social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs.
- **Pupil Premium Plus (PP+):** Managing PP+ funding requests via Virtual School frameworks and targeting resources toward interventions that accelerate attainment, wellbeing, and developmental outcomes.
- **Inter-Agency Collaboration:** Attending and contributing to CLA Reviews, PEP meetings, Core Groups, and Care Planning meetings.
- **Staff Training & Awareness:** Cascading training on attachment needs, trauma, and educational legislation to school staff.
- **Secure Transitions:** Ensuring complete, confidential transfers of educational and safeguarding records when pupils transition between settings.

3.2. The Local Governing Committee (LGC)

Named Governor for CLA/PCLA: Liz Riding

The LGC ensures the academy fulfills its statutory duties and holds leadership accountable. The Designated Teacher provides an annual report to the LGC detailing:

- Total numbers of CLA and PCLA enrolled.
- Comparative academic progress, attainment, and attendance data.
- Suspension, exclusion, and attendance rates compared to peer cohorts.
- Utilization and impact of Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) funding.
- Post-primary transition destinations.

3.3. All Teaching and Support Staff

All staff working with CLA and PCLA will:

- Maintain high expectations for academic progress and personal development.

- Be aware of the child's care status while preserving strict confidentiality.
- Implement trauma-informed behavior and learning strategies recommended by the Designated Teacher.
- Alert the Designated Teacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately regarding academic, attendance, or emotional concerns.

4. Admissions, Attendance & Interventions

- **Admissions & Onboarding:** CLA are given top priority in admissions. Upon entry, records are requested promptly, an initial PEP meeting is scheduled with carers and social workers, baseline assessments are completed, and a smooth transition plan is enacted.
- **Attendance Monitoring:** Daily attendance checks are maintained and securely shared with Children's Social Care and Virtual Schools without breaching data privacy laws.
- **Equal Access & Inclusion:** CLA and PCLA have equal access to the National Curriculum, extra-curricular activities, trips, academic interventions (e.g., 1-to-1 tuition), and pastoral support. Exclusions are treated as a last resort, with immediate consultation with the Virtual School Head if a child is at risk of suspension.