



Children Looked After (CLA) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) Policy

Kenilworth Primary School

Our Vision

*'High Aspirations Today, Inspiring
the Leaders of Tomorrow.'*

Last reviewed: September 2025

Date of next review: September 2026

Person(s) Responsible: Headteacher & Safeguarding Link Governor

Signed: Mrs K. Sampson

Date: 4th September 2025

The Children Looked After and Previously Looked After Children Policy of The Virtual School has been adopted by the Governing Body of Kenilworth Primary School

Policy Objective:

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of Children Looked After (CLA) and Children Previously Looked After (PLAC) on the roll of this school.

Name of the Designated Teacher CLA & PLAC:

Mrs Sampson

Name of the Designated School Governor for CLA & PLAC:

Irmine Mason (Interim Chair of Governors) and Rifat Shaheen (Safeguarding Governor)

At Kenilworth Primary School, we will create an environment where children looked after (CLA) and previously looked after children (PLAC) have access to excellent educational provision and are prioritised for additional support through school-based interventions, in accordance with the '*DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018.*

We recognise that our school plays a vital role in providing a stable base for CLA and in promoting their academic, social and emotional development. We promote staff training in their specific needs, so that all adults are sensitive to the barriers to learning that CLA & PLAC experience and feel able to support the children discretely and confidentially, as needs arise.

Our school community aims to champion the needs of CLA & PLAC to ensure they made rapid progress during their period of care.

Aims

Many CLA (Children Looked After) & PLAC (Previously Looked After Children) will have experienced disrupted schooling and gaps in learning. In addition, a significant proportion of CLA & PLAC have some form of Special Educational Need and or have been excluded from school. This has resulted in the attainment of this group not being in line with the attainment of their peers nationally.

At Kenilworth Primary School, we will address this by:

- Providing a safe and secure environment for all CLA and PLAC, where their educational experience is valued, high aspirations are encouraged and belief in the potential of all children is held.
- Ensuring that all CLA and PLAC are provided with, and have access to, support to enable them to have any opportunity to enjoy, learn and achieve in line with their peers.
- Narrowing the gap between the attainment of CLA & PLAC and their peers, ensuring accelerated and rapid progress.

- Ensuring that our policies and procedures for CLA & PLAC meet the requirements outlined within ['The designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children, Statutory guidance on their role and responsibilities, DfE February 2018](#) and that they benefit from school-based interventions to ensure effective impact.
- Ensure that adults to provide sensitive, child-led support, with one key adult identified who will form a strong relationship and take a special interest in daily life at school.
- Ensuring that school systems facilitate discrete support, as appropriate.
- CLA will be advantaged within school policies and procedures, with their needs explicitly considered and provided for. (['The designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children, Statutory guidance on their role and responsibilities, DfE February 2018](#))
- CLA and their foster families will feel part of the school community; they will be actively welcomed into the community in recognition of the particular needs of this group. (['The designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children, Statutory guidance on their role and responsibilities, DfE February 2018](#))

Definitions

Children Looked After (CLA) or Children in Care (CiC) refers to a child 'looked-after by a local authority' as outlined by section 22 Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

CLA/CIC are children who are in the care of the Local Authority for more than 24 hours and include children who are:

- Living with foster parents/carers
- Living in a residential children's home or
- Living in residential settings like schools or secure units

Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) refers to children who are:

'...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 persons, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales.'

Roles and Responsibilities

The **Headteacher** and **Governing Body** are committed to promoting improved educational life chances for CLA and PLC. They will ensure that the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After has qualified teacher status, appropriate seniority in the leadership team and time and experience to fulfil this statutory role. They will monitor the role of the Designated Teacher to ensure that all CLA and PLAC make accelerated and rapid progress and that the whole school staff receives appropriate training.

The Designated Teacher (DT) for CLA & PLAC

The Designated Teacher for CLA and PLAC is: Mrs Sampson.

The Designated Teacher is responsible for and committed to championing the needs and attainment of CLA & PLAC (up to the age of 18), in an effort to bridge the gap and raise their attainment so that it is in-line with their peers.

The DT is a qualified teacher and “someone with sufficient authority to make things happen...[who] should be an advocate for Looked After Children, assessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them.” Or The Headteacher, as stipulated by *Designated Teacher (Looked-After Pupils etc) (England) Regulations 2009*.

The designated teacher is responsible for:

- Coordinating support for CLA & PLAC in school and providing information, advice and training for staff and governors to raise awareness of their needs e.g., mental health, trauma and attachment
- Ensuring that the CLA or PLAC have access to quality first teaching
- Tracking the progress of CLA and PLAC across the curriculum using data, teacher reports and book looks
- Being the first point of contact for the Local Authority, CLA & PLAC, their carers and associated professionals, ensuring that a member of staff represents the school at all relevant meetings.
- Providing and attending training and offering advice to the whole school staff
- Liaising with the Virtual School, Social Workers, Carer and other relevant professionals when CLA & PLAC are experiencing difficulties and/or at risk of exclusion, arranging meetings to share concerns and plan interventions.
- Ensuring that all CLA & PLAC educational transitions, including starting school, changing Key Stage etc keeping in mind their needs.
- Swiftly identifying possible learning needs, safeguarding and mental health concerns to the Safeguarding Lead, Mental Health Lead and SENCO where appropriate and jointing planning interventions to address these concerns.
- Encouraging CLA and PLAC to take part in extracurricular activities and trips, and removing any hidden barriers to their involvement.
- Ensuring instances of bullying affecting CLA and PLAC is acted upon swiftly and that appropriate support is put place.
- Maintaining the confidentiality of CLA and PLAC, sharing personal information on a need-to-know basis only.
- The SENCO is aware of the CLA/PLAC children in school, works closely with the DT and prioritises their access to additional support both internally and externally (including EP assessment).
- Regularly reporting to the Head and Governing Body on the attainment of CLA and PLAC and school resources and staff training needs for working with this group
- Prioritising CLA & PLAC for school-based additional support, even when the young person does not meet the criteria

- Ensuring that PP+ is used appropriately and creatively to address the needs of PLAC in school.
- Completing the annual Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) of each CLA as requested, to inform their annual CLA health review.
- PEP's (Personal Education Plans)
 - Ensuring the PEP's for LAC are accurate, effective, relevant and completed within the identified timescales with the child, social worker, carers and any other relevant professionals.
 - PEP's for CLA children with EHCP's complement rather than mirror the EHCP.
 - Advising relevant staff of PEP targets, making sure that staff work with children to meet their targets.
 - Ensuring that the Pupil Premium for CLA is used appropriately to support the child in meeting targets outlined within the PEP.

All staff will promote improved educational life chance for CLA & PLAC by:

- Having high expectations in regard to the achievement of CLA & PLAC.
- Ensuring that the individual needs of CLA & PLAC are met through quality first teaching.
- Understanding that CLA and PLAC have high rates of SEND, flagging concerns regarding learning with the SENCO and DT.
- Playing their part in creating an attachment and trauma-informed 'CLA-friendly' culture and securing rapid progress for CLA by ensuring that they benefit from any additional school-based support available.
- Understanding the prevalence of CLA and PLAC mental health needs, flagging concerns to the DT and Mental Health Lead.
- Referring to the DT for advice
- Working proactively with the DT to ensure that CLA & PLAC meet their targets and achieve. Ensuring that any barriers to learning, and inclusion are highlighted at the earliest opportunity.
- Working to ensure that inclusion of CLA & PLAC within the School community, maintaining their confidentiality while also providing support with training their self-esteem, and supporting their relationships with peers in line with the Anti-Bullying policy.

Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)

The experiences and outcomes of PLAC can be very similar to those of CLA. PLAC educational needs are unlikely to have changed just because their care status has. To address this, the needs of CLA and PLAC are prioritised and addressed in a similar way.

The progress of PLAC is reviewed termly and we work proactively with parents and carers and other professionals to address any areas of concern and put in place support as appropriate.

Parents and Carers of PLAC are encouraged to identify their child's previously looked after status on entry to the school and are required to produce documentation

to support this. All parents and carers are written to annually to request that they make us aware of their child's PLAC status. All information is treated confidentially.

Concerns regarding the progress of PLAC are highlighted to parents and carers in a timely fashion so that support can be put in place swiftly. Parents and Carers are directed to the Adoption Fund via LA Social Work assessment where necessary.

Admissions (See Admissions Policy and Arrangements for detail)

Kenilworth Primary School acknowledges and ensures that CLA & PLAC are given priority for School Admissions as outlined in DFE School Admissions Code Guidance 2014 (updated March 2022). We work collaboratively with the Virtual School regarding any concerns that that we might have in relation to the admission of CLA & PLAC. The Designated Teacher attends CLA & PLAC admissions meetings and works closely alongside the Virtual School, Social Worker, Carers and any other professionals to ensure that children feel supported, and have a successful smooth transition into school life.

Inclusion (See SEND Policy and SEND Information Report for detail)

CLA & PLAC are encouraged to take part in all aspects of school life. Through effective communication with carers, professionals and staff, as well as the appropriate use of pupil premium and the PPG, we work to remove the barriers to CLA & PLAC having a robust, enjoyable and valuable school experience.

The experiences of CLA & PLAC have resulted in disproportionate levels of Special Educational Needs within these groups. In acknowledgement of this, individual attainment is monitored closely by the Designated Teacher via the PEP process and concerns highlighted to the SENCO and Virtual School. Concerns raised, by Parents, Carers, Social Workers and the Virtual School are welcomed and swiftly acted upon. Where it is felt that further assessment may be needed. CLA & PLAC access to the SEND assessment process and interventions are prioritised.

A significant proportion of CLA/PLAC have undiagnosed Speech and Language needs which impacts on educational outcomes. In recognition of this, all CLA & PLAC (with the consent of parents & carers) are screened on entry for Speech, Language and Communication Needs. Significant or continuing concerns are referred to specialist support.

Pupil Premium Grant & Pupil Premium Plus

Pupil Premium Grant (PPG)

Pupil Premium Grant for CLA is provided by the Local Authority to assist the school with ensuring that children meet the targets outlined within their PEP. It can be used to support:

- Academic achievement and progress
- Wider achievement e.g., in an area in which the child is gifted and talented

- Attendance
- Inclusion (by reducing internal and external exclusion)
- Social skills
- Transition into the next key stage and/or a new learning provider

Where further funding is needed for support, advice from the Virtual School will be sought.

Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)

While the PP+ for PLAC is not a 'personal budget,' should a PLAC require support over and above that which is provided for any other child, the PP+ will be used to fund this.

PP+ for PLAC is also 'pooled' and used to provide additional support and services to raise the attainment of PLAC within school as outlined by our online Pupil Premium Report and as part of a 3 Year Pupil Premium Strategy, for instance:

- Training for all staff
- One to one tuition
- Interventions and booster support
- Mentoring programmes
- Enrichment opportunities – e.g., subsidised school trips and clubs
- Sporting opportunities – e.g., access to ballet and multi-skills clubs

Attendance (See Attendance Policy for detail)

The attendance of the CLA is carefully monitored and reported daily to the Local Authority. Parents and Carers of the CLA & PLAC will be contacted regarding unauthorised absences daily. Concerns regarding attendance including identified patterns of absence will be raised with parents, carers, social works and professionals.

Exclusions

CLA & PLAC had disproportionately high levels of exclusions from schools nationally, placing them at a further educational disadvantage.

We have reviewed the school behaviour policy in line with the statutory guidance published in February 2018 (*DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children, 28th February 2018*). We will do everything in our power not to exclude a CLA child, in line with our behaviour policy. We will ensure that we work with all other services to give CLA children the best opportunities to stay in mainstream education. We will consider a managed move if all avenues have been explored, and carefully consider the increased risk this poses in terms of them quickly disengaging from the school, due to their early experience of broken attachments and loss. We will ensure that we

explore every possible avenue including a managed move for all CLA and PLA and CLA and PLAC with special educational needs (*Regulation 4,1*).

Multi-Agency Working:

School staff will make every effort to engage with colleagues from other agencies and facilitate their work. This will enable colleagues to successfully perform their roles and positively impact on the education and wider needs of CLA & PLAC.

The Headteacher, Designated Teacher and Governing Body will ensure that all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy:

Date: September 25

Review date: September 26

Further Information/Links:

The Hertfordshire Virtual School for Children Looked After

- Website: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/virtualschool
- Twitter: @VS_HCC
- Email: virtualschool@hertfordshire.gov.uk
- Phone: 019925569

Other Relevant School Policies

- Admissions Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality Policy
- Pupil Premium Report
- SEND Policy and SEND Information Report.