



The English Martyrs  
Catholic School and  
Sixth Form College

**'Per Unitatem Virtus'**

**Designated  
Teacher for Looked  
After and  
Previously Looked  
After Children  
Policy**



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## **Statement of intent**

Educational achievement and subsequent life chances for LAC and previously-LAC are of real concern. Pupils who are looked after require special treatment and additional attention in order to improve their life chances and educational outcomes. The English Martyrs Catholic School and Sixth Form College will therefore provide positive experiences and offer stability, safety, and individual care and attention for all our LAC pupils.

## Legal framework

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

- Children Act 1989
- 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 (2018) 'The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2022) 'School Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school/college policies and documents:

- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Home School Agreement
- Safeguarding Policy
- SEN Policy

## Definitions

"Looked after children (LAC)" are defined as:

- 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, where the LA has parental responsibility.

- Children who are not subject to an order, but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents.

**“Previously-LAC”** are defined as:

- Children who are no longer looked after by an LA in England and Wales because they have either been adopted or 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 organisation, or other organisation whose main purpose is to benefit society).

## **Roles and responsibilities**

**The Board of Directors is responsible for:**

- Ensuring the Trust has a coherent policy for LAC and previously-LAC.
- Appointing a Director responsible for Safeguarding and LAC <sup>1</sup>

The Local Governing Committee is responsible for:

Ensuring that one or more (depending on the numbers of LAC) Designated Teachers(s) for LAC and Previously-LAC are appointed

Ensuring that the Designated Teacher for LAC and Previously-LAC has received appropriate training.

Ensuring that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep LAC and previously-LAC safe.

Ensuring LAC and previously-LAC have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and that reasonable adjustments are made, if necessary.

Reviewing the annual LAC report produced by the designated teacher to evaluate the progress of LAC in the school.

**The virtual school head (VSH) is responsible for:**

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<sup>1</sup> The *Designated Teacher (Looked-After Pupils etc) (England) Regulations 2009* require that the designated person is:

- a qualified teacher who has completed the appropriate induction period (if required) and is working as a teacher at the school (regulation 3(2)); or
- a head teacher or acting head teacher of the school (regulation 3(3)).

- Monitoring the attendance and educational progress of the children their authority looks after; this includes children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders, or who were adopted from state care outside of England and Wales.
- Ensuring that arrangements are in place to improve the education and outcomes of the authority's LAC, 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 previously-LAC.
- 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 previously-LAC 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 independent reviewing officers 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.

**Sara Crawshaw - The Headteacher is responsible for:**

- Appointing the Designated Teacher for LAC and Previously-LAC (**Rebecca Corcoran**).
- Allowing the Designated Teacher the time and facilities to succeed in carrying out their duties.
- Overseeing this policy and monitoring its implementation, feeding back to the Local Governing Committee on the following:
  - The number of LAC and previously-LAC in the school

- An analysis of assessment scores as a cohort, compared to other pupil groups
- The attendance of LAC and previously-LAC, compared to other pupil groups
- The level of fixed term and permanent exclusions, compared to other pupil groups

Ensuring all members of staff are aware that supporting LAC is a key priority.

**Rebecca Corcoran - The Designated Teacher for LAC and Previously-LAC is responsible for:**

Following and adhering to statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities: The Designated Teacher for Looked-after and Previously Looked-after Children

Building relationships with health, education and social care partners and other partners so that they and the VSH understand the support available to LAC and previously-LAC.

Acting as the central point of initial contact within the school for partners.

Promoting the educational achievement of LAC and previously-LAC at the school; this includes those that left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.

Ensuring that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to each looked after child's:

Legal status (i.e. whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.

Care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the LA.

Ensuring staff understand the things which can affect how LAC children learn and achieve and promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations.

Contributing to the development and review of whole school policies and procedures to ensure that the needs of LAC are adequately reflected

Ensuring LAC and their carers are involved in the process for developing their own PEP and targets.

Monitoring and tracking the progress of the attainment of LAC

Advising staff on teaching strategies for LAC.

Working with the child's VSH and social worker to develop and implement their PEP including liaison about the use of Pupil Premium Plus.

Leading on how the child's PEP is developed, implemented, monitored and reviewed in school to ensure the child's progress towards targets is monitored including the use and impact of Pupil Premium Plus.

Working closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (where they are different) to ensure that any safeguarding concerns are quickly and effectively responded to

Liaising with the SENCO to ensure all pupil needs are met.

Working directly with looked-after and previously looked-after children and their carers, parents or guardians to:

- promote good home-school links;
- support progress by paying particular attention to effective communication with carers, parents or guardians;
- ensure carers, parents or guardians understand the potential value of one-to-one tuition and are equipped to engage with it at home;
- ensure carers, parents or guardians are aware of how the school teaches key skills such as reading and numeracy; and
- encourage high aspirations and working with the child to plan for their future success and fulfilment.

Planning arrangements for the smooth transition to their next school or phase of education including the transfer of pupil records (including an up to date PEP) to the new school / college. Ensuring that the relevant Local Authority receives the most recent version of the PEP.

Working with the Headteacher to submit the annual LAC rs the most port to the Local Governing Committee, which details the progress of all LAC and previously-LAC.

**Nicholas Lindsay and Rebecca Corcoran - The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:**

Keeping up-to-date records of LAC's respective social worker and VSH.

Where a child ceases to be looked after and becomes a care leaver, keeping up-to-date contact details of their LA personal advisor and liaising with the advisor as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

**Abi White - The SENCO is responsible for:**

Ensuring they are involved in reviewing PEP and care plans for LAC and previously-LAC who are SEN.

**All Staff are responsible for:**



- Being aware of LAC and previously-LAC and providing them with support and encouragement.
- Preserving confidentiality, where appropriate, and showing sensitivity and understanding.
- Being vigilant for any signs of bullying towards LAC and previously-LAC.
- Promoting the self-esteem of LAC and previously-LAC.

## **Personal Education Plans**

All LAC must have a care plan. PEPs are an integral part of the care plan and will be initiated by the Social Worker.

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 potential.

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

The school with other professionals and the child's carers will 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:

- Identifying strengths and weaknesses and any barriers to learning
- Identifying attainment targets / educational milestones and record academic achievement and participation in wider activities
- Identify and support any mental health needs relevant to the child's education
- Recording details of planned actions and of specific interventions including the child's views on how they see they have progressed and what support they considered to be most useful
- 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.
- Careers advice, guidance, work experience and financial information about FE/ HE, training and employment, that focusses on the child's strengths, capabilities and the outcomes they want to achieve.
- Extra-curricular and out-of-school hours learning activities, study support and leisure interests.

## **Working with agencies and the Virtual School Head**

- The school will ensure that copies of all relevant reports are forwarded to the LAC social workers, in addition to carers or residential social workers.
- The school will coordinate their review meetings; for example, hold their annual review of LAC with their statutory care review.
- The school will work with other agencies to exchange information, such as changes in circumstances, exclusions or attendance issues, taking prompt action, where necessary, to safeguard LAC and previously-LAC.
- Behaviour management strategies will be agreed between the VSH and the school, to ensure challenging behaviour is managed in the most effective way for that individual child.
- The Designated Teacher for LAC and Previously-LAC will communicate with the VSH and child's social worker to facilitate the completion of the PEP.
- Through the Designated Teacher, the school will work with the VSH, 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 VSH and agree on how pupil premium plus (PP+) can be used effectively to accommodate the child's educational attainment and progress.
- PP+ for previously-LAC will be allocated directly to, and managed by, the school.
- The school will work with the VSH to manage allocation of PP+ for the benefit of our cohort of LAC, or previously-LAC, 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 regarding LAC who are absent without authorisation.
- The school will share their expertise on what works in supporting the education of LAC and previously-LAC.

## **Raising Awareness and Staff Training**

The Designated Teacher and other school staff involved in the education of LAC and previously-LAC will receive the appropriate training, this includes information about the following:

- School admissions arrangements
- SEND
- Attendance
- Exclusions
- Homework
- GCSE options
- Understanding and managing challenging behaviour
- Promoting positive educational and recreational activities
- Supporting pupils to be aspirational for their future education, training and employment
- Safeguarding
- Understanding the link between emotional well-being and being able to make educational progress

## **Pupil Mental Health**

LAC and previously-LAC children are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues which can impact 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 VSH, SENCO and specialist and targeted services to ensure the school is able to identify signs of potential mental health issues, understand the impact issues can have on LAC and previously-LAC, and knows how to access further assessment and support, where necessary.

A strengths and difficulties questionnaire will be used to help social workers and other relevant professionals to form a view about LAC and previously-LAC's current emotional wellbeing. Teachers will complete their element of the questionnaire to assist social workers in their assessment.

## **Suspensions**

The Headteacher will have regard to the DfE's statutory guidance 'School exclusions and suspensions' and, as far as possible, avoid excluding any LAC.

Where the school has concerns about a child's behaviour and/or there is a risk of fixed or permanent exclusion, the VSH will be informed at the earliest opportunity.

Suspensions will only be used as a last resort, after the school and VSH have considered what additional support can be provided to prevent exclusion, and any additional arrangements to support the pupil's education in the event of exclusion.

The school will inform parents that they can seek the advice of the VSH on strategies to support their child to avoid exclusion.

## **Pupils with SEND**

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 SENCO, class teacher, Designated Teacher and specialists will involve parents when considering interventions to support their child's progress.

If appropriate, the VSH will be invited to comment on proposed SEND provision for previously-LAC.