



**THE WESTLEIGH SCHOOL**  
Aspiring & Achieving Together

# Looked After Children Policy

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<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>C Bramwell</b>
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## 1. The Academy Council

The academy council will carry out their role in line with statutory guidance.

### **The designated councillor in school is Mrs D Platt**

The academy council, head teacher and school leadership team will support the education of looked after and previously looked after children by ensuring that the designated teacher has:

- Appropriate seniority and professional experience to provide leadership, training, information, challenge and advice to others
- Training opportunities, including time away from timetable commitments, to acquire and keep up-to-date the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding, including a good knowledge of SEN
- Appropriate monitoring arrangements to ensure that the school/education setting is providing appropriate support for looked-after and previously looked-after children

They will also ensure that school policies consider the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children. This consideration will include additional arrangements for looked-after and previously looked-after children when considering;

- Admission
- Exclusion
- Behaviour management
- Mental health needs
- Specific safeguarding challenges
- Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- Most able provision
- Teaching and learning needs
- Educational visits and extended school activities

The academy council will hold the school to account on how it supports its looked-after and previously looked-after children, including:

- how the Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) is used
- level of progress

## 2. The Designated Teacher

The designated teacher will carry out their role in line with statutory guidance.

### **The designated teacher is Miss G Johnson**

The designated teacher is the central point of initial contact within the school. They will join up resources and support to minimise any disruption to a child's learning.

- The designated teacher will work with VSHs to promote the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children by promoting a whole school culture where the personalised learning needs of every looked-after and previously looked-after child matters and their personal, emotional and academic needs are prioritised.

- They will take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils. Our school will make sure that all staff:
  - have high expectations of children's learning and set targets to accelerate educational progress;
  - are aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation (attachment awareness)
  - understand how important it is to see children as individuals
  - appreciate the central importance of the looked-after child's PEP
  - for previously looked-after children, understand the importance of involving the child's parents or guardians in decisions affecting their child's education, and be a contact for parents or guardians who want advice or have concerns about their child's progress at school.
- The designated teacher will have a direct and day-to-day role in promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children. They will
  - Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies and procedures
  - Ensure the pupil premium plus is used effectively within school to have the greatest positive impact on children's learning. This includes;
    - Ensuring parents and guardians of previously looked-after children are reminded that they need to inform the school if their child is eligible to attract PP+
  - Ensure looked after and previously looked after children are prioritised for support; listened to; encouraged to participate; and believe they can achieve through an ethos of aspiration.
  - The designated teacher or child protection officer along with our CLA mentor will chair Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings to effectively plan to utilise school resources and ensure each child has access to the support they need to achieve.
    - These meetings will take place 3 times per academic year to review support and deploy effective resources.
    - Documentation will be co-produced with family and social care and shared with appropriate professionals as part of the child's care plan.
- The designated teacher will work closely with professional agencies including the foster carer; allocated social worker; virtual school head; learning and behaviour support agencies; EPS; SEND, CAMHS, local police/youth offending service; community nurses and any other professional agency involved in supporting the child and family.

### 3. Transfer out of care

- When children cease to be looked-after the designated teacher will maintain links with VSHs for the purposes of promoting the educational achievement of this group of previously looked-after children.
- The designated teacher will ensure that family members and carers are aware that they must pass on information about previous care status to any education settings. This information cannot be passed from school to school as it will be protected information under GDPR.

#### **4. Voice of the child**

- We will listen to the voice of looked-after and previously looked-after children as a vital part of successfully understanding and meeting their needs.

#### **5. Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)**

Looked-after children and children adopted from care, on a special guardianship or child arrangements order are eligible for PP+ funding. This is additional funding provided to help improve the attainment of looked-after and previously looked-after children and close the attainment gap between this group and their peers.

- All pupil premium spending will take account of the specific needs of eligible pupils.
- PP+ reflects the significant additional barriers faced by looked-after and previously looked-after children
- PP+ is allocated according to need rather than a personal budget.
- Our school will use pupil premium to address need in social, academic and mental health needs. This will be in agreement with the VSH from the child's home authority

#### **6. Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

- Looked-after children and previously looked-after children are significantly more likely to have SEN than their peers. Of those with SEN, a significant proportion will have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC plans).
- The designated teacher is also the SENCO and will ensure that
  - Children's PEPs work in harmony with their EHC plan or SEN support provided.

#### **7. Meeting Mental Health needs**

- Looked-after children and previously looked-after children are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues than their peers.
- The designated teacher has an important role in ensuring they and other school staff can identify signs of potential issues and understand where the school can draw on specialist services.
- Our school will utilise the CAMHS education link to support understanding mental health needs for looked-after and previously looked –after children.
- This will enable us to improve a whole school understanding of attachment and trauma and the impact on learning and behaviour for vulnerable children.
- We also recognise the impact on staff when working with traumatised children. We will ensure all staff feel supported to address their own needs as well as those of the vulnerable children they are caring for.

#### **8. Working with local authorities**

- As a school we educate young people from different localities and as such will always ensure to understand working practice and liaise pro-actively with relevant professional bodies to provide the best support for the child.

## 9. Working with Parents and Carers

- The voice of parents and carers is crucial in ensuring the best support for students. As a school we work closely with parents and carers to facilitate best possible outcomes for our students.
- We operate an open door policy and employ a strong team of pastoral staff, including a CLA mentor to ensure that support for children and families can form a core part of our offer, reducing barriers to learning as early as possible and celebrating all achievements.

## 10. Exclusions

- The past experiences of looked-after and previously looked-after children can impact on their behaviour.
- Where a looked-after child is at risk of either fixed term or permanent exclusion, the designated teacher will contact the relevant authority's VSH as soon as possible so they can help the school decide how to support the child to improve their behaviour and avoid exclusion becoming necessary.
- To reduce the prospects of exclusions, either fixed term or permanent, we operate an onsite Alternative Provision to provide intensive SEMH support to students experiencing periods of unrest or particular challenge. We also work closely with our VST and external professionals prioritising CLA and Post CLA students for intervention and assessment where appropriate.

## 11. Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies:-

- SEND Policy
- Exclusions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy