



Looked After Children & Previously Looked After Children Policy

Policy Details:

Reviewed: November 2022

Next review: November 2024

Policy history:

November 2022	Policy updated Policy renamed	James Bancroft (Principal) and Kim Potts (Designated LAC Teacher)
March 2019	Policy updated	Kimberley Potts (Designated LAC teacher)
November 2018	Policy updated	Joanna Wright (Assistant Head)

This policy was reviewed by the Local Advisory Board in the Term 2 meeting, 2022 to 2023



Looked After Children & Previously Looked After Children Policy

We aim for all Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children to have access to a rich, broad, balanced curriculum which meets their individual needs and has high aspirations for enabling them to meet their academic and social potential.

We will support children as much as possible throughout their time in care, including through any fostering or adoption process.

Who are Looked After Children?

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They include the following:

- Children who are accommodated by the local authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- Children who are the subject of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- Children who are the subject of emergency care orders for the protection of the child (section 44 and 46)
- Children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21)
- Children who are living with adoptive parents, but the adoption has not yet been finalised.

The term 'in care' refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989. They may live with foster carers, in a children's home, in a residential school, with relatives or with parents under supervision. They may be looked after by Cheshire East or may be in the care of another authority but living in Cheshire East.

Who are Previously Looked After Children?

Previously looked-after children are those who:

- Are no longer looked after by a local authority in England and Wales (as defined by the Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014) because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order; or
- were adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales. 'State care' is care provided by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other organisation whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

Inclusion

This policy recognises that all pupils are entitled to a broad, balanced curriculum and our Looked after Children policy reinforces the need for fully inclusive teaching. The Local Advisory Board will ensure the school makes appropriate provision for all Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children.

Admission and Induction Arrangements

- Looked after Children and Previously Looked After Children are a priority for admission and, as such, we will follow Cheshire East's published admission criteria.
- All Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children are positively welcomed into our school.
- Pre-visits and staggered starts can be organised to meet the needs of individuals.



- On admission, the child will meet with the designated LAC teacher. They will discuss any relevant issues, academic or pastoral, and ensure the child is made to feel comfortable in our school.
- Records will be requested from the child's previous school and as soon as practical after they are received, a meeting will be held with the parent/carer, social worker, and other relevant professionals, and child, as appropriate. This will provide information to inform the child's new Personal Education Plan, and ensure that communication systems are established early.
- In the first PEP meeting, we will seek clarification from the social worker as to who requires school reports and who may give permission for school trips or other such activities. At this meeting any means of communication to aid the fluid exchange of information between statutory meetings will be discussed and agreed (such as a home/school book to detail any sudden significant changes in a child's circumstances).

Roles and Responsibilities

Designated LAB Member for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children – Mrs Lesley Meaney

The Local Advisory Board at Wistaston Church Lane must ensure:

- The designated teacher undertakes appropriate training.
- The designated LAB member meets with the LAC teacher annually and reports back to the LAB regarding: any workload issues arising as a result of the number of Looked after children, levels of progress made by Looked after Children (educational, social, emotional), attendance of Looked after Children, SEN/Gifted & Talented needs and training undertaken.
- The designated teacher is supported by the Principal and Safeguarding Teams

Designated Teacher for Looked after Children and Previously Looked After Children – Miss Kimberley Potts

The designated teacher should:

- Meet with the child on pre-visits or within the first few days of joining and assist with their induction into school.
- Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of the child's Personal Education Plan within the school.
- Ensure that appropriate staff attend the PEP meeting and that the PEP is up-to-date and made available for relevant agencies.
- Promote the educational achievement and high expectations of all Looked after Children on roll at the school.
- Make sure the child has a voice in setting learning targets.
- Be a source of advice for staff about differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children and in making full use of Assessment for Learning.
- Promote good home-school links through contact with the child's carer about how they can support his or her progress.
- Attend relevant training about Looked after Children.
- Ensure confidentiality on individual children, sharing confidential and personal information on a need to know basis.
- Ensure that any Special Educational Needs are addressed in conjunction with the Special Educational Needs co-ordinator.
- Have time as a 'key person' to have contact with the child simply to listen or talk about things the child wishes to share.



- Carefully manage transition from one class to the next or transfer to a new school.
- Meet annually with the LAC LAB member to discuss the progress of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children.
- Contribute to the decision making about the use of the Pupil Premium.
- Keep all relevant education and care information about Looked after Children up-to-date.
- Report to the Virtual School on the progress, targets, achievements and levels of attainment of Looked after Children.

All school staff including the child's class teacher

All staff will be aware of Looked after Children and Previously Looked After Children in their classes and give them all possible support and encouragement as students who need special provision and positive discrimination whilst preserving confidentiality and showing sensitivity and understanding.

They will help Looked after Children and Previously Looked After Children to achieve by:

- having high expectations for learning and educational progress
- being aware of the social, psychological and social effects of loss and separation from birth families
- understanding the reasons which may be behind a Looked After Child's behaviour, or a Previously Looked After Child's behaviour and why they may need more support than other children. They do not, however, allow this to be an excuse for lowering expectations of what a child is capable of achieving
- ensuring there is sensitivity to the background of children in teaching, especially in work on family life
- understanding how important it is to see children as individuals rather than as a homogenous group and to not publicly treat them differently from their peers
- appreciating the importance of showing sensitivity about who else knows about a child's Looked after status, respecting the confidentiality of Looked after Children and ensure that any information is shared strictly on a need-to-know basis
- appreciating the central importance of the child's PEP in helping to create a shared understanding between teachers, carers, social workers and, depending upon age, the child him or herself of what everyone needs to do to help the child achieve his or her potential, ensuring that any Looked after Children who may have learning difficulties are appropriately supported/assessed/resourced
- ensuring that all children have every opportunity to participate fully in the national curriculum, examinations, extra-curricular activities and additional educational support
- taking appropriate action as soon as there may be any problems with behaviour or attendance
- involving appropriate carers/parents in home/school arrangements

Please see or Positive Relationships and Behaviour Policy.

Many Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children do not want school staff to be aware of their care status because it makes them feel "different". Therefore, we will negotiate with the child to identify who should be aware of their care status. However, we do acknowledge that in some cases, such as if the child has a severe learning difficulty, this may not be possible.

Personal Education Plans (PEP)

- All Looked after Children must have a PEP as part of their overall care plan. The PEP should be sent to the designated teacher when the child becomes 'Looked after' or joins the school.
- The PEP is a shared document which includes the information that everyone needs to help make sure the child gets the support and provision needed to succeed.



- The designated teacher makes sure the PEP is updated regularly and available in time for the Local Authority review of the child's wider care plan.
- If a child moves schools the PEP must be forwarded along with other school records.

Further information can be found online:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children

www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-children

www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-health-and-wellbeing-of-looked-after-children--2