

# Looked After Children (LAC) & Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) Policy



## Vision Statement

### **'Faith, Family, Future'**

Jesus built his church upon the strength of St Peter – who was his rock. At St Peter's, we provide a solid foundation on which our community thrives through our rich, aspirational curriculum. As a family, we nurture and unlock individual potential through mutual love and respect; enabling all to flourish now and in the future.

**'Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others'**

### **1 Peter 4 v10**

## Introduction

At St. Peter's we are committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. Nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of children in residential and foster care, when compared with their peers. Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that Looked After Children are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being, in line with Every Child Matters.

Helping Looked After Children succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority for Kent County Council and Kent schools. This policy takes account of:

- The County Council's duty under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children (LAC).
- The Education (Admission of Children in Care)(England) Regulations 2006.
- Relevant DfES guidance to Governing Bodies (Supporting Looked After Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors).

Children who are “looked after” may be “Accommodated” “In Care” or “remanded/ detained” as follows:

**Accommodated (Section 20)** - This is a voluntary arrangement, because parents are ill, missing, unable to cope, or as part of a child protection plan negotiated with the family. The parents retain parental responsibility.

**In Care** - A child is in care only if a court has granted a Care Order which it will issue if it believes a child to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. A care order generally gives parental responsibility to the local authority, or shares this with the parents.

**Remanded/Detained** - A child can be remanded or detained as in the following:

- an emergency protection order
- removed by police using their powers of protection
- remanded by a court following criminal charges
- a court directing a social services department to accommodate a child (already on a supervision order for criminal behaviour) for up to six months.

Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children may (or may not) have some or all the following issues:

- low self esteem
- poor education standards due to time out of school
- delayed social/emotional/ cognitive development
- be bullied or bully others.
- be prone to mental health issues
- be isolated with few friends
- have behaviour issues.
- poor attachments to others.
- have a need to be very private.

This makes them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life-chances.

St Peter’s Church of England Primary School’s approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education.
- Promoting attendance.
- Targeting support.
- Having high expectations.
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes.
- Achieving stability and continuity.
- Early intervention and priority action.
- Listening to children.
- Promoting health and wellbeing.
- Reducing exclusions and promoting stability.
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals.

The designated teacher for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children is [Alice Tuckett \(SENCo\)](#)

## Implications

As for all our pupils, St Peter’s Church of England Primary School is committed to helping every Looked After Child to achieve the highest standards they can, including supporting aspirations to achieve in further and higher education. This can be measured by improvement in their achievements and attendance. The Governing Body of St Peter’s Church of England Primary School is committed to providing quality education for all pupils and will:

- Ensure a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children is identified and enabled to carry out the responsibilities set out below
- Ensure a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is put in place for the LAC, implemented and regularly reviewed for every Looked After Child, in line with Kent's guidance on Personal Education Plans.
- Identify a governor as Designated Governor for Looked After Children.

This policy links with a number of other school policies and it is important that Governors have regard to the needs of Looked After Children when reviewing them:

- Oversubscription criteria.
- Behaviour Policy.
- Home School Agreement.
- Anti-bullying Policy.
- Single Equality Scheme
- Policy on Racial Incidents and Reporting.
- Child Protection Policy.
- Special Educational Needs Policy.

The school will champion the needs of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children, raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them, in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### ***Responsibilities of the Headteacher***

The Headteacher has the following responsibilities: -

- Identify a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children, whose role is set out below. It is essential that another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take sick leave.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance, and any exclusions of Looked After Children and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of Looked After Children. OFSTED now select a number of Looked After Children, tracking their results and the support they have received.
- Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

### ***Responsibilities of the Governing Body***

The Governing Body have the following responsibilities: -

- Identify a nominated Governor for Looked After Children.
- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Looked After Children.
- Ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Looked After Children.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of Looked After Children.
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.

To carry out these responsibilities, the Governing Body will follow the procedures set out below: -

- Monitor the academic progress of Looked After Children, through an annual report (see below).
- Ensure that Looked After Children are given top priority when applying for places in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria.

- Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school, by ensuring the school implements policies and procedures to ensure Looked After Children achieve and enjoy their time at the school, by recognising the extra problems caused by excluding them and by not excluding them except as a last resort.
- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Support the Headteacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of Looked After Children are recognised and met.
- Receive a report once a year setting out: -
  - The number of looked-after pupils on the school's roll (if any).
  - Their attendance, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils.
  - Their SAT scores, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils.
  - The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any).
  - The destinations of pupils who leave the school.
- The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Looked After Children
- Nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body (These reports should not include any names of individual children for child protection and confidentiality reasons)
- Review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years.

### ***The Role of the Designated Teacher***

Government Guidance says that the Designated Teacher should be “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.”

Governors should be aware that all schools are already required to have a designated teacher for LAC. It is strongly recommended that this person should be a member of the Senior Management Team. Training for Designated Teachers has been and will continue to be available through our Looked After Children Education Adviser Team. Governors should also be aware that OFSTED will focus on Looked After Children, monitoring how the school has promoted their inclusion and attainment and the effectiveness of joint working with other services involved with them.

Our Designated Teacher will: -

- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan (PEP) to plan for that transition in consultation with the child's social worker.
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is completed, as soon as possible. This should be prepared with the child and the carer, in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies, and be linked to the Care Plan meetings, within 28 days, 3 months and 6 months and, at least, every 6 months; a flow chart showing PEP completion is found at the end of this policy.
- Keep PEPs and other records up to date, particularly in time to inform review meetings.
- Ensure that each Child in Care has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher but should be based on the child's own wishes. Members of staff who take on this role may need to be supported by someone from the

school's pastoral staff. They should also be alert to any child protection issues, any disclosures that pupils may make and know what action to take. They should link closely therefore with the school's Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

- Track academic progress and target support appropriately.
- Co-ordinate any support for the Looked After Child that is necessary within school.
- Ensure staff receive relevant information and training and act as an advisor to staff and governors.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need-to-know basis.
- Encourage Looked After Children to join in extra-curricular activities and out of school learning.
- Ensure, as far as possible, attendance at planning and review meetings.
- Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of Looked After Children.
- Set up timely meetings with relevant parties where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion.
- Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and – if the pupil changes school – to a new school be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately.
- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life.
- Be aware that 60% of Looked After Children say they are bullied, so will actively monitor, and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy.
- Ensure that the audit on attendance and numbers is returned to the LAC Education Adviser every Term.
- Provide written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible.
- Ensure that the child and carer(s) receive early notification of meetings, parents' evenings and other events and that communication remains regular and positive.
- Seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded.
- Ensure that any returns on looked after children are completed – as requested by the LA

### ***Responsibilities of All Staff***

All our staff will: -

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children, as for all pupils.
- Maintain Looked After Children's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond positively to a pupil's request to be the named member of staff whom they can talk to when they feel it is necessary.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- Work to enable Looked After Children to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all Looked After Children.
- Understand the key issues that affect the learning of Looked After Children.
- Be aware that 60% of Looked After Children say they are bullied so work to prevent bullying in line with the school's policy.
- As with all children, ensure that no Looked After Child is stigmatised in any way.
- Provide a supportive climate to enable Looked After Child to achieve stability within the school setting.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

- information on looked after children will be shared with school staff on a “need to know basis.”
- the Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with which school staff at the PEP meeting. Once this has been agreed with the social worker, carer, young person, and other parties, complete confidentiality is to be maintained.

## **TRAINING**

The Head Teacher or the Designated Teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy. Advice and support are available from Kent County Council’s Looked After Children Education Adviser team. KCC website now has a LAC Education section, which includes relevant guidance documents <http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-learning/looked-after-children>. Information about the education of Looked After Children is also available on [www.kelsi.org.uk](http://www.kelsi.org.uk) (under Looked After Children).

## **PERSONAL EDUCATION PLAN (PEP) COMPLETION**

- Social worker informs school of a child becoming looked after (or a looked after children entering the school)
- Date is set for the completion of a Personal Education Plan (PEP).
- A copy of the form is sent to the school to enable completion of educational data PEP meeting takes place within 20 days, involving the social worker designated teacher (or other appropriate staff), carer and young person if appropriate.
- A date is set for the next pep meeting Personal Education Plan is taken to the child’s statutory review and discussed within the wider context of the child’s life.
- PEP sent by SW to the LAC team.

Last reviewed January 2026

Next Review January 2028