



## Looked After (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) Policy 2021/22

**This policy is applicable to:** Pocklington Community Junior School, as part of the Wolds Learning Partnership (WLP)

### Version 5.0

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<b>Name and Title of Author:</b>	Mrs A Cave (Designated Teacher)
<b>Name of Responsible Committee/Individual:</b>	Board of Governors
<b>Implementation Date:</b>	October 2021
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<b>Target Audience:</b>	Staff, Parents and Carers, Pupils, Visitors

**A Policy to promote the successful inclusion of pupils who have been Looked After or are Previously Looked After at Pocklington Community Junior School.**

### Staff and Contact Details

Staff Role	Name and contact details
Designated Teacher for Pupils in Local Authority Care or who have been previously in Local Authority Care (LAC/PLAC)	Mrs Aimee Cave 01759 -302224 <a href="mailto:aimee.cave@pocklingtonjuniors.co.uk">aimee.cave@pocklingtonjuniors.co.uk</a>
Head of School and Safeguarding Lead	Mrs. Sarah Carlisle 01759 -302224 <a href="mailto:sarah.carlisle@pocklingtonjuniors.co.uk">sarah.carlisle@pocklingtonjuniors.co.uk</a>
Link Governor for LAC/PLAC	Mrs Sandra Burley Contactable via the school telephone number.

### Introduction

At Pocklington Community Junior School, we believe that working in partnership with the East Riding of Yorkshire Local Authority and other Local Authorities, we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of Looked After, or Previously Looked After Children.

### Main Points

This guidance has been compiled in line with the statutory guidance for the Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children, as released by the Department for Education in February 2018.

For the purposes of this guidance:

- A child 'looked-after by a local authority' is one who is looked after within the meaning of section 22 of Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.
- A previously looked-after child is one who is 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 person, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales.
- A child is in 'state care' outside England and Wales if s/he is in the care of, or accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.



## **The Wolds Learning Partnership**

Pocklington Community Junior School is a part of the Wolds Learning Partnership. This Partnership is made up of schools who work collaboratively together to achieve the best for our children.

As a family of schools with shared values, we believe that we can provide the best education for children in our care by working together to develop best practice. We will, therefore, liaise and work with other schools that are part of the Wolds Learning Partnership, to draw on best practice and strengths in order to provide the best possible outcomes for our Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.

## **Rationale**

Many Looked After and Previously Looked After Children have suffered disrupted learning, may have missed extended periods of school, and many of them have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). The gaps in their learning and, in many cases the emotional impact of their experiences, are likely to have become significant barriers to their progress. The complexity of this fragmented educational experience with high incidence of SEND, needs careful assessment and planning. Excellent practice in supporting Looked After and Previously Looked After Children already exists in many schools. The Designated Teacher role is statutory to help ensure that effective practice becomes universal.

Attainment data for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children shows that they do not perform as well at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 when compared to non-looked-after children.

The support that schools and Designated Teachers give to children who are Looked After and Previously Looked After should not be seen in isolation. All Looked After and Previously Looked After Children will have a wide range of support mechanisms that will assist in promoting their educational achievement. The child's foster carer (or residential care worker), social worker or, for Previously Looked-after Children, parents or guardian, will have day-to-day responsibilities for the child. Within the Local Authority, the Virtual School Head will provide more strategic support or advice and information for both the child and the school.

## **Aims**

To ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children, as for all children.

To provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children.

To support our Looked After and Previously Looked After Children, and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential and enjoy learning.

To fulfil our school's role to promote and support the education and wellbeing of our Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.

To ensure other relevant partners are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment.



To ensure that Looked After and Previously Looked After Children are involved, where reasonable, in decisions affecting their school life.

**In pursuit of this policy, we will:**

- Nominate a Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children, who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them.
- Nominate a school governor to ensure that the needs of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children in the school are taken into account at a school management level and to support the Designated Teacher.
- Support the Designated Teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend training on Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.

**Admissions**

The Governing Body endorses council policy. The Council, as the Admission Authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools, believes that admissions criteria should not discriminate against Looked After and Previously Looked After Children. Due to care placement changes, Looked After Children may enter school mid-term. It is vital that we give them a positive welcome. If necessary, we may offer additional support and pre-entry visits to help the new pupil settle. The same would apply to a Previously Looked After child who entered into our school mid-term.

**Inclusion**

This policy recognises that all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broadly based curriculum. Our Looked After and Previously Looked After Children policy reinforces the need for teaching that is fully inclusive. The Governing Body will ensure the school makes appropriate provision for all Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.

**Allocation of resources**

The Governing Body will ensure that the school allocates resources to support appropriate provision for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children, meeting the objectives set out in this policy.

**Looked After and Previously Looked After Children**

The Designated Teacher will know who all the Looked After and Previously Looked After Children in school are and will have access to their relevant contact details including parents, carers and social workers. The Designated Teacher will also know about any Looked After and Previously Looked After Children from other authorities. The school will flag Looked After and Previously Looked After Children status appropriately in the school's information systems so that information is readily available as required.

**Partnership with parents/carers and care workers**

At school, we firmly believe in developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable Looked After and Previously Looked After Children to achieve their potential. Review meetings are an opportunity to further this partnership working.



We have an open-door policy at our school and welcome contact with, and actively seek, contact with parents and carers of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.

### **Monitoring the progress of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children**

The virtual school/social worker for Looked After Children should initiate a Personal Education Plan (PEP) within 20 days of joining the school, or of entering care, and ensure that the young person is actively involved. It is vital that the school assesses each Looked After Child's attainment on entry, to ensure continuity of learning.

The school will monitor and track the achievement and attainment of all pupils at regular intervals. In addition, Looked After Children will require their PEP to be reviewed, according to their needs, as initiated by the reviewing office or social worker, and the young person's views should be sought by the Designated Teacher and noted on the PEP.

Previously Looked After Children do not require a PEP document. However, as a school, we recognise that Previously Looked After children have this same right to continuity of learning and that we recognise that Previously Looked After Children also require careful monitoring to ensure that they are making good progress in school. The entry attainment of all Previously Looked After Children will be reported to the Designated Teacher and the Designated Teacher will carefully monitor the progress of these children at regular intervals, to ensure that they are progressing well in school.

### **Staff development**

We encourage staff to attend courses that help them to acquire the skills needed to support Looked After and Previously Looked After Children. Part of the Designated Teacher's role is to develop awareness of issues associated with Looked After and Previously Looked After Children and ensure that they are trained appropriately.

Both the Designated Teacher and Designated Governor will attend all relevant training for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children and will ensure that any network meetings are attended in both the Local Authority and other relevant Authorities.

### **Attachment Theory**

We recognise that Looked After and Previously Looked After Children can suffer with difficulties with Attachment. As a school, we are committed to ensuring that we have strategies in place to help these children. Therefore, all teaching staff, teaching assistants and the Designated Governor have been trained in Attachment Theory and strategies to support children with difficulties in this area. The Designated Teacher has completed accredited training to become an Attachment Lead in school and for the Local Area.

Furthermore, we are working towards becoming an Adoption Friendly School, following the guidance in the book of the same name by Dr. Emma Gore Langton and Katherine Boy.



### **Links with external agencies/organisations**

We also recognise the important contribution that external support services make in supporting Looked After and Previously Looked After Children. Colleagues from the following support services may be involved with individual Looked After and Previously Looked After Children:

- Virtual Schools
- LAC Teams
- Independent Reviewing Officers
- Educational Psychologists and others from Local Authority SEND Services
- Medical Officers
- CAMHS
- Education Welfare Officers
- Children's Centre Workers
- Youth and Family Support
- Adoption Support Workers
- Social Care Worker/ Community Care Worker/ Residential Child Care Worker
- Youth Offending Service
- School Age Parents' Officer.

Please note that this list is not exhaustive and may, of course, include other support services and agencies.

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

Looked After children and children adopted from care, on a special guardianship or child arrangement order are eligible for PP+ funding. This additional funding is 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 should take account of the specific needs of eligible pupils. Whilst there will be some overlap with needs of economically disadvantaged children who attract the pupil premium, Looked After and Previously Looked After Children's needs can be very different to others eligible for Pupil Premium. The extra funding provided by the PP+ reflects the significant additional barriers faced by Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.

The Designated Teacher has an important role in ensuring the specific needs of Looked After and Previously Looked After children are understood by the school's staff and reflected in how the school uses PP+ to support these children.

For Looked After Children, PP+ funding is managed by the Virtual School Head (VSH) for the purpose of supporting their educational achievement. The VSH and schools, including the Designated Teacher, will work together to agree how this funding can most effectively be used to improve Looked After Children's attainment. All PEPs should include information about how that Looked After child is benefitting from the use of PP+ funding to improve their attainment.



For Previously Looked After Children, PP+ funding is managed by the school. The amount a school receives is based on the number of eligible children recorded in the school's annual January School Census return to the Department for Education.

For both Looked After and Previously Looked After Children, PP+ is not a personal budget for individual children. The VSH and school manage their PP+ allocation for the benefit of their cohort of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children and according to children's needs.

**With regards to PP+, the Designated Teacher will:**

- For Looked After Children, liaise with the VSH so that the Designated Teacher can contribute to decisions about how PP+ will support improving the child's educational outcomes.
- Help raise Previously Looked After Children's parents' and guardians' awareness of the PP+ and other support for Previously Looked After Children - this includes encouraging parents of eligible Previously Looked After Children to tell the school if their child is eligible to attract PP+ funding.
- Play a key part in decisions on how the PP+ is used to support Previously Looked After Children.
- Encourage parents and guardians' involvement in deciding how the PP+ is used to support their child and be the main contact for queries about its use.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

**The Designated Teacher will:**

- Maintain an up to date record of all Looked After and Previously Looked After Children who are on the school roll. This will include:
  - Status (for example their care order or accommodation.)
  - Type of Placement i.e. foster, respite, residential.
  - Name of Social Worker, area office, telephone number.
  - Daily contact and numbers e.g. name of parent or carer or key worker in children's home.
  - SEND information, where appropriate
  - Child protection information, where appropriate.
  - Baseline information and all test results.
  - Attendance figures
  - Exclusions
- Actively seek to improve educational outcomes for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- Actively seek to improve the social, emotional and mental health of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- Ensure that there is a Personal Education Plan for each child/young person who is currently Looked After to include appropriate targets and above information. This must be compatible with the child's/young person's Care Plan and where applicable, include any other school plan, e.g. EHCPs and other associated plans.
- Ensure that someone attends Children's Services Reviews on each child/young person (Looked After Children) and/or prepare a report which promotes the continuity and stability of their education. The Designated Teacher will also attend any relevant meetings for Previously Looked After Children.



- Liaise with the Virtual School for Looked After Children on a regular basis, with regard to the performance, attendance and attainment of Looked After Children. The Virtual School are also available for support in seeking advice on Previously Looked After Children.
- Liaise with the Education Support Service for Looked After Children on a regular basis with regard to the performance, attendance and attainment of Looked After Children.
- Ensure that if/when the child transfers school all relevant information is forwarded to the receiving school as a matter of priority.
- Ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when Looked After and Previously Looked After Children are underachieving, and have early interventions to improve this in line with existing school policy.
- Ensure that systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about Looked After and Previously Looked After Children, where and when appropriate.
- Ensure that Looked After and Previously Looked After Children, along with all children, are listened to and have equal opportunity to pastoral support in school.
- Ensure that they keep the school up to date with current legislation and its implication for the school in respect of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- Report to the Governing body on the performance of the Looked After and Previously Looked After Children who are on the roll of the school.
- Be an advocate for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children in school.
- Attend relevant training.
- Ensure Looked After and Previously Looked After Children receive a positive welcome in school.
- Arrange a mentor to whom Looked After and Previously Looked After Children can talk to.

**Good practice suggests that all school staff will:**

- Follow school procedures.
- Keep the Designated Teacher informed about the progress of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- Have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- Positively promote the raising of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children's self-esteem.
- Actively seek to improve educational outcomes for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- Actively seek to improve the social, emotional and mental health of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- Ensure any Looked After and Previously Looked After Children are supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained.
- Be familiar with the school's policy and guidance on Looked After and Previously Looked After Children and respond appropriately to requests for information to support PEPs and review meetings.
- Liaise with the Designated Teacher where a Looked After and Previously Looked After Child is experiencing difficulties.
- Give only official exclusions and only use exclusions in line with the school's exclusion policy, and relevant national guidance, being mindful to the difficulties this may create in the care placement.
- Keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to other professionals/parents/carers/pupils, as appropriate.





- Contribute to regular liaison with social care colleagues and other appropriate professionals, and keep carers fully informed at all times.

**Good practice suggests that the Governing Body will:**

- Ensure that admission criteria and practice prioritises Looked After and Previously Looked After Children, according to the DFE Admissions Code of Practice.
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- Ensure there is a Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- Liaise with the headteacher, Designated Teacher and all other staff to ensure the needs of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children are met.
- Nominate a governor with responsibility for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children who links with the Designated Teacher.
- Receive regular reports from the Designated Teacher.
- Ensure that the school's policies and procedures give Looked After and Previously Looked After Children equal access in respect of:
  - admission to school
  - National Curriculum and examinations
  - out of school learning and extra-curricular activities
- Annually review the effective implementation of the school policy for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- Ensure that the Designated Teacher is invited to the exclusion meetings of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.

**Looked After and Previously Looked After Children Policy review and evaluation**

We consider the Looked After and Previously Looked After Children policy to be important and we undertake a review of both policy and practice each year.

Aimee Cave

Review Date: September 2022