



QUEEN VICTORIA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Government Statutory Policy

Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

Policy Number:	Government Statutory Policy – GS14
Approved by:	LGB Meeting 19th March 2024
Next review due date:	March 2027

INTRODUCTION

The governing body of Queen Victoria Primary School is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. This governing body recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of children in residential and foster care, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in “Guidance on the Education of Looked After Children” (May 2000) and Section 52 of the Children Act 2004. We believe that we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of Looked After Children, ensuring that they are well prepared for the next step in their lives.

AIM

To provide Looked After Children with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful, enthusiastic learners and responsible individuals by providing a positive, safe and stimulating environment where all are included and achievements are celebrated.

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 Children and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential, enjoy learning and take as full a part as possible in all school activities.

To ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for LAC as for all children.

To work with the Virtual School and ensure that carers and social workers of LAC pupils are kept fully informed of their child’s progress and attainment.

To fulfil our schools’ role to promote and support the education of our Looked After Children, by asking the question, *‘Would this be good enough for my child?’*

Our school’s approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education
- Promoting attendance
- Targeting support
- Having high expectations
- Promoting inclusion
- Raising aspiration
- Achieving stability and continuity
- Early intervention and priority action
- Listening to children
- Promoting health and well-being
- Reducing exclusions and promoting stability
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals

DEFINITIONS

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.

Previously - Looked After Children (PLAC)

- 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).

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. The governing body of Queen Victoria Primary School, is committed to ensuring that these children are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following are in place, and are working effectively:

- a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children
- Personal Education Plans for all Looked After Children.
- all staff have a clear understanding of confidentiality and issues that affect looked after children.
- effective strategies that supports the education of this vulnerable group.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

The designated teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked-After Children at Queen Victoria Primary School is Mrs K Walker.

It is the role of the Designated Teacher to:

- be an advocate for Looked After Children;
- when new to the school, ensure a smooth and welcome induction for the child and carer, and note any specific requirements, including care status;
- 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;
- 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 if they wish (this should be based on the child's request, and may not necessarily be the Designated Teacher);
- co-ordinate support for the child in the school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary;
- ensure staff receive relevant information and training and act as an advisor to staff and governors;
- ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis;
- 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.
- encourage Looked After Children to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning, where feasible;
- ensure speedy transfer of information between individuals and other relevant agencies and to a new school if and when the child transfers;
- seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being suspended.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF

- ensure that any child in care is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained;
- be familiar with the PEP process and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings;
- respond positively to a child in care's request to be the named person that they can talk to when they feel it is necessary;
- contribute to the Designated Teacher's requests for information on educational attainment and needs, as appropriate;
- as with all children, ensure that no child in care is stigmatised in any way;
- provide a supportive climate to enable a child in care to achieve stability within the school setting;
- as with all children, have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children
- positively promote the self-esteem of Looked After Children

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNING BODY

The governing body of this school will:

- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Looked After Children;
- be aware of whether the school has Looked After Children and how many (no names);
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Looked After Children;
- liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out her responsibilities in relation to Looked After Children;
- support the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of Looked After Children are met;
- 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.

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.

PERSONAL EDUCATION PLAN (PEP) COMPLETION

- School is informed 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).
- An electronic version of the form will be used, e.g. ePEP.
- The PEP meeting takes place within 20 days of the child starting at the school, 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
- The PEP (Personal Education Plan) is the focus of the child's LAC review and discussed within the wider context of the child's life.
- Completed PEP is submitted via ePEP Online.

GDPR - PERSONAL DATA

This policy adheres to the principles under data protection law. For further information please review the school's data protection policy published on the school's website.