



Looked After Children (LAC) Policy

Review Date: September 2025

Next review Date: September 2026


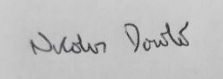
Adopted by the Governing Body on: 22nd Sept 2025

Please read this policy alongside our school Child protection and Safeguarding Policy, Code of conduct (employees), School Disciplinary Policy and Procedures, Online Safety policy and other relevant policies.

Review

The governing body reviews this policy annually. The governors may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the governing body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

VERIFICATION CERTIFICATE

Document Title:	Policy
Issue:	3
Reviewer:	Ceri Baggus
Position:	Designated Safeguarding Lead and CIC lead
Signature:	
Date:	9.9.25
Approver: (on behalf of the Governing Body)	Nicolas Dowler
Position:	Chair of Governors
Signature:	
Date:	22/09/25

DOCUMENT ISSUE/AMENDMENT HISTORY

(previous versions not numbered nor amendments noted)

Issue	Date	Amendment
1	29.11.22	Policy reviewed and updated for full governor ratification.
2	2.9.23	Policy reviewed and updated for full Governor ratification.
3	9.9.25	Policy reviewed and updated for full Governor ratification – updates are highlighted in red

BACKGROUND

All schools should have a policy for Looked After Children (LAC) which is subject to review and approval from the Governing Body. The Policy should set out not only the ethos of the school in its approach to meeting the needs of Looked after Children but also the procedures.

There has been concern since the mid-Seventies that the education of children in care has been neglected. Conversely, from about the same time, attention was also being drawn to the important part that successful schooling could play in helping children escape from social disadvantage.

As recently as 1995 a joint report by the Social Services Inspectorate and Ofsted stated that the care and education systems were failing to promote the educational achievement of children in care and draw attention to:

- Poor exam success rates in comparison with the general population.
- A high level of disruption and change in school placements.
- Lack of involvement in extra-curricular activities.
- Inconsistent or no attention paid to homework.
- Underachievement in further and higher education.

It is, therefore, essential that schools promote the achievement of such vulnerable children.

The Policy should include:

(a) The Objective of the Policy

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of children in care.

(b) Definition of Children in Care

The Children Act (1998) introduced changes in terminology. The term “in Care” now refers solely to children who are subject to Care Orders.

Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are “accommodated” by the local authority.

Accommodated children also include those in receipt of respite care – if it exceeds 20 days in one episode or over 120 days in a year.

It is important not to confuse a young person’s legal status with their living arrangements.

For example, a child on a Care order can be living with:

- Foster carers
- In a children’s home
- In a residential school
- With relatives
- With parents – under the supervision of the Social Services Department

An “accommodated” child can be living:

- In foster care
- In a children’s home
- In a residential school
- Or unusually with parents

(c) The name of the Designated Teacher for Looked after Children: Mrs Ceri Baggus

(d) The Role of the Named Teacher

Within School Systems:

- to ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have an understanding of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by Looked after Children and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them
- to inform members of staff of the general educational needs of Looked after Children, and to promote the involvement of these children in school homework clubs, extra-curricular activities, home reading schemes, school councils etc
- to act as an advocate for Looked after Children
- to develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers, Social Workers, the Virtual School and the Education Inclusion Department
- to hold a supervisory brief for all Looked after Children e.g. to ensure all relevant education and care information is available to school staff and carer(s), and that this information is kept up to date
- to monitor the educational progress of Looked after Children
- to intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy

Work with Individual Looked after Children:

- to enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their care plan
- to help ensure that each pupil has a Personal Education Plan (the PEP should be initiated by the young person's social worker)
- to ensure that a home-school agreement is drawn up with the primary carer and signed by the social worker

Liaison:

- To liaise with the member of staff responsible for monitoring children on the Child Protection Register
- To help co-ordinate education and Looked after Children review meetings, so that the Personal Education Plan can inform the child's Care Plan, along with the Social Worker and Learning Mentor from the Virtual School
- To attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or to contribute in other ways to Looked after Children planning meetings
- To be the named contact for colleagues in Social Care and the Virtual School
- To ensure the speedy transfer of information between agencies and individuals

Training:

- To develop knowledge of Vulnerable Children/Education Inclusion procedures by attending training events organised by the Local Authority
- To cascade training to school staff as appropriate

e) The name of a Governor with special responsibility for Looked after Children: Mr Nic Dowler

f) The role of that Governor

The named governor will report to the Governing Body on an annual basis:

- a comparison of achievement as a discrete group, compared with those of other pupils
- the attendance of pupils as a discrete group, compared with other pupils
- the level of fixed term/permanent exclusions
- pupil destinations

The named governor should be satisfied that the school's policies and procedure ensure that Looked after Children pupils have equal access to:

- the national curriculum
- public examinations
- additional educational support
- extra-curricular activities

g) Responsibility for Looked after Children in School

It is important that all teaching staff that are in contact with the child or young person are aware that he/she is being looked-after by the Local Authority. The responsibility for the transfer of this information should be that of the Head teacher and/or the Designated Teacher for Looked after Children.

It is appropriate for Teaching Assistants to have knowledge that the young person is being looked-after only when directly involved in the teaching of the young person.

In the absence of the usual class teacher, some information regarding the child's circumstances should be shared with the teacher covering the class.

The extent of this sharing should be determined by the Head teacher or the Designated Teacher for Looked after Children.

h) Admission Arrangements

On admission, records (including the P.E.P.) will be requested from the pupil's previous school and a meeting will be held with carer/parent/social worker. A date will be agreed upon for a new Personal Education Plan. An appropriate school induction will take place.

i) Involving the Young Person

It is important that a young person is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. How this is shared with them clearly depends on their age and understanding. The explanation should emphasise that the school, the Social Worker the Virtual School, and their carer(s) are working together to promote their education.

j) Communication with Other Agencies

Schools should ensure that a copy of all reports (e.g. end of year reports) should be forwarded to the young person's Social Worker in addition to the foster carer or Residential Social Worker.

Schools, the Social Services and all involved agencies should endeavour to co-ordinate their review meetings, e.g. to have an Annual Review of a Statement combined with a Statutory Care Review.

Social Services, the Independent Reviewing Service, the Virtual School and Schools will need to exchange information between formal reviews if there are significant changes in the young person's circumstances, e.g. if school is considering an exclusion, there is a change of care placement or there are significant attendance issues.

h) Assessment, Monitoring and Review Procedures

Each looked-after pupil will have a Care Plan that will include a Personal Education Plan (PEP) that the Social Worker takes a lead in developing. This will identify specific areas of concern and include achievable targets. Areas for consideration will include:

- Attendance
- Achievement Record (academic or otherwise)
- Behaviour
- Homework
- Involvement in Extra Curricular Activities
- Special needs (if any)
- Development needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge or subject areas and experiences)
- Long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations)
- Pupil voice – what the pupil thinks about all aspects of school and home life

The PEP will be updated at least every six months, as part of the Statutory Reviewing process carried out by Children's Services

The named governor will report annually to the Governing Body on the progress of all Looked after Children against the key indicators outlined above.