



Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

Accepted by Trustees in: September 2021

Due for next review in: September 2022

The national position

Nationally, LAC (looked after) children (including children who have previously been LAC or in care) significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. All schools have a major part to play in ensuring that LAC Children are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic wellbeing.

Who are children in care?

NSPCC guidance states:

A child who is being looked after by their local authority is known as a child in care. They might be living:

- with foster parents
- at home with their parents under the supervision of social services
- in residential children's homes
- in other residential settings like schools or secure units.

They might have been placed in care voluntarily by parents struggling to cope. Or, children's services may have intervened because a child was at significant risk of harm.

Our approach at Woodside Primary School

Our approach to supporting the educational achievement of LAC children is 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.

As for all our children, we are committed to helping every LAC 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.

Our trustees are committed to providing quality education for all children and will:

- Ensure LAC children are prioritised in the school's oversubscription criteria, in line with the Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006
- Section 20 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 ("the Act") and The Designated Teacher (Looked After Pupils etc.) (England) Regulations 2009.
- The Local Authority statutory duty under 22(3A) of the Children Act 1989 to promote the educational achievement of looked after children [includes those LAC placed out-of-authority].
- The Children and Families Act 2014, which requires every local authority in England to appoint an officer to make sure that its duty is properly discharged - referred to as the Virtual School Head

- Ensure a Designated Teacher for LAC children is identified and enabled to carry out the responsibilities set out below
- Ensure a Personal Education Plan is put in place, implemented and regularly reviewed for every LAC child, in line with the LA's guidance on Personal Education Plans.
- Identify a trustee as Designated Trustee for Looked After Children.

This policy links with a number of other school policies and it is important that trustees have regard to the needs of LAC children when reviewing them.

How will the impact of the policy be measured and reviewed?

The impact of the policy will be seen in improved outcomes for LAC children:

- Inclusion [zero permanent exclusion]
- Attendance
- Attainment
- Progression
- The quality of plans for LAC in Personal Education Plans [PEPs]
- The views of children [captured in PEPs]

All of the above is summarised in the annual report of the Designated Teacher to the Trustee Board, and any review with the Virtual School of the report and outcomes for children. The policy is based on a set of principles, which in turn are linked to statutory guidance. It is expected that all partners will be familiar with the guidance. Key VS documents that underpin it can be found on the VS website <http://www.shropshirelg.net>

Virtual School Heads

Virtual school heads are responsible for managing pupil premium funding for children looked after by a local authority, and allocating it to schools. Their responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Identifying the eligible LAC children and informing the local authority
- Making sure methods for allocating and spending ensure that LAC children benefit without delay
- Working with each LAC child's educational setting to put together a personal education plan, agree how pupil premium funding will be spent to meet the need identified in this plan, and ensure the funding is spent in this way
- Demonstrating how pupil premium funding is raising the achievement of LAC children

Virtual school heads are in charge of promoting the educational achievement of all the children looked after by the local authority they work for.

The Responsibility of the Headteacher

- Louise Jones is the Designated Teacher for LAC 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.
- Attend PEPs and ensure that the voice of the child is heard and acted upon appropriately.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusions of LAC Children and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.

- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of LAC Children.
- Ensure that staff receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

The Responsibility of the Trustees

Our trustees:

- Identify a nominated trustee for LAC Children.
- Ensure that all trustees are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of LAC children.
- Ensure staff and relevant trustees have an overview of the needs and progress of LAC children.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of LAC children.
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.

Procedures: The Trustee Body:

- Monitors the academic progress of LAC children
- Ensures that LAC children are given top priority when applying for places in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria.
- Works to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school, by ensuring the school implements policies and procedures to ensure LAC 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.
- Ensures that the school has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Receive an annual report setting out:
 1. The number of LAC pupils on the school's roll (if any)
 2. Their attendance, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils
 3. Their SAT scores, compared to other pupils
 4. The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any)
 5. The destinations of pupils who leave the school
 6. The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.

The Responsibility of the Designated Lead

Our Designated Lead (Louise Jones) in partnership with our Social Inclusion Worker (Lindsay Morris):

- Ensures a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan to plan for that transition in consultation with the child's social worker
- Ensures that a Personal Education Plan is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people, at least two weeks before the Care Plan reviews
- Ensures that each LAC Child 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
- Tracks academic progress and target support appropriately

- Co-ordinates any support for the LAC children that is necessary within school
- Ensures confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis
- Encourages LAC children to join in extra-curricular activities and out of school learning
- Ensures, as far as possible, attendance at planning and review meetings
- Sets up timely meetings with relevant parties where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion
- Ensures the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and – if the pupil changes school – to a new school
- Is pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education
- Tracks academic progress and target support appropriately
- Promotes inclusion in all areas of school life.

The responsibility of all staff

All of our staff:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of LAC children, as for all children
- Maintain LAC 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 LAC children to achieve stability and success within school
- Promote the self-esteem of all LAC children
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of LAC children.