



Looked After Children (LAC) Policy

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Looked After Children (LAC) Policy

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Looked After Children (LAC) Policy

1. Definition

'Looked After' refers to children for whom the Local Authority shares parental responsibility, either through parental agreement or a Court Care Order. These children may be placed with foster carers, in residential settings, with family members, or sometimes still with parents. They are subject to corporate parenting.

This policy includes requirements set out in:

- Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004
- Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children (DfE 2018)

While this policy focuses on children currently looked after, Higham Primary also recognises the needs of previously looked after children (PLAC) and will offer support in line with DfE guidance.

2. Aims

Higham Primary School recognises that all pupils are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum, and aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in public care. The school and the governing body endorse the Kent County Council Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy and welcomes LAC who may be looked after by our local authority. Higham Primary School's approach is to encourage and support the educational achievement of LAC and is based on the following principles:

- Ensuring a Designated Teacher is appointed, who will be responsible for all LAC.
- Ensuring the Designated Teacher has received any relevant training provided by the Local Authority or Virtual School Kent (VSK [Home | Virtual School Kent](#)), and undertakes regular CPD on the education of LAC where available.
- All LAC will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) drawn up between the school, the child, and the child's social worker and VSK, which will identify the child's individual needs and the support they require
- Having high expectations for the child and ensuring equal access to a broad and balanced education.
- Assessing, monitoring, and improving the academic achievement of the child in addition to their health and wellbeing.
- Providing a stable and continuous educational experience.
- Prioritising reduction in exclusions and promoting attendance.
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes.
- Promoting good communication between all those involved in the child's life and listening to the child.
- Maintaining and respecting the child's confidentiality wherever possible.
- Ensuring staff awareness of, and sensitivity to, the difficulties and educational disadvantages of LAC.
- Ensure that Pupil Premium Plus funding is used effectively to support the learning and wellbeing of LAC.



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3. Rationale

Many children and young people who are in care have suffered abuse or neglect and are particularly vulnerable to underachievement, despite having just a broad a range of abilities. Nationally, LAC significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Higham Primary School recognises that LAC can experience specific and significant disadvantage within a school setting, and are aware that they may have specific difficulties with transport and attendance, homework, getting parental consent for activities, obtaining correct uniform and equipment, as well as stigma about their circumstances. Higham Primary School believes that the educational experience of all children should be positive and powerful and aims to provide a learning environment in which every Looked After Child can be successful.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Responsibility of the Headteacher

- Identify a Designated Teacher for LAC, whose role is set out below. (In the absence of the Designated Teacher, the SENCo or Deputy Headteacher will assume responsibility for LAC provision.)
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusion of LAC and take-action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of LAC to all parties involved.
- Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

4.2. Responsibility of the Governing Body

- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of LAC:
 - The Education (Admission of LAC England) Regulations 2006.
 - Relevant DfE guidance to Governing Bodies (Supporting Looked After Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors).
- Ensure that the school has an overview of the needs and progress of LAC.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of LAC.
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.
- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out their responsibilities as below.
- Support the Headteacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of LAC are recognised and met.

4.3 The role of the Designated Teacher

- Ensure 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 and that arrangements are put in place to ensure their needs are identified and met.
- This may include providing basic equipment and resources if necessary and providing appropriate support in meeting uniform requirements if needed.



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- Ensure 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.
- Maintaining an up-to-date record of the LAC in school, including those in the care of other authorities and ensuring all necessary information is passed to other staff as required
- Ensure that each Looked After 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.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately
- Co-ordinate any support for the LAC that is necessary within school liaising with teaching and nonteaching staff in school, including the Designated Safeguarding Leads as well as pastoral and subject staff to ensure they are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage LACs may face.
- Establish and maintain regular contact with home, statutory and voluntary agencies.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life and encourage LAC to join in extracurricular activities and out of school learning.
- Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of LAC.
- Set up meetings with relevant parties where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion.
- Ensure the rapid 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.
- Ensure that attendance is monitored.
- Attending training as required to keep fully informed of latest developments and policies regarding LAC.

4.4 The responsibility of all staff

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of LAC, as for all pupils.
- Maintain LAC's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- Work to enable LAC to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all LAC.
- Understand the key issues that affect the learning of LAC.
- Work to prevent bullying in line with the School's policy.

5. Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)

The experiences and outcomes of PLAC can be very similar to those of LAC. PLAC educational needs are unlikely to have changed just because their care status has. To address this, the needs of LAC and PLAC are prioritised and addressed in a similar way. The progress of PLAC is reviewed three times a year and we work proactively with parents and carers and other professionals to address any areas of concern and put in place support as appropriate. Parents and Carers of PLAC are encouraged to identify their child's previously looked after status on entry to the school and are required to produce documentation to support this. LAC & PLAC receive a similar level of support from the school. Concerns regarding the progress of PLAC are highlighted to parents and carers in a timely fashion so that support can be put in place swiftly. Where adopted children or those under Special Guardianship Orders require therapeutic support, parents and carers will be supported in accessing



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help via Kent County Council's Social Work Team. If appropriate, an assessment of need will be undertaken to apply for the Adoption Support Fund (ASF), in line with national guidance.

6. Confidentiality

Information on LAC 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. See Confidentiality Policy for further information.

7. Record keeping and information sharing

The Designated Teacher will keep an up-to-date record of LAC and Young People in school and will ensure that relevant information is made known to appropriate staff. A Personal Education Plan (PEP) will be initiated within 20 school days of the Looked After Child or Young Person starting at the school or being taken into care and will be reviewed regularly and as necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the LAC (more information on this can be found here: [Personal Education Plan | Virtual School Kent](#)). The PEP will provide a regular opportunity to review progress, note any concerns and ensure that all relevant parties are informed accordingly. Copies of reports and appropriate documentation will be sent to authorised carers and agencies involved with the child as well as any receiving school at point of transition. It is vital that the Looked After Child or Young Person is aware of information being recorded, in what circumstances and who will have access to it. How this is shared with them will depend on their age and level of understanding.

8. Exclusions

Higham Primary School recognises that LAC are particularly vulnerable to exclusions. Please refer to the school's Behaviour Policy and Suspension and Exclusion Policy for more information.

9. Links with other agencies

The school recognises the value of working together with other agencies and organisations and will work closely with colleagues from services involved with the Looked After Child.

10. Racial Equality & Equal Opportunities Statement

All children have equal access and inclusive rights to the curriculum regardless of their gender, race, disability or ability. We plan work that is differentiated for the performance of all groups and individuals.

Further information relating to supporting LAC in Kent schools can be found at [Home | Virtual School Kent](#)

11. Links with other policies and reports

- Admissions Policy and Arrangements
- Anti-Bullying Policy



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- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Early Years Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy and SEND Annual Information Report
- Suspensions and Exclusions Policy