



Dovelands
Primary School

Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) Policy

Ratified by the Full Governing Body:
Review Date:

October 2025
September 2028

Rationale:

Dovelands Primary School is committed to promoting the educational achievement and welfare of looked after and previously looked after children within the school. We recognise that looked after and previously looked after children may have faced significant trauma in the form of adverse childhood experiences (ACES) including abuse, neglect, loss and/or rejection. When children are exposed to these adverse and stressful experiences, it can have a long-lasting impact on their learning, as well as on their ability to think and to interact with others.

We recognise that, nationally, the educational achievement of Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) as a group, remains a concern and gaps in their learning and/or emotional impact of their experiences may have formed barriers to progress. LAC are one of the most vulnerable groups in society, our intention is that LAC and PLAC who attend our school make good progress and find school the place where they maintain friendships, feel safe and thrive. We are aware that Children Looked After may or may not have experience difficulties in:

- Transport and attendance
- Doing homework
- Gaining consent for activities
- Obtaining funding for extra activities
- Obtaining correct uniform and equipment

We recognise that they may also have

- Low self-esteem
- Gaps in their education
- Delayed social/emotional/cognitive development
- Be at a higher risk of bullying / bullying others
- Be prone to mental health issues
- Be isolated from peers
- Have behaviour difficulties
- Poor attachments to others
- Have a need to be very private

Dovelands 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 child both currently and previously looked after can be successful. We believe that this school has a major part to play in ensuring that children who are looked after or previously looked after are able to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic wellbeing.

Definition

Looked after children (LAC)

The term 'looked after' has a specific, legal meaning, based on the Children Act 1989: a child is 'looked after' by a local authority if they fall into one of the following:

- is provided with accommodation, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours, [Children Act 1989, Section 20 and 21]
- is subject to a care order [Children Act 1989, Part IV]
- is subject to a placement order

Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)

This term refers to children who are:

- are no longer LAC by a local authority in England and Wales (as defined by the Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014) because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order; or

- were adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales. 'State care' is care provided by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other organisation whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

Governor Responsible: Keith Lishman

Designated Teacher: Laura Newby – contact inclusion@dovelands.leicester.sch.uk

Dovelands Primary School recognises that all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broad-based curriculum and aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in public care. The school and the governing body endorses the Leicester City Council policy and welcomes CLA who may be looked after by our local authority or those who may be in the care of another authority but living in Leicester City.

Dovelands Primary School's approach to encouraging and supporting the educational achievement of Children Looked After is based on the following principles:

- Ensuring an appropriately trained Designated Teacher is appointed, who will be responsible for all Children Looked After
- All Children Looked After will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) drawn up between the school, the virtual school, the child, the child's carers and the child's social worker, which will identify the child's individual needs and the support they require. A meeting will be held, and this document updated three times per year.
- The Designated Teacher will attend LAC Reviews three times yearly.
- Having high expectations for the child and ensuring equal access to a balanced and broadly based education.
- Recording, monitoring, and improving the academic achievement of the child in addition to their health and wellbeing.
- Achieving stability and continuity
- Prioritising reduction in exclusions and promoting attendance.
- Promoting inclusion
- Recording, monitoring, and improving the academic achievement of the child in addition to their health and wellbeing.
- 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 Looked After Children.

Legislation and statutory responsibilities

This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children Act 1989
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- DfE (2018) 'Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked after children'
- DfE (2018) 'The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies and documents:

- Admissions arrangements Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour and discipline Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Safeguarding and child protection policy

- Equality information and objectives Policy
- SEND Information Report

Responsibility of the Head teacher

- Identify a Designated Teacher for Children Looked After, 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.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusion of Children Looked After Children and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of Children Looked After to all parties involved.
- Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

Responsibility of the Governing Body

- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Children Looked After:
- The Education (Admission of Children Looked After 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 Children Looked After.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of Children Looked After.
- 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 his or her responsibilities as below.
- Support the Head teacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of Children Looked After are recognised and met.

Receive a termly report setting out:

- The number of looked-after pupils on the school's roll (if any).
- Their attendance, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
- Their Teacher Assessment, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
- The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any).
- The destinations of pupils who leave the school.
- 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 role of the Designated Teacher

- Be the main point of contact for children, parents, carers, social workers and teachers for anything to do with the child.
- Maintain a good relationship with the child, parents and carers.
- 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 arrangements are put in place to ensure their needs identified and met.
- Build relationships with children who are looked after and previously looked after and their carers and adoptive parents.
- This may include providing basic equipment and resources if necessary and providing appropriate support in meeting uniform requirements if needed.
- 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 LAC and PLAC 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 Child Looked After 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 LAC or PLAC that is necessary within school liaising with teaching and non-teaching staff in school, including the person responsible for Child Protection as well as pastoral and subject staff to ensure they are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage CLAs 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 Children Looked After 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 Children Looked After.
- 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.
- Be aware that 60% of Children Looked After say they are bullied, so will actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy.
- Ensure that attendance is monitored.
- Attending training as required to keep fully informed of latest developments and policies regarding Children Looked After.

The responsibility of the all staff

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Children Looked After, as for all pupils.
- Maintain the confidentiality of Children Looked After and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- Work to enable Children Looked After to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all Children Looked After.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of Children Looked After.
- Be aware that 60% of Children Looked After say they are bullied so work to prevent bullying in line with the School's policy.

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.

Record keeping and information sharing

The Designated Teacher will keep an up-to-date record of Children Looked After and Previously Looked after in school and will ensure that relevant information is made known to appropriate staff.

A Personal Education Plan will be initiated when Children Looked After start at the school or being taken into care and will be reviewed regularly and as necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the CLA. 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 Child Looked After 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.

Exclusions

Dovelands Primary School recognises that Children Looked After are particularly vulnerable to exclusions.

Where a CLA is at risk of exclusion the school will try every practicable means to maintain the child in school. The Virtual School will be notified immediately and support will be sought. A multi-professional meeting will be arranged, bringing together all those involved with the young person to discuss strategies to minimise the risk of exclusion.

The child or young person's Personal Education Plan will reflect strategies to support the child and where relevant those employed in the Pastoral Support Plan. All relevant measures and resources will be considered to provide support and provide alternative educational packages to prevent an exclusion from happening.

Please refer to the school's Behaviour Policy for more information.

Staff development and training

Arrangements will be made to ensure that the Designated Teacher is kept up to date with developments relating to the education and attainment of Children Looked After.

Other staff will receive relevant training and support to enable them to work sympathetically and productively with Children Looked After, including those who are underachieving or at risk of underachieving or who have additional needs. These may include EAL, being Gifted and Talented or having learning or physical needs.

Teachers with responsibility for Special Educational Needs provision and for children who are Gifted and Talented will be informed of those Children Looked After who have particular gifts, talents or learning needs and will work with them appropriately.

Support and resources

The Governing body will ensure that the school allocates resources, including professional time and expertise, to support appropriate provision for Children Looked After, meeting the objectives set out in this policy.

Home-school liaison

The school recognises the value of a close working relationship between home and school and will work towards developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable Children Looked After to achieve their potential.

Open evenings as well as PEP and Care Plan review meetings provide opportunities to continue to develop this partnership working.

Admission arrangements

We recognise that due to care arrangements CLA may enter school mid-term and that it is important that they are given a positive welcome and where appropriate additional support and pre-entry visits to help them settle.

The school recognises that Looked After children are an 'excepted group' and will prioritise Children Looked After in the school's oversubscription criteria following the DfE Admissions Code (Admissions of Children Looked After (England) Regulations 2006).

Partnership with parents/carers and social workers:

We believe in developing strong partnerships with parents/carers and social workers to enable LAC and PLAC children to achieve their potential to aid their future economic well-being. Parents and carers are supported to attend review meetings and provide an important opportunity to further collaboration and partnership working.

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 Children Looked After including Social Care teams; Educational Psychologist; Health Services, CAMHS; Youth Offending Teams.

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. Doveland's Primary School is committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment and to achieve their full potential.

Personal Education Plan (PEP) Process

- Social worker informs school 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 EPEP login is provided to enable completion of personal education plan with the child and team
- PEP meeting takes place within 20 days, 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 Personal Education Plan is taken to the child's statutory review and discussed within the wider context of the child's life.
- PEP completed by LN and shared with carers, social workers and virtual school head teachers via the Local Authority ePEP websites. ePEP website will vary depending on the Local Authority within which the child was originally moved to CLA status.