



## Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children

**Date of Policy:** September 2022  
**Member of staff responsible:** Mrs. S Dring

### Is this good enough for my child?

"Though some do well, the educational achievement of children and young people in care as group remains unacceptably low. That is why the Children's Act, 2004 places a duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievements of children and young people in care".  
(Section 52 (S52), Children Act, 2004)

This policy outlines our school commitment to the education of looked after children and previously looked after children.

"Though some do well, the educational achievement of Children and Young People in Care as a group remains unacceptably low. That is why the Children Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievements of Children and Young People in Care".  
(S52, Children Act, 2004)

### **1. The role of the governing body**

The governors will carry out their role in line with statutory guidance which can be accessed on the following link:

**The designated governor with responsibility for children looked after and children previously looked after is:** Mr. Gary Shepherd

The governing body/trust board, head teacher and school leadership team will support the education of looked after and previously looked after children by ensuring that the designated teacher has:

- Appropriate seniority and professional experience to provide leadership, training, information, challenge and advice to others;
- Training opportunities, including time away from timetable commitments, to acquire and keep up-to-date the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding, including a good knowledge of SEN
- Appropriate monitoring arrangements to ensure that the school/education setting is providing appropriate support for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

They will also ensure that school policies consider the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children. This consideration will include additional arrangements for looked –after and previously looked-after children when considering;

- Admission
- Suspension
- Behaviour management
- Mental health needs
- Specific safeguarding challenges
- Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- Gifted and talented students
- Teaching and learning needs

- Educational visits and extended school activities

The Governing body/trust board will hold the school to account on how it supports its looked-after and previously looked-after children, including;

- how the Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) is prepared, requested and allocated;
- level of progress for any children who are looked after.

## **2. The designated teacher**

The designated teacher will carry out their role in line with statutory guidance. **The designated teacher in school is:** Mrs. S Dring, Assistant Headteacher. She is a qualified teacher, a member of the Senior Leadership Team and is an experienced DSL.

The designated teacher (DT) is the central point of initial contact within the school. They will join-up resources and support to minimise any disruption to a child's learning.

- The DT will work with VSHs to promote the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children by promoting a whole school culture where the personalised learning needs of every looked-after and previously looked-after child matters and their personal, emotional and academic needs are prioritised.
- They will take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils. Our school will make sure that all staff:
  - have high expectations of children's learning and set targets to accelerate educational progress;
  - are aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation (attachment awareness)
  - understand how important it is to see children as individuals
  - appreciate the central importance of the looked-after child's PEP
  - for previously looked-after children, understand the importance of involving the child's parents or guardians in decisions affecting their child's education, and be a contact for parents or guardians who want advice or have concerns about their child's progress at school.

The designated teacher will have a direct and day-to-day role in promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children. They will:

- Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies and procedures;
- Ensure the pupil premium plus is used effectively within school to have the greatest positive impact on children's learning. This includes;
  - Ensuring parents and guardians of previously looked-after children are reminded that they need to inform the school if their child is eligible to attract PP+.
- Ensure looked after and previously looked after children are prioritised for support; listened to; encouraged to participate; and believe they can achieve through an ethos of aspiration.
- The designated teacher will chair Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings to effectively plan to utilise school resources and ensure each child has access to the support they need to achieve.

- These meetings will take place 3 times per academic year to review support and deploy effective resources.
- Documentation will be coproduced with family and social care and shared with appropriate professionals as part of the child's care plan.
- The designated teacher will work closely with professional agencies including the foster carer; allocated social worker; virtual school head; learning and behaviour support agencies; EPS; SENDs, CAMHs, local police/youth offending service; community nurses and any other professional agency involved in supporting the child and family.

### **3. Transfer out of care**

When children cease to be looked-after the designated teacher will maintain links with VSHs for the purposes of promoting the educational achievement of this group of previously looked-after children.

The Designated teacher will ensure that family members and carers are aware that they must pass on information about previous care status to any education settings. This information cannot be passed from school to school as it will be protected information under GDPR.

### **4. Voice of the child**

We will listen to the voice of looked-after and previously looked-after children as a vital part of successfully understanding and meeting their needs.

### **5. Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)**

Looked-after children and children adopted from care, on a special guardianship or child arrangements order are eligible for PP+ funding. This is additional funding provided to help improve the attainment of looked-after and previously looked-after children and close the attainment gap between this group and their peers.

- All pupil premium spending will take account of the specific needs of eligible pupils.
- PP+ reflects the significant additional barriers faced by looked-after and previously looked-after children
- PP+ is allocated according to need rather than a personal budget.
- Our school will use pupil premium to address need in social, academic and mental health needs. This will be in agreement with the VSH from the child's home authority.

### **6. Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

Looked-after children and previously looked-after children are significantly more likely to have SEN than their peers. Of those with SEN, a significant proportion will have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC plans).

#### **The designated teacher will ensure that:**

- They work closely with the SENCO and local authority support team where applicable;
- Children's PEPs work in harmony with their EHC plan.

## **7. Meeting Mental Health needs**

Looked-after children and previously looked-after children are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues than their peers.

The designated teacher has an important role in ensuring they and other school staff can identify signs of potential issues and understand where the school can draw on specialist services

Our school will utilise the CAMHS education link to support understanding mental health needs for looked-after and previously looked –after children.

This will enable us to improve a whole school understanding of attachment and trauma and the impact on learning and behaviour for vulnerable children.

We also recognise the impact on staff when working with traumatised children. We will ensure all staff feel supported to address their own needs as well as those of the vulnerable children they are caring for.

## **8. Working with local authorities**

**The designated teachers will ensure all changes in the child’s education are communicated directly to the social worker and any other involved agencies.**

The DTs promote strong, positive, working relationships between social workers, health professionals and others and all Leigh St Peter’s CE Primary staff involved with the CLA.

The DTs recognise the importance of effective communication with all professionals involved and takes all reasonable steps to ensure that information is effectively passed between agencies.

The DTs provide information as requested by social care colleagues or other professionals involved with the CLA.

The DTs will always be mindful of the child’s legal status and will advise accordingly on the issue of **Parental Responsibility**.

The DTs will ensure they are clear who has parental responsibility and who has powers of authorisation via delegated responsibly from the social worker.

**Every school has the opportunity to call on the help of the Virtual School Team through advice, training, attending meetings, PEP support and direct support for CLA. The DT can contact Wigan’s VST via phone (01942 486176) or email (m.amberry@wigan.gov.uk) to request this support. There is no formal referral process for this support.**

The DTs will provide any information requested by VST colleagues or other professionals involved with the CLA.

The DTs ensure that the team is informed of any DT name change.

The DTs undertake regular training, as offered by the VST, in line with statutory expectations. If this is not possible then the DTs understand that 1:1 training, advice and support is always available from the VST.

The DTs will ensure that all information requested by Education Business Intelligence Unit (EBIU) on behalf of VST will be given the deadlines set by EBIU to ensure the VST can track and monitor the progress of the Virtual School Population.

## **9. Working with carers and parents**

**The schools ensure they establish good communication links with all carers/ parents/ residential home staff and ensure they are aware of Leigh, St Peter's CE Primary School policies and procedures for CLA.**

The carer knows who the DT is and feels welcomed by the school and able to ask questions etc.

The DTs ensure that school gives information to the carers in a timely way and takes a proactive role in ensuring that both carer and pupil are aware of important deadlines e.g. coursework, examination dates, Parents' Evenings etc.

The DTs ensure that information re trips, after school clubs etc is conveyed.

The DTs will also receive information from carers and others and ensures that it is recorded and processed appropriately.

The DTs understand the importance of the carer's role in partnership working and fosters a collaborative working relationship with both carers and parents (as appropriate).

The DTs understand the need for flexibility when timing contact with a carer and/or social worker.

## **10. Suspensions**

The past experiences of looked-after and previously looked-after children can impact on their behaviour.

Where a looked-after child is at risk of either fixed term or permanent suspension, the designated teacher will contact the relevant authority's VSH as soon as possible so they can help the school decide how to support the child to improve their behaviour and avoid suspension becoming necessary.