

DESIGNATED TEACHER WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER AND CHILDREN PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER POLICY

This policy will be reviewed	Annually
Previously reviewed on	29 th March 2023
Approved on:	27 th March 2024
Next review date:	31 st March 2025
Signed:	S Graham (Headteacher)
Signed:	K Hodgkiss (For and on behalf of the Trust Board)

The DfE's statutory guidance (February 2018) "Promoting the education of Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children" says that, "Looked-after children start with a disadvantage of their pre-care experiences and, often, have special educational needs." School staff have a key role to ensure these children have the maximum opportunity to reach their full educational potential.

Looked-after and previously looked-after children can experience specific and significant disadvantages within a school setting. West Derby School are committed to ensuring that these children reach their potential in all areas. 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 ACES, it can have a long-lasting impact on their cognitive and social skills and affect their educational progress. Despite having as broad a range of abilities as their peers, national progress and attainment data demonstrated that looked-after and previously looked-after children are particularly vulnerable to underachievement. Helping looked-after children succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority in our school.

Looked-after children's lives are sometimes characterised by dislocation. Moving in and out of care often means moving in and out of their family home, foster care, and children's homes. Sometimes school is the only stable place in their lives. The gaps in their learning and / or in many cases the emotional impact of their experiences are likely to have become significant barriers to their progress. "Previously looked-after children" refers to children adopted or in special guardianship or child arrangement orders. Some aspects of this policy will also apply to children who are looked after by 'kinship carers' (family members who are not necessary their legal guardians). Discretion will be used in the application of this policy in respect of kinship carers.

According to Section 20 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008, it is a statutory duty for all governing bodies of maintained schools, academies, and free schools, to designate a member of staff at the school as having responsibility for promoting the educational achievement and addressing any barriers to progress of pupils at the school who are looked-after or previously looked-after. At West Derby School, the named teacher with responsibility for CLA/CPLA is Mrs Stephens, who is also an Assistant Head Teacher and SENDCO. In addition, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Inclusion Team and Pupil Progress Leaders (PPLs) are other key members of staff who work closely with the looked-after children and previously looked-after children at West Derby School.

Every local authority is required to appoint an officer to make sure that their duty to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children is properly discharged; this officer is called the Virtual School Head (VSH). The duties of the VSH are defined in the DfE statutory guidance "Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children" – February 2018.

The Designated Teacher (DT) has appropriate training, experience and is qualified to be able to carry out the role. They will have due regard to the statutory guidance issued and amended (from time to time) by the Secretary of State in relation to the role.

The School, (led by the Designated Teacher for CLA/CPLA):

- Knows who the looked-after and previously looked-after children in school are;
- Ensures that all looked after children have an up to date, effective, high quality personal education plan ('PEP'), which is submitted to Children's Services via School Improvement Liverpool's website or relevant Local Authority portals. The PEP process includes listening to the young person's views, monitoring educational progress, and

setting appropriate SMART targets. The Designated Teacher will lead on the PEP in school and work closely with other staff to ensure it meets the needs of the pupil. It will be monitored regularly by the Designated Teacher to ensure that the progress of the pupil is rigorously evaluated and the PEP adapted to meet the identified needs. Involving the carers, social workers and other relevant professionals is essential, because it ensures that the pupil hears a consistent message, and receives the support that they need to succeed. The PEP document is an essential part of the overall care plan that the social worker is responsible for;

- Allocates Pupil Premium Plus funding to provide for looked-after children and previously looked-after children to support their educational outcomes. The Pupil Premium allocation is for the benefit of the cohort, although a personal budget is allocated to individual pupils to support their needs.
- Attends, where appropriate, the statutory CLA review that takes place usually every six months, to report on educational progress, and answer any questions about academic progress. Moreover the Designated Teacher offers professional judgements on key decisions fundamental to the young person's care and welfare;
- Helps school staff to understand the things which affect how looked-after and previously looked-after children learn and achieve;
- Aims to balance significant levels of support with high expectations and challenge, extend the horizons of each young person and make sure the young person has a voice in setting learning targets;
- Makes it a priority to know the young people well and to build strong relationships, providing regular opportunities to listen to the voice of the child;
- Develops strong partnerships with carers, the Local Authority and specialist agencies;
- Creates and carries out plans for enhanced transitions including KS2 to KS3, transition to KS4, to KS5 and to further education;
- Provides careers advice and guidance about education, training and employment, beginning this work in KS3
- Is clear on who has parental responsibility for the pupil, and ensures that they are notified about important decisions;
- Liaises with all those within school with pastoral support responsibilities;

Understands that looked-after and previously looked-after children are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues than their peers. This can impact on their behaviour and education;

- Has a Designated Senior Lead for Mental Health (Mrs Stephens, Assistant Head Teacher);
- Has good links with other agencies and holds a half termly multi-agency Team Around the School meeting;
- Will work with the VSH where there are concerns about a looked-after or previously looked-after child's behaviour, to support the child and to try to avoid exclusion being necessary;

- Will provide whole school training about Trauma and Attachment;
- Through regular school tracking and data analysis, the Designated Teacher for CLA/CPLA, DSL and PPLs have a clear overview of the progress of looked after children on roll, including attainment and attendance and whether, for example, each child is SEN etc. The SENDCO/Designated Teacher for looked-after children ensures that relevant provision and support is accessed and maintained where a looked after pupil has SEN. Responding to the needs of children who are looked after is a crucial part of avoiding breakdown in their care placement. Therefore the SENDCO/Designated Teacher, Social Workers, Virtual School and relevant local authority work together to avoid delays in assessing and addressing the needs of children who are looked after. The Designated Teacher/SENDSCO ensures that the implications of a child being both looked after and having SEN are fully understood by relevant school staff;
- Will track the progress of the looked-after children cohort and ensure that the cohort are prioritised for intervention (including external agency support);
- The Designated Teacher for CLA/CPLA updates trustees via the Pupil Progress, Achievement and Welfare Committee on matters related to the role and the education of LAC in school. The Designated Teacher for CLA/CPLA meets regularly with the link trustee to inform on the progress of the school's looked-after and previously looked-after children;
- Has regard for the seven fundamental needs (corporate parenting principles) established in the Children and Social Work Act 2017. They are:
 - a) To act in the best interests of and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing of children;
 - b) To encourage children to express their views, wishes and feelings;
 - c) To take into account their views, wishes and feelings;
 - d) To help children gain access to services;
 - e) To promote high aspirations and seek to secure the best outcomes for children;
 - f) For children to be safe and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work;
 - g) To prepare those children for adulthood and independent living.

Liverpool Personal Education Plan Process

The steps to completing the PEP;

1. A PEP must be completed within 20 days of the child coming into care
2. Social worker should initiate the PEP meeting by arranging the date and time with the designated teacher, pupil, parent or carer and any other appropriate adult
3. Pupil views can be completed before the PEP meeting, these do not need to be sent to the Virtual School, but kept on the students file
4. The meeting is chaired by the school, the PEP form is online via [School Improvement Liverpool website](#), this is completed by school
5. Once submitted online automatic copies are sent to the email addresses given in the body of the PEP
6. The Virtual School will attach the form to the young persons file on Liquid Logic

The PEP link can be found online at School Improvement Liverpool - Virtual School
(www.schoolimprovementliverpool.co.uk/teams-virtual-school)

Hints, tips and guidance....

- Personal Education Plans are renewed every 6 months
- Pupil Premium Plus funding should be spent on helping to meet the targets identified in the PEP
- The Designated Teacher leads on how the PEP is developed and used in school to make sure the child's progress towards education targets is monitored
- The PEP should reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning that meets the identified needs of the child, raises aspirations and builds life chances
- To be an effective high quality PEP it should be a 'living' evolving comprehensive and enduring record of the child's experience, progress and achievement

To get in touch with the Virtual School please email VSLiverpool@si.liverpool.gov.uk or call **0151 233 2289**

