

# **LOOKED AFTERED CHILDREN POLICY**



## **Alexander McLeod Primary School**

**Updated: July 2024**

**Date of review: September 2025**

## Policy for Looked After Children

Alexander McLeod is committed to providing Quality First Teaching and a dyslexia-friendly environment, as a basic entitlement for all learners. As a school, we value the needs of all learners and foster a positive attitude towards pupils with dyslexia. We aim to teach all learners how to build on their strengths and minimise their weaknesses, by by-passing their barriers to learning, so that they are empowered to be the best that they can be.

Alexander McLeod Primary School is committed to promoting the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in public care. We will:

- Ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for LAC as for all children
- Ensure that all LAC have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- Provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual's needs and ability
- Ensure that LAC pupils take as full a part as possible in all school activities
- Ensure that carers and social workers of LAC pupils are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment
- Ensure that LAC pupils are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision.

The designated teacher for LAC is Jennifer Bailley

The governor with responsibility for LAC is Zena Thomasi-Hyde

### Looked After Children

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. This includes:

- Children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- Children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- Children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
- Children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21)

## Looked After Children Policy

The term “in care” refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 – they may live with foster carers, in a Children’s home, in a residential school, with relatives or with parents under supervision. Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are “accommodated” by the local authority under section 20 of the Children Act – they may live in foster care, in a Children’s home or in a residential school. All these groups are said to be “Looked After Children” – LAC. They may be looked after by our local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

### Previously Looked After Children

In 2017 new duties were assigned to schools to consider ‘Previously Looked After Children’. These are children who are now adopted, on a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) or Care Arrangement Order. These children may have previously been “in care” and are now living back with their parents.

These children are eligible for Pupil Premium Plus and schools are responsible for ensuring this has a measurable impact on outcomes for the children. There is no requirement to produce termly PEPs but it is expected that schools will monitor progress and outcomes data as a group compared to the whole school cohort including attendance and exclusions.

### **Admission Arrangements**

On admission, records will be requested from the pupil’s previous school and a meeting will be held with carer/parent/Social Worker as appropriate – but always involving someone with parental responsibility. This will provide information to inform the Personal Education Plan. An appropriate school induction will take place.

### Previously Looked After Children

For ‘Previously Looked After Children’ it can be harder to find out if they meet the criteria as this may have happened prior to them starting in the education system. It is sensitive information and a parent/carer can choose whether they wish to share it with the school. As part of the School’s ‘Welcome Pack’ there is now a form that parents/carers can choose to complete and return. This information can then be recorded on SIMS.

### **Teaching Staff**

All teaching staff are made aware that he/she is being looked after by the Local Authority. The responsibility for the transfer of this information is that of the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After. It is appropriate for a classroom support assistant also to have knowledge that the young person is in care.

It will also be shared if they have a child who was 'Previously Looked After' as their outcomes will need to be closely monitored.

### **The Young Person**

It is important that the young person is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. We emphasise that the school, the Social Worker, and their carer(s) are working together to promote their education. The young person is supported to complete the Pupil Voice section of the Personal Education Plan to inform the PEP and Care Plan review meetings.

### **Communication with Other Agencies**

Copies of all reports are forwarded to the young person's Social Worker in addition to the foster carer or Residential Social Worker and if appropriate parent/s and the Virtual School. We work with social work colleagues within Children's Services to co-ordinate review meetings, e.g. to have an Annual or a Statement Review and a Personal Education Plan meeting or review.

### **Assessment, Monitoring and Review Procedures**

Each Looked After Child has a Personal Education Plan (PEP) that is developed jointly by the Social Worker and Designated Teacher. This identifies specific areas of focus and include targets and associated action to improve the student performance or educational achievement. Areas for consideration will include:

- Achievement Record (academic or otherwise);
- Development needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge or subject areas and experiences); and
- Long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations).
- Educational Data so that progress may be easily tracked between Key Stages
- Extended learning opportunities;
- Involvement in Out of School Hours Activities;
- Special needs;
- Attendance;
- Behaviour;

The PEP is updated and reviewed at least annually or at the point of any major change and contribute to the Statutory Reviewing process carried out by the Independent Reviewing Officer. The Designated Teacher is accountable for the implementation and review of the educational action to meet the targets within the Plan.

There is no requirement to produce PEPs for 'Previously Looked After Children'.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **The Designated Teacher**

- Be an advocate for LAC and 'Previously LAC' within school
- Know who are all the LAC and 'Previously LAC' in school, including those in the care of other authorities, and ensure the availability of all relevant details from school record-keeping systems as required
- Attend relevant training about LAC and act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to LAC, seeking advice from the LAC team where appropriate
- Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of the child's personal education plan (PEP) within school and ensure a speedy transfer of information, records and coursework, where appropriate, when a LAC or 'Previously LAC' transfers to another educational placement
- Ensure that Pupil Premium Plus funding is spent on improving outcomes for LAC and 'Previously LAC' and that the impact is monitored.
- Carry out training with staff as appropriate.

### **All school staff will:**

- Keep the Designated Teacher informed about a LAC's or 'Previously LAC' progress and contribute to regular liaison with social care colleagues and other appropriate professionals
- Have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of LAC and 'Previously LAC'
- Positively promote the raising of a LAC's and 'Previously LAC' self-esteem
- Be familiar with the school's policy and guidance on LAC and 'Previously LAC' and respond appropriately to requests for information to support PEPs and review meetings

### **The Governing Body will:**

- Nominate a governor with responsibility for LAC who links with the Designated Teacher
- Ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritise LAC according to the DfES Admissions Code of Practice
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for LAC and 'Previously LAC'
- Liaise with the headteacher, Designated Teacher and all other staff to ensure the needs of LAC and 'Previously LAC' are met
- Ensure that school policies support these groups of children.
- Ensure that progress and outcomes data are monitored and compared to the whole school cohort including attendance and exclusions.
- Hold the school accountable for the impact of Pupil Premium Plus.

