



**St Edward's  
School**

Unity - Achievement - Faith

# Looked After Children and Post Looked After Children Policy

**Reviewed and Approved by Personal Development, Behaviour and Attitudes  
Committee**

**On: 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

**Reviewed and Ratified by the Full Governing Body**

**On: 25<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

**Next review date: Spring 2025**

**SLT are responsible for oversight of this policy's implementation**

## **Introduction**

This policy covers St Edward's approach to supporting Looked After Children and Post Looked After Children in the context of being a joint Roman Catholic and Church of England school. Providing high quality academic, pastoral, emotional and spiritual support and guidance for this cohort of young people, who are often amongst the most vulnerable in our society, is central to our ethos as a school. This is reflected in our mission statement:

MAY WE BE ONE

In purpose – educating for life in all its fullness

In faith – encountering God who lives among us, calling us to unity

In dignity – nurturing confidence and maturity

In community – striving together for justice, love and peace.

Our support for Looked After and Post Looked After Children will aim to fulfil this mission statement for young people who live or have lived in care. We will support our young people to live life in all its fullness and grow into the people that they are called to be.

## **Definition**

A student who has been in the care of their local authority for more than 24 hours is known as a Looked After Child (LAC). Looked after children are also often referred to as children in care. In general, looked after children are:

Living with foster parents or carers

Living in a residential children's home or

Living in residential settings like schools or secure units.

A student stops being looked after when they are adopted, return home, are under a special guardianship order or turn 18. When this occurs, a student is then classed as being a Previously Looked After Child (Post LAC).

## **Statutory requirements**

This policy incorporates requirements set out in the statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004, the Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher – Statutory Guidance for School Governors (2009).

The Children and Families Act 2014 amends section 22 of the Children Act 1989 to require every local authority in England to appoint an officer employed by the authority, or another authority, to make sure that its duty to promote the educational achievement of its looked after children is properly discharged. This officer is referred to as the Virtual School Headteacher (VSH).

It is also important to remember that while parental responsibility (PR) for the young person normally lies with the Local Authority and/or the parents, responsibility for day-to-day decisions is often delegated to the foster carers or staff at the residential home. It is therefore important to ascertain who holds PR and what if any authority has been delegated to carers as soon as possible. Each case will be different as to who will have responsibility and who will need to be kept informed.

## **Aims**

The overall aim of this policy is to promote the educational achievement and emotional wellbeing of looked after children (LAC) and previously looked after children (Post LAC) that are part of our school community.

We recognise that our school plays a vital role in providing a stable base for students who are LAC and Post LAC and in promoting their academic, social, emotional, and spiritual development. We promote staff training in their specific needs, so that we are sensitive to the barriers to learning *and enjoyment* that LAC and Post LAC students may experience.

## **Overall objectives**

- Our priority is to ensure psychological and environmental safety first: it is the foundation on which everything else depends.
- We understand that students in our school have different starting points in their young lives; they have unique capabilities, sensitivities, and vulnerabilities and because of this, young people will demonstrate different emotional states and reactions to their environment and their curriculum.
- for all students who are looked after to have three Personal Education Planning (ePEP) meetings in an academic year and for the joint planning to actively impact on each child's learning on a daily basis, to ensure accelerated and rapid progress.
- To ensure that the voices of young people and their carers are heard alongside the professionals around the young person and reflected in all target-setting and planning
- to use the allocated Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) to ensure effective impact.
- for all adults to provide discreet, sensitive, child-led support, with one identified key adult (usually the LAC Manager) who will form a strong relationship and take a special interest in daily life at school.
- for the LAC Manager to identify appropriate provision in school to support both academic and the social, emotional and mental health needs of the young person.
- to narrow the gap between the attainment of students who are (post) looked after and their peers, ensuring accelerated and rapid progress.

## **Roles and responsibilities:**

The Headteacher and Governing Body are committed to supporting young people who are LAC and Post LAC throughout their time in the school. They will ensure that the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children has qualified teacher status, appropriate seniority in the leadership team and time and experience to fulfil this statutory role.

The current Designated Teacher for Looked After Children is *Mrs Vikki Pirie*. *She is a qualified teacher, SENCo, DSL-MH, a member of the Senior Leadership Team and a Designated Safeguarding Lead. She will oversee and line manage the work of the LAC Manager who is currently Mrs Lee.*

The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children and the LAC Manager will:

- track the progress of LAC and Post LAC students across the curriculum using data, teacher reports and feedback
- ensure that the PP+ is used effectively and efficiently
- perform a coordinating role with school staff and outside agencies
- effectively manage periods of transition including working with primary and post 16 partners
- ensure effective communication with the school's assigned Education Advisory Teacher from the Virtual School
- develop expertise in the field of LAC and Post LAC provision, this will include attending regular training and networking events
- promote a school culture which is supportive and has high expectations for students who are LAC and Post LAC; this includes providing regular training on trauma informed practice, adverse childhood experiences (ACES), PACEful strategies and the Neuro-Sequential Model of Education (Dr Bruce Perry)
- regularly report to the Headteacher and Governing Body on the attainment of students who are LAC and Post LAC.
- *with colleagues in the Pastoral Team, continue to actively support students and engage with their parents or carers.*
- attend and contribute to ePEPs.
- ensure that carers and professionals from the local authority are engaged with the targets outlined in the ePEP.

All staff will support the education students by:

- attending specialist training (see above)
- providing accurate information and data when asked by the Designated Teacher or LAC Manager
- referring to the Designated Teacher or LAC Manager for advice if required
- playing their part in creating a supportive culture and ensuring that students benefit from and be prioritised for any additional school-based support available

**Attendance:**

Daily school attendance procedures reflect the specific needs of young people who are LAC and Post LAC to ensure good school attendance *and safety*. Where there is a concern about attendance or punctuality the school contacts the carer, social worker and other professionals including the Virtual School as an early intervention.

**Alternative Provision (AP):**

We will make every effort to ensure that any arrangements for provision, alternative to daily attendance at school, there will be:

- a robust plan that will retain the student on the roll of the school or clarify in writing which educational establishment will be responsible for *monitoring and reporting progress and attendance* and accountable for the PP+. This will be reflected in the ePEP.
- full time (25 hours) or contribute to full time attendance
- meet the educational needs of the student
- will be monitored regularly by the school and the AP

### **Special educational needs:**

The school will endeavour to secure progress for LAC and Post LAC who have special educational needs by:

- *working collaboratively with the SENCo*
- *the SENCo will be invited to attend the ePEPs when appropriate*
- graduated response as outlined in the SEN Code of Practice 2015
- having high expectations whilst holding the boundaries in
- ensuring that all plans are co-ordinated and appropriate interventions identified
- ensuring that progress is regularly monitored and reviewed, in line with the SEN Code of Practice

### **Safeguarding:**

School staff will be vigilant for any safeguarding issues which can impact particularly on young people who are LAC and Post LAC. If there are any concerns, they will respond in accordance with the school's child protection policy and the 'DfE: Keeping Children Safe in Education' document (September 2023).

Any safeguarding concerns will be logged on My Concern, and the LAC manger will be aware of and be involved with the response to the concern.

### **Suspension:**

We will make every effort to avoid *suspending* a student who is LAC or Post LAC, in recognition of the increased risk this poses in terms of them quickly disengaging from the school, due to their early experience of broken attachments and loss. We will discuss the rationale for *suspension* with the social worker, the Virtual School and any other relevant stakeholder. If there is no option other than *suspension*, then we will make every attempt to reduce the number of days of the *suspension*.

### **Multi-Agency working:**

School staff will engage with colleagues from other agencies and facilitate their work. This could include Virtual Schools, Children's Social Care, health and carers. This will enable colleagues to successfully perform their roles and positively impact on the education and wider needs of students.

### **Review**

This policy will be considered annually, and formally reviewed every three years by the Designated Teacher and the LAC Manager. The formal review will also be conducted in consultation with the Governors, Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team.

