



Policy and Guidelines for Looked after Children (LAC) and Previously Looked after Children (PLAC)



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1. THE OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to promote the educational achievement and welfare of LAC and PLAC at Rokeby School. The policy sets out, not only the ethos of the school in our approach to meeting the needs of LAC and PLAC, but also the procedures that will ensure participation in high quality learning and progress.

2. RATIONALE

Nationally, children who are Looked-After (LAC) or Previously Looked-After Children (PLAC) significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Many LAC and PLAC have suffered disrupted learning and may have missed extended periods of time at school. Many have special educational needs (SEND). In many cases the emotional impact of their experiences is likely to have become a significant barrier to their progress and this contributes to gaps in their learning. Attainment data for LAC and PLAC shows that they do not perform as well at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 when compared to non-LAC.

At Rokeby School, we work in partnership with the relevant external agencies (e.g., Virtual Schools, social care) to support our Looked-After and Previously Looked-After students to achieve their best outcomes possible.

3. TERMINOLOGY

Looked-After Children (LAC) are children who are subject to a Care Order granted by the Court or a Section 20, voluntary agreement between parent(s) and the Local Authority. Previously Looked-After Children (PLAC) are children who have been Looked-After and are now subject to an Adoption Order, Special Guardianship Order or Child Arrangement Order.

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HEAD TEACHER

The responsibilities of the head teacher regarding LAC and PLAC are as follows:

- to identify a Designated Teacher for LAC and PLAC whose role is set out below. Should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take sick leave, to quickly identify another appropriate person
- to ensure that LAC and PLAC have the highest priority in our admissions criteria, and in our oversubscription criteria in compliance with the DfE School Admissions Code (2014).
- to ensure that procedures are in place to monitor and report on the admission, attendance, progress, levels of attainment of any LAC and PLAC; and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- to avoid, as far as possible, excluding LAC and PLAC, in accordance with the DfE's statutory guidance on exclusions for maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England (2017). If Rokeby School has concerns about a Looked-After Child's behaviour, we will inform the Virtual School Head (VSH) at the earliest opportunity. This will allow us to work in partnership with the VSH and other professionals to consider what additional support or alternative placement may be required, to prevent the need for exclusion. Where necessary this should make provision for assessing the suitability of provision for a student's SEN. For example, if a student has an EHC plan, we would consider requesting an early annual review or interim/emergency review.
- to ensure all staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GOVERNING BODY

The role of the named Governor with special responsibility for LAC and PLAC in the school includes:

- supporting the Head Teacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of LAC and PLAC are recognised and met.
- ensuring all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of LAC and PLAC.
- ensuring the school has an overview of the needs and progress of LAC and PLAC.
- ensuring the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.
- ensuring the school allocates resources, including professional time and expertise, to support appropriate provision for LAC and PLAC, meeting the objectives set out in this policy.
- completing the relevant Governor training on LAC and PLAC.
- ensuring all governors are aware that OFSTED will focus on LAC and PLAC by monitoring how the school has promoted their inclusion and attainment to include the effectiveness of joint working with other services.
- receiving a termly report which sets out:
 - the number of LAC and PLAC on the school's roll
 - their attendance, as a discrete group, compared to other students
 - their progress as a discrete group, compared to other students
 - the number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any)
 - the destinations of students who leave the school

NB: The information for this report will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the students concerned.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

Government Guidance states that the Designated Teacher should be:

"someone with sufficient authority to make things happen, who should be an advocate for Looked After Children, assessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them".

The role of the Designated Teacher for Looked-After Children and Previously Looked-After Children for the school includes:

INDUCTION

- ensuring the school provides a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer by planning for transition in consultation with the social worker to ensure their individual needs are identified and met.
- ensuring that each LAC and PLAC has an identified member of staff that they can talk to.

REPORTING

- reporting on the progress, attendance and exclusions of LAC and PLAC to all parties (social worker, the responsible Virtual School and carers), termly via PEP meetings, and at any other time if there are concerns.

PERSONAL EDUCATION PLAN (PEP)

- facilitating the development of a personal education plan (PEP) for each LAC/PLAC. This is a vital document, as it is an integral part of a child's wider care plan and provides a 'collective' memory about the child's education. (See Appendix One for the DfE statutory guidance (2018) - The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children, which includes information on how to complete a PEP).

SEND/EHCP

- A considerable number of LAC have special education needs. Of those, a significant proportion will have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Rokeby School will endeavour to ensure that the child's EHC plan works in harmony with their care plan to tell a coherent and comprehensive story of how the student's needs are being met.
- We also recognise that some LAC may have undiagnosed special needs. As part of the PEP process, we will ensure that robust arrangements are in place to address any undiagnosed special educational needs through the SEND framework.

7. MONITOR, TRACK AND REVIEW PROGRESS

- ensuring that attendance is monitored; and intervening, if there is evidence of absence from school or internal truancy.
- tracking academic progress and target support appropriately.
- intervening if there is evidence of individual underachievement, and consider applying for Pupil Premium Plus funding to accelerate progress.
- setting up meetings with relevant parties where the student is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion.
- promoting inclusion in all areas of school life and encouraging LAC and PLAC to join in extracurricular activities and out of school learning.

TRANSITION

- being pro-active in supporting transition and planning when LAC and PLAC are moving between key stages and when moving schools.

RECORD KEEPING

- maintaining an up-to-date record of LAC and PLAC in school, including those in the care of other authorities and ensure all necessary information is passed to relevant staff.
- ensuring that LAC and PLAC are aware information is recorded, and of who has access to it.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- ensuring confidentiality and that sharing personal information is on a need to know basis.

TRAINING

- attending Designated Teacher training provided by Newham Virtual School as required, and keeping up to date with the latest developments and policies concerning LAC and PLAC.
- ensuring all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by LAC and PLAC. Staff should be aware of the need for positive systems of support to overcome them.

8. GOVERNING BODY

- reporting to the Governing Body on a termly basis the points as detailed on page 4 of this policy document
- acting as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of LAC and PLAC.

9. RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF

Rokeby School will ensure that all staff:

- have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of LAC and PLAC.
- recognise the value of multi-agency partnership working, and how important it is for meeting the needs of LAC and PLAC.
- are aware that, due to care arrangements, LAC and PLAC may enter school mid-term and it is important they are given a positive welcome especially during pre-entry visits to help them settle.
- support positive working relationships in partnership with parents/carers, social care and Newham Virtual School in PEP and Care Plan review meetings.
- are aware that 60% of LAC report incidents of being bullied in school, so work to prevent bullying in line with the school's policy.
- work to enable LAC and PLAC achieve stability and success within school.

- promote the self-esteem of all LAC and PLAC.
- have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of LAC and PLAC, as for all students.
- respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- understand that information on LAC and PLAC will be shared with school staff on a "need to know" basis.
- maintain LAC and PLAC's confidentiality.
- engage with training provided on how to redress the educational attainment gap and disadvantage LAC and PLAC experience.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

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; Promoting the Education of Looked-After Children and Previously Looked-after Children statutory guidance for local authorities (2018).

A link to the DfE statutory guidance (2018) - The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children can be found below:

[The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children.pdf](#)