




Designated teacher policy (looked-after and previously looked-after children)

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09. Pastoral	SharePoint> Information Sharing> Policies & Guidance>09. Pastoral

*This policy will be reviewed by Teaching, Learning & Safeguarding committee prior to approval by Full Governing Body.

This policy has been developed from a template (last updated 01/09/19) provided by 

The term '**school**' refers to all educational establishments including academies.

Similarly, '**governing board**' and '**governor**' refer to the accountable body for the school and the representatives on that body.

This document forms part of our commitment to promoting emotional wellbeing and mental health. It has been created making sure that it:

- is consistent with our vision and strategy
- protects and promotes emotional wellbeing and mental health



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1. Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

- › A suitable member of staff is appointed as the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children
- › The designated teacher promotes the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, and supports other staff members to do this too
- › Staff, parents, carers and guardians are aware of the identity of the designated teacher, how to contact them and what they are responsible for

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's [statutory guidance on the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children](#).

It also takes into account [section 2E](#) of the Academies Act 2010.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

Looked-after children are registered pupils that are:

- › In the care of a local authority, or
- › Provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services functions, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours

Previously looked-after children are registered pupils that fall into either of these categories:

- › They were looked after by a local authority but ceased to be as a result of any of the following:
 - A child arrangements order, which includes arrangements relating to who the child lives with and when they are to live with them
 - A special guardianship order
 - An adoption order
- › They appear to the governing board to have:
 - Been in state care in a place outside of England and Wales because they would not have otherwise been cared for adequately, and
 - Ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted

Personal education plan (PEP) is part of a looked-after child's care plan that is developed with the school. It forms a record of what needs to happen and who will make it happen to ensure the child reaches their full potential.

Virtual school head (VSH) is a local authority officer responsible for promoting the educational achievement of their authority's looked-after children, working across schools to monitor and support these pupils as if they were in a single school. The VSH is also responsible for providing information and advice to schools, parents and guardians in respect of previously looked-after children.

4. Our circumstances

The DfE document on which this policy is based says that:

“**Many** looked-after and previously looked-after children have suffered disrupted learning, may have missed extended periods of school,”

It begins by describing how schools might organise their support in order to help pupils to bridge the attainment gap caused by such disruption.

Thereafter, it describes the additional support that may be required for the **large number** of looked-after and previously looked-after children identified as having additional “mental health needs”

Finally, it addresses how a school might identify and then support the **high proportion** (57%) of looked-after and previously looked-after children who have “special educational needs (SEN).”

In our circumstances

- **MOST** have suffered disrupted learning
- whilst not all will have identifiable mental health needs; **MOST** display high levels of social and emotional difficulties.
- **100%** of our pupils have SEN,

Our environment & ethos is designed to support pupils with precisely these issues regardless of their status as a looked-after or previously looked-after child. It is central; not additional.

Our teaching is organised in small classes and smaller groups within these classes to allow us to target specific learning needs.

Our intervention Framework describes the additional support available to pupils to overcome some of the other barriers to learning.

Pupils who are looked-after or previously looked-after children automatically receive Tier 1 & 2 support being part of a regular Looked After Child Support Group as a minimum.

Baseline & repeat assessments using Thrive will be used throughout the tiers (for group & individual assessment) to produce unified, comparable baseline & ongoing data collected at least termly.

This will be used to measure progress and plan next steps.

The entire framework can be found at **SharePoint> Information Sharing> Policies & Guidance>10. Teaching & Learning>03. Intervention framework.**

In brief; it describes a universal (Tier 1) programme which includes:

- PSHE
- ‘draw and talk’
- Mindfulness/relaxation techniques.
- Zones of regulation
- Positive Behaviour Scale (PBS)
- Relationship & Sex Education

A targeted 1:1 or group intervention (Tier 2) for those identified as requiring additional support including:

- **Looked After Child Support Group**
- Sand-tray (undirected)
- Lego group
- Social and emotional well being
- Mindfulness ‘paws.B’ – mindfulness in schools project.
- Anger management
- Resilience
- Attachment
- RSE specific 1:1

Specialist therapeutic intervention (Tier 3) including:

- Autism awareness
- Safety planning
- Bereavement Support

- Sand tray (directed/undirected)
- Anger management
- Attachment/Trauma

This approach to learning places our pastoral team at the centre of our approach and it is natural therefore that this team takes a lead in the support and development of individual pupils and our whole-school approach to looked-after and previously looked-after children.

5. Roles & Responsibilities

5.1 Headteacher

Our Headteacher is our designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children and will:

- Monitor the work of our Pastoral Manager and their team in delivering positive outcomes for pupils who are looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Promote the educational achievements of every looked-after and previously looked-after child on roll by:
 - Ensuring the Pastoral Manager and their team have the support, resources and skills required to fulfil their role in supporting looked-after and previously looked-after children. Including (but not limited to):
 - Acting as a source of advice & support for the Pastoral Manager & team in their development of initiatives, ideas and problem-solving
 - Supporting regular, relevant training for the Pastoral Manager, team members & wider staff group (up to and including the whole school where appropriate).
 - Promoting a whole school culture where the needs of these pupils matter and are prioritised
- Where a looked-after child is at risk of exclusion:
 - Discuss the decision-making process with our Pastoral Manager
 - Contact the VSH as soon as possible so they can help the school decide how to support the child to improve their behaviour and avoid exclusion becoming necessary
 - Working with the VSH and child's carers, consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to address the causes of the child's behaviour
- Where a previously looked-after child is at risk of exclusion,
 - Discuss the decision-making process with our Pastoral Manager
 - talk to the child's parents or guardians before seeking advice from the VSH on avoiding exclusion

5.2 Pastoral Manager

Our Pastoral Manager will take overarching responsibility for supporting looked-after and previously looked-after children and will:

- › Act as a central point of initial contact within the school for any matters involving looked-after and previously looked-after children
- › Report directly to our designated teacher providing regular written updates on the work they have completed, the progress of looked-after and previously looked-after children (academic, social & emotional).
- › Involve the designated teacher in decisions about interventions being offered for individual pupils
- › Seek support from the designated teacher where necessary in improving their own knowledge and understanding, supporting the understanding of other staff any other issues that may arise out of this work
- › Promote the educational achievement of every looked-after and previously looked-after child on roll by:
 - Working with VSHs
 - (with support from our designated teacher) Promoting a whole school culture where the needs of these pupils matter and are prioritised
- › Take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand:

- The things which can affect how looked-after and previously looked-after children learn and achieve
- How the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils
- Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies to ensure they consider the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Promote a culture in which looked-after and previously looked-after children are encouraged and supported to engage with their education and other school activities
- (With support from our designated teacher where necessary) Act as a source of advice for teachers about working with looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Work directly with looked-after and previously looked-after children and their carers, parents and guardians to promote good home-school links, support progress and encourage high aspirations
- Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of looked-after children's PEPs
- Work closely with the school's designated safeguarding lead to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to
- Involve parents and guardians of previously looked-after children in decisions affecting their child's education

In supporting looked-after children

<p>Our Pastoral Manager will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Make sure looked-after children's PEPs meet their needs by working closely with other teachers to assess each child's specific educational needs ➤ Have overall responsibility for leading the process of target-setting in PEPs ➤ Monitor and track how looked-after children's attainment progresses under their PEPs 	<p>Class teachers will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide timely and accurate assessment data to the Pastoral Manager as required for the creation/review of PEPs ➤ Input directly into the formation of appropriate educational targets ➤ Alert the Pastoral Manager at the earliest opportunity where a pupil's attainment progress is a cause for concern
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If a child is not on track to meet their targets, be instrumental in agreeing the best way forward, involving the pupil where appropriate, in order to make progress, and ensure that this is reflected in their PEP 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure the identified actions of PEPs are put in place 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ During the development and review of PEPs, help the school and relevant local authority decide what arrangements work best for pupils 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A looked-after child's PEP is reviewed before the statutory review of their care plan – this includes making sure the PEP is up-to-date and contains any new information since the last PEP review, including whether agreed provision is being delivered ○ PEPs are clear about what has or has not been taken forward, noting what resources may be required to further support the child and from where these may be sourced ○ The updated PEP is passed to the child's social worker and VSH ahead of the statutory review of their care plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Support the work of the Pastoral Manager by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ensuring that the PEP remains up-to-date. ○ describing the resource implications of any further plans/initiatives considered necessary to support the child ○ completing these tasks in a timely fashion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Transfer a looked-after child's PEP to their next school or college, making sure it is up to date and that the local authority responsible for looking after them has the most recent version 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Be proactive in offering support to staff within the next school or college which might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the development of a transition plan ○ face-to-face, telephone, video call support for staff to support their understanding of the pupil ,their PEP and any current interventions.

In supporting both looked-after children and previously looked-after children

Our Pastoral Manager will:

- Ensure the specific needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children are understood by staff and reflected in how the school uses pupil premium funding
- Discuss plans for the use of such funding and report on the progress of such plans to the designated teacher
- Work with VSHs to agree how pupil premium funding for looked-after children can most effectively be used to improve their attainment
- Help raise the awareness of parents and guardians of previously looked-after children about pupil premium funding and other support for these children
- Play a key part in decisions on how pupil premium funding is used to support previously looked-after children
- Encourage parents' and guardians' involvement in deciding how pupil premium funding is used to support their child, and be the main contact for queries about its use
- Ensure teachers have awareness and understanding of the specific needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children in areas like attendance, homework, behaviour and future career planning
- Ensure the [SEND code of practice](#), as it relates to looked-after children, is followed
- Make sure PEPs work in harmony with education, health and care (EHC) plans
- Ensure that they and other staff can identify signs of potential mental health issues in looked-after and previously looked-after children and understand where the school can draw on specialist services
- Oversee our intervention framework to deliver, facilitate, review & refine interventions ensuring that:
 - Thrive assessments are completed regularly and the results analysed to ensure that:
 - appropriate continuous interventions are in place
 - pupil's progress can be reflected in PEPs.
- Put in place mechanisms for understanding the emotional and behavioural needs of previously looked-after children

Enhancing relationships beyond the school

Our Pastoral Manager will:

- Proactively engage with social workers and other professionals to enable the school to respond effectively to the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Discuss with social workers how the school should engage with birth parents, and ensure the school is clear about who has parental responsibility and what information can be shared with whom
- Be open and accessible to parents and guardians of previously looked-after children and encourage them to be actively involved in their children's education
- Proactively build relationships with local authority professionals, such as VSHs and SEN departments
- Consider how the school works with others outside of the school to maximise the stability of education for looked-after children, such as:
 - Finding ways of making sure the latest information about educational progress is available to contribute to the statutory review of care plans
 - Ensuring mechanisms are in place to inform VSHs when looked-after children are absent without authorisation and work with the responsible authority to take appropriate safeguarding action
 - Talking to the child's social worker and/or other relevant parties in the local authority regarding any decisions about changes in care placements which will disrupt the child's education, providing advice about the likely impact and what the local authority should do to minimise disruption
 - Making sure that, if a looked-after child moves school, their new designated teacher receives any information needed to help the transition process
- Seek advice from VSHs about meeting the needs of individual previously looked-after children, but only with the agreement of their parents or guardians
- Make sure that for each looked-after child:

- There's an agreed process for how the school works in partnership with the child's carer and other professionals, such as their social worker, in order to review and develop educational progress
- School policies are communicated to their carer and social worker and, where appropriate, birth parents
- Teachers know the most appropriate person to contact where necessary, such as who has the authority to sign permission slips

6. Links with other policies, procedures and guidelines

This policy links to the following policies, procedures & guidelines:

Policy/Procedure/Guidelines	on our web-site	Available to Woodlands staff at: SharePoint> Information Sharing> Policies & Guidance
➤ Positive Behaviour	Yes	>10. Behaviour
➤ Safeguarding & Child Protection	Yes	>09. Pastoral
➤ Exclusions	No	>10. Behaviour
➤ SEN	Yes	>03. Equality & Inclusion
➤ Supporting pupils with medical needs	No	>13. Health & Safety>07. Medical
➤ Intervention Framework	No	>11. Teaching & Learning