



Policy for Children who are Looked After and Previously Looked After

Supporting the Educational Outcomes for Children who are Looked After and Previously Looked After



March 2024 – March 2025

Signed by:  Headteacher Date: 07 MAR 2024

 Chair of Governors Date: 07 MAR 2024

Statement of intent

The educational achievement for looked after and previously looked after children needs particular focus so that their outcomes and life chances can be improved.

Church Stretton School endeavours to provide positive experiences and offer stability, safety, and individual care and attention, for all our pupils. With this in mind, we aim to work with the wider corporate parenting team and take an active role in applying the principles of 'good parenting' by:

- ***acting in the best interests of our children and young people, promoting their physical and mental health/wellbeing***
- ***encouraging our children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings and taking these into account.***
- ***helping our children and young people gain access to and make best use of services.***
- ***promoting high aspirations and seeking to secure the best outcomes for our children and young people.***
- ***supporting our children and young people to be safe and have stability in their home lives and relationships***
- ***preparing our children and young people for adulthood and independent living***

Additionally, to

- ensure that pupils experience high quality teaching and a curriculum which meets their needs and the requirements of legislation.
- plan support for looked after and previously looked after children realistically and using our school's resources efficiently in order to ensure the school meets their needs.
- promote a positive culture in all aspects of school life.

- help pupils develop their cultural, moral and social understanding.

We recognise that by embedding a school culture that supports Children who are Looked After and those who are Previously Looked After, we create an environment that better supports all of our children and young people.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- [Children Act 1989](#)
- [The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review \(England\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [Children \(Leaving Care\) Act 2000](#)
- [Children and Young Persons Act 2008](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#)
- DfE (2018) [Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children](#)
- DfE (2022) [Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement](#)
- DfE (2023) [Keeping children safe in education 2023 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- DfE Dec 2023 [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- DfE (2018) [The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- DfE (2022) [Promoting the education of children with a social worker \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- SEND COP June 2014 - Updated April 2020 [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- SEND Review 2022 - [Special educational needs publication June 2022 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- School Attendance Guidance September 2022 - [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- Mental Health & Behaviour in Schools November 2018 - [Mental health and behaviour in schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- Education Inspection Framework September 2019 updated July 2022 - [Education inspection framework \(EIF\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- Early Years inspection framework September 2019 updated July 2022 - [Early years inspection handbook - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- School Inspection Handbook Ofsted September 2022 - [Schools inspection handbook for September 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [School monitoring handbook for September 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

This policy operates in conjunction with our following school policies and documents:

- Admissions Policy
- One-to-One Tuition Policy
- Behavioural Policy
- Anti-Bullying and Peer on Peer Abuse Policy
- Home School Agreement
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

Please find school policies here: [Policies | Church Stretton School](#)

Definitions

Local terminology

Taking into account the views of children in care within Shropshire, the terms 'Child Looked After' or CLA is the preferred reference rather than Looked After Children or LAC.

Looked after children (CLA) are defined as:

- Children or young people who are the subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989.
- Children who are placed in foster care, children's residential homes, with relatives or friends, in semi-independent or supported independent accommodation.
- Children subject to a Care or Interim Care Order whilst placed with a parent, as the LA has parental responsibility.
- Children who are not subject to an order, but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents (Section 20)

Previously looked after children (PLAC) are defined as:

- Children no longer looked after by an LA in England and Wales because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order.
- Children who were adopted outside England and Wales from 'state care' (care that is provided by a public authority, religious organisation, or other organisation whose main purpose is to benefit society).

Roles and responsibilities

Our Governing board is responsible for:

- Ensuring the school has a coherent policy for CLA and PLAC.
- Reviewing the school's policies and procedures in conjunction with legislation and statutory guidance.

- Ensuring the Designated Teacher for CLA and PLAC has received the appropriate training.
- Ensuring CLA and PLAC have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and that reasonable adjustments are made, if and when necessary.
- Reviewing the Annual Report produced by the **Designated Teacher** to evaluate the progress of CLA in the school.
- Ensuring they receive feedback from the **Headteacher** regarding the effectiveness of the policy on an annual basis.
- Providing a nominated Governor who should:
 - Ensure that a school's self-audit of provision for CLA and PLAC is undertaken.
 - Ensure that the school's policies and procedures ensure that CLA and PLAC have at least equal access to all aspects of the school life.
 - Attend meetings/training organised by the Virtual School to provide updates and training to nominated governors.

The Virtual School Head Teacher (VSHT) is responsible for:

- Acting as the educational advocate for CLA
- Monitoring the attendance and educational progress of the children their authority looks after.
- Ensuring that arrangements are in place to improve the education and outcomes of the authority's CLA, including those placed out-of-authority.
- Building relationships with Health, Education and Social Care partners, as well as other partners, so they and the Designated Teachers understand the support available to CLA and PLAC.
- Working with the school to ensure all within the school CLA are fully supported in reaching their full potential.
- Acting as a source of advice and information to help parents of PLAC as effectively as possible.
- Ensuring there are effective systems in place to:
 - Maintain an up-to-date roll of the CLA who are in school settings, and gather information about their educational placement, attendance and progress.
 - Inform the Head Teacher and Designated Teacher if they have a pupil on roll who is looked after by the LA.

- Ensure Social Workers, Schools, Designated Teachers, Carers and Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) understand their role and responsibilities regarding a pupil's PEP.
- Ensure that up-to-date and effective PEPs that focus on educational outcomes are maintained for all CLA.
- Avoid delays in providing suitable educational provision.
- Ensure the education achievement of CLA and PLAC is seen as a priority by everyone who has responsibility for promoting their health and welfare.
- Report regularly on the attainment, progress and school attendance of CLA through the authority's Corporate Parenting structures.

Our Headteacher is responsible for:

- Appointing the Designated Teacher for CLA and PLAC.
- Allowing the Designated Teacher time and facilities to succeed in carrying out their duties.
- Overseeing this policy and monitoring its implementation, feeding back to the **governing board annually** on the following:
 - Positive achievements of CLA and PLAC
 - The number of CLA and PLAC in the school
 - An analysis of assessment scores as a cohort, compared to other pupil groups.
 - The attendance of CLA and PLAC, compared to other pupil groups.
 - The level of suspensions and permanent exclusions, compared to other pupil groups.
 - Ensuring all members of staff are aware that supporting CLA and PLAC is a key priority.
 - Actively challenging negative stereotypes of CLA
 - Actions the school will take to develop/improve the above

Our Designated Teacher for CLA and PLAC is responsible for:

- Building relationships with health, education and social care partners and other partners so that they and the VSH understand the support available to CLA and PLAC.
- Promoting the educational achievement of CLA and PLAC at the school.
- Acting as the main contact for social services and the virtual school.
- Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations.
- Ensuring CLA are involved in reviewing and setting their own targets.
- Gaining the knowledge and skills to advise and support staff on teaching and behaviour strategies for CLA and PLAC
- Ensuring that CLA and PLAC are prioritised for one-to-one tuition and support.
- Supporting new CLA admissions to the school:
 - Provide pre-admission support and where appropriate, an enhanced 'welcome' phase in the first days and weeks at the school.
 - On admission of a CLA to the school, liaising with the VS to agree a date for a PEP meeting.

- Leading on how the child's personal education plan PEP is developed and used in school to ensure the child's progress towards targets is supported and monitored.
- Liaising with the SENCO to ensure all pupil needs are met.
- Working with the child's Social Worker, VS Head Teacher and Links to develop and implement their PEP.
- Liaising regularly with the Corporate Parents for CLA (which includes the Virtual School) especially if there is a suspension or safeguarding issue as this needs to be on the same day that the suspension/concern arises
- Working with the Headteacher to submit an Annual Report to the Governing board, which details the progress of all CLA and PLAC. (See model template for DT's Annual Report at [Shropshire Virtual School | Shropshire Council](#))

Our SENCo is responsible for:

- Ensuring they are involved in reviewing PEP and care plans for CLA if the child has Special Educational Needs.
- Ensuring the Annual Review of an Education Health and Care Plan is held in conjunction with the PEP.
- Liaising with the class teacher, designated teacher, specialists and parents when considering interventions to support the progress of CLA/PLAC.
- Ensuring timely assessment and intervention is in place through provision mapping and allocation of resources to meet specific needs.

All our school staff are responsible for:

- Being aware of CLA and PLAC in their classes and providing them with support and encouragement.
- Apply a positive behaviour approach or relational approach to CLA and PLAC through developing an awareness of attachment theory and evidence based trauma approaches – plus understanding the young person's journey.
- Preserving confidentiality where appropriate, showing sensitivity and understanding.
- Promoting the self-esteem of CLA and PLAC.
- Being vigilant for any signs of:
 - bullying or peer on peer abuse towards CLA or PLAC
 - safeguarding issues which can impact particularly on CLA and PLAC.

Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

It is statutory for all CLA to have a PEP and it is an integral part of their Care Plan. The PEP is an evolving record of what needs to happen for a pupil to enable them to make expected progress and fulfil their potential. It will reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning which meets the identified educational needs of the child.

Our school will work with other professionals and the child's carers, using the PEP to support the child's educational needs, raise the child's aspirations and improve their life chances. All relevant bodies, such as the LA, the designated teacher and carers, will involve the child in the PEP process at all stages.

The PEP will address the pupil's full range of education and development needs, including:

- If relevant, access to quality nursery provision that is appropriate to the child's age.
- On-going catch-up support, which will be made available for children who have fallen behind with work.
- Suitable education agreed with the LA, where the child is not in school because of suspension or exclusion (this should be in place on the 2nd day of any fixed term suspension).
- Transitional support where needed, such as if a child is moving to a new school.
- School attendance and behaviour support, where appropriate.
- Support to help the child meet their aspirations, which includes:
 - Support to achieve at least expected levels of progress for the relevant national key stage and to complete an appropriate range of approved qualifications.
 - Careers advice, guidance and financial information about FE, training and employment, that focuses on the child's strengths, capabilities and the outcomes they want to achieve.
 - Out-of-school hours learning activities, study support and leisure interests.

Working with Agencies and the Virtual School Head Teacher

Our school will ensure that copies of all relevant reports are forwarded to the social workers, in addition to parents/carers or staff at residential homes where relevant.

Our school will coordinate their review meetings; for example, hold their annual EHCP review at the same time as a PEP review.

Our school will work with other agencies to exchange information such as changes in circumstances, suspensions, exclusions or attendance issues.

Our school will complete Attendance records on the online ePEP system on a weekly basis. This will enable the VS to monitor the attendance of CLA and react promptly if attendance falls or unexplained absences occur. Our Designated Teacher will ensure prompt and communication with the Virtual School if any CLA is absent without authorisation.

Where a **Reduced Timetable (RTT) or Flexible Learning Programme*** is agreed in principle with Corporate Parent and any other persons with Parental Responsibility, then our Designated Teacher will communicate and liaise with the Virtual School, sending the RTT or Flexible Learning Programme (FLP) document for the VS Head Teacher's consideration and signature if approved.

Behaviour management strategies will be agreed between the VSH and the school, to ensure challenging behaviour is managed in the most effective way for that individual child.

Our Designated Teacher for CLA and PLAC will communicate with the Virtual School Link and Child's Social Worker to facilitate the completion of the PEP to a high standard.

Through our Designated Teacher the school will work with the Virtual School, Social Worker and other relevant agencies to monitor any arrangements in place so that actions and activities recorded in the child's PEP are implemented without delay.

Our Designated Teacher will ensure that the PEP clearly shows how the PP+ Grant will be used. If necessary, this may involve consulting the Virtual School prior to a PEP meeting to gain advice on using the PP+ most effectively to accommodate the child's educational attainment and progress.

Additional funding for further intervention can be requested at any time, not just at the PEP.

**A FLP is where the child is off site for any element of their school week eg at alternative provision.*

Training

Our Designated Teacher and other school staff involved in the education of CLA and PLAC have received appropriate training - or this has been prioritised for action. This includes information about the following:

- School admissions arrangements
- SEND
- Supporting SEMH
- Attachment and the impact of trauma; relational approaches and managing, understanding and responding to behaviours which challenge.
- Attendance/Suspensions/Exclusions
- Homework - raising educational outcomes, supporting carers.
- Promoting high aspirations for achievement, future education, training and employment.
- Supporting transitions
- Promoting positive educational and recreational activities, including Cultural Capital

Pupil Mental Health

CLA and PLAC are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues which can impact their behaviour and education. Our Designated Teacher has awareness, training and skills regarding a child's needs and how to support them in relation to behaviour management and mental health.

Our Designated Teacher will work with the Virtual School to ensure the school is able to identify signs of potential mental health issues, understand the impact issues can have on CLA and PLAC, and when appropriate, know how to access further assessment and support.

The PEP includes measures for social, emotional and behavioural development, these will be completed and used to help social workers and other relevant professionals to form a view about each of our CLA's emotional wellbeing.

Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions

Past experiences of CLA and PLAC will be considered when designing and implementing the school's **Behaviour or Relational Policy**, ensuring that it is suitably flexible and inclusive.

Designated Teacher for LAC & PLAC February 2018 [The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children 2018 [Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Our school will have regard to the DfE's statutory guidance and, as far as possible, avoid suspension for any CLA or PLAC. Where a suspension is considered, our school will consult with the Virtual School prior to the suspension, to consider what additional support can be provided to prevent this. In the event of a suspension, our school will ensure that suitable alternative provision will be in place from the first day of the suspension.

No Looked After Child should be permanently excluded and our school will always seek support and advice from the Virtual School at the earliest opportunity in order to prevent this, similarly for Previously Looked After Children.

Our school will have regard to Shropshire's Inclusion Strategy and make use of support available - such as the Inclusion Advice Forum.

Pupils with SEND

Our SENCo, Class teacher, Designated Teacher and specialists will involve the Virtual School/ Social Worker, Carers/ Parents when considering interventions to support their child's progress. Support for CLA with SEND or where SEND is being identified will be included for discussion in the child's PEP and Care Plan reviews.

Our school refers to [The SEND local offer | Shropshire Council](#)

Information Sharing

Appropriate and specific arrangements for sharing reliable data are in place at our school to ensure that the education needs of CLA and PLAC are understood and met.

The arrangements set out:

- Who has access to what information and how the security of data will be ensured in order to comply with the latest GDPR.
- How pupils and parents are informed of, and allowed to challenge, information that is kept about them.
- How carers contribute to and receive information.
- Mechanisms for sharing information between the school and relevant LA departments.
- How relevant information about individual pupils is passed between authorities, departments and the school when pupils move.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by our Designated Teacher and Headteacher.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is: March 2025