



# **Looked After Children Policy for Laurus Trust Primary Schools**

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## Definition

Children and young people become 'Looked After Children (LAC)' if they have been taken into care by the Local Authority, or have been accommodated by the Local Authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most LAC will be living in foster homes but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or placed at home with their natural parent(s). A 'Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)' child is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales. LAC and PLAC have an Individual Education Plan.

## Legal Framework

This policy should be read in conjunction with the 'Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children – Statutory Guidance on their roles and responsibilities February 2018 Guidance'.

## Responsibility of the Head of School

The Head of School recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of LAC, when compared with their peers and is committed to all playing an influential role in providing quality education for all pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes and ensuring that the Designated Teacher and staff carry out their responsibilities effectively. The Head of School will, therefore:

- Appoint the Designated Teacher. Ensure the Designated Teacher: '*a qualified teacher who has completed appropriate induction period and is working as a teacher at school (regulation 3(2))*' or is a Headteacher/ Acting Headteacher of the school (regulation 3(3))'.
- Regulations (2009): '*require that the person designated is a qualified teacher who has completed the appropriate induction period (if required) and is working as a teacher at the school*' (regulation 3(2)).
- Ensure the Designated Teacher has received appropriate training about school admission arrangements; Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities; attendance and exclusions.
- Provide an annual report to the Local Governing Body Academy Committee on the number of LAC and PLAC pupils in school; their attendance; attainment levels (and progress) and general well-being (including information of Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) spending).

## Responsibility of the Local Governing Body (LGB) Academy Committee

The LGB Academy Committee of Laurus Primaries will:

- Ensure the school has a comprehensive policy for LAC/PLAC and review the effective implementation of this policy at least every two years.
- Ensure that there is a named Designated Governor for LAC and PLAC.
- Ensure that the Designated Governor links with the Designated Teacher and receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the LGB. Including supervising the monitoring of progress and attendance and the impact of PP+ funding.

- Ensures that the Designated Teacher has received appropriate training.
- Ensure that admission criteria prioritise LAC and PLAC, according to the Code of Practice on Admissions. Ensure that there are no unintended barriers to admissions of LAC and PLAC.
- To be aware of the resource implications and expertise support the Designated Teacher may need.
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for LAC and PLAC.
- For safeguarding and confidentiality reasons, ensure that information will be collected and reported in ways that preserve anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.
- Ensure that the school's other policies and procedures give LAC and PLAC equal access in respect of: admission to school and that the needs of LAC and PLAC are considered in all school policies (including identifying LAC and PLC who are Gifted and Talented, ensuring LAC and PLAC with SEND needs are being met and that additional Safeguarding and SEMH needs are met).

### **Responsibility of the Designated Teacher**

The Designated Teacher will:

- Be an advocate for LAC and PLAC and take on a leadership role in promoting educational achievement for Lac and PLAC.
- Ensure a smooth and welcoming induction for the child and carer/s (and parent/s where possible). Note any specific requirements, including care status.
- Contribute to development and review of whole school policies with LAC and PLAC in mind.
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is completed (within 20 days of entering care or joining a new school). This should be prepared with the child and the carer/s (and parent/s if possible), in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies. Where appropriate, the PEP should take account of any Initial Support, SEND Support Plan (SSP), Educational Health Care Plan, career plan or any other relevant plans.
- Ensure that each LAC/PLAC has an identified member of staff that they can talk to and liaise with staff who work closely with LAC and PLAC.
- Liaise with the relevant Virtual Head/Local Authority representative to secure Pupil Premium Plus funding and support the HoS in ensuring this funding is spent most effectively to support the LAC/PLAC.
- Ensure entry to examinations for all LAC/PLAC, to co-ordinate support for the child in the school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary.
- Encourage LAC to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning using LAC funding as needed.
- Ensure staff and governors receive relevant information and training (including information about VSHs and PEPs).
- Ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis.
- Provide written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible.
- Seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded.
- Work closely with the Safeguarding Lead, Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCO) and the Pastoral Manager.

- Support staff to raise attainment for LAC and PLAC
- Form good lines of communication with parents/ carers of LAC and PLAC.
- Carefully monitor attainment and patterns in areas such as attendance for LAC and PLAC.
- Liaise with professionals who are involved in supporting LAC and PLAC.

### **Responsibility of All Staff/ Individual Class Teachers**

- To have high aspirations and celebrate the educational and personal achievement of LAC and PLAC.
- To ensure entry to examinations for LAC and PLAC.
- To be aware LAC and PLAC personal circumstances and individual needs.
- To be familiar with the Guidance on LAC and PLAC.
- To respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings.
- To liaise with the Designated Teacher where a LAC/PLAC is experiencing difficulty.
- To have good communication with parents/ carers and external agencies.

### **Personal Education Plan**

All LAC have a care plan, of which the Personal Education Plan (PEP) is an integral part and is led by their social worker and supported by school. The Designated Teacher will lead on how the PEP is developed and used in school to make sure the child's progress towards education targets is monitored.

For further information, please refer to the relevant sections of 'Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children – Statutory Guidance on their roles and responsibilities February 2018 Guidance'.

### **Funding**

Looked-after children and children adopted from care, on a special guardianship or child arrangements order are eligible for PP+ funding. This is additional funding provided to help improve the attainment of looked-after and previously looked-after children and close the attainment gap between this group and their peers.

### **The Voice of the Child**

Laurus Trust Primary Schools are committed to understanding the importance of listening to and taking account of the child's wishes and feelings about their education and social and emotional development.

### **Training**

The Head of School, Designated Teacher and Professional Learning Lead will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in all statutory guidance.