

THE PRIORY PRIMARY ACADEMY TRUST	DATE AGREED	Jan 2024
POLICY AND PROCEDURE STATEMENT	REVISION DATE	Jan 2026
 The Priory Primary School		
Designated Teacher for LAC and PLAC Children Policy		
HEAD TEACHER	Matt Walsh	
CHAIR OF GOVERNORS	Prubie Payne-Sahota	

Date	Amendments/Updates
Jan 24	Additional info in Intro. Addition of Angela Selwood as DT definitions of looked after children

Designated Teacher – Mrs Angela Selwood

Designated Safeguarding Lead - Mrs Debra Adams

Designated Governor - XXXXXXX

Introduction

Nationally, Looked After Children significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion, compared with their peers. Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that Looked After Children are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being.

The Priory Primary School believes that in partnership with Hampshire County Council as Corporate Parents we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of Looked After Children.

AIMS

To provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children.

To support our looked after children and give them access to every opportunity to achieve their potential and enjoy learning and take as full a part as possible in all school activities.

To ensure that school [policies and procedures are followed for LAC as for all children.

To work with the Virtual School and ensure that carers and social workers for LAC are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment.

To fulfil our schools' role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our Looked After Children, by asking the question, **'Would this be good enough for my child?'**

Our school's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education
- Promoting attendance
- Targeting support
- Having high expectations and raising aspiration
- Promoting inclusion
- Achieving stability and continuity
- Early intervention and priority action
- Listening to children
- Promoting health and well-being
- Minimising exclusions and promoting stability
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals

IN PURSUIT OF THIS POLICY WE WILL

- Nominate a Designated teacher for Looked After Children who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them.

- Nominate a school governor to ensure that the needs of Looked After Children in the school are taken into account at a school management level and to support the Designated Teacher.
- Support the Designated teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend training on Looked After Children.

Who are Looked After Children?

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They fall into four main groups:

- children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
- children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21).

The term 'in care' refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 - they may live with foster carers, in a Children's home, in a residential school, with relatives or with parents under supervision. Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are 'accommodated' by the local authority under section 20 of the Children Act – they may live in foster care, in a Children's home or in a residential school. All these groups are said to be 'Looked After Children' -LAC. They may be looked after by our local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

LAC reviews, involving the school, will take place up until an adoption order has been granted. However, Pupil Premium Plus funding will continue for LAC until they are 16 years old.

The governing body of The Priory Primary School is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. This governing body recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of children in residential and foster care, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in "Guidance on the Education of Looked After Children" (May 2000) and Section 52 of the Children Act 2004. Children who are "looked after" may be "Accommodated" "In Care" or "remanded/ detained" as follows:

Accommodated (Section 20)

This is a voluntary arrangement, because parents are ill, missing, unable to cope, or as part of a child protection plan negotiated with the family. The parents retain parental responsibility.

In Care

A child is in care only if a court has granted a Care Order which it will issue if it believes a child to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. A care order generally gives parental responsibility to the local authority, or shares this with the parents.

Remanded/Detained

A child can be remanded or detained as in the following:

- an emergency protection order
- removed by police using their powers of protection
- remanded by a court following criminal charges

• a court directing a social services department to accommodate a child (already on a supervision order for criminal behaviour) for up to six months. Looked After Children may (or may not) have some or all the following issues: • low self esteem • poor education standards due to time out of school • delayed social/emotional/ cognitive development • be bullied or bully others. • be prone to mental health issues • be isolated with few friends • have behaviour issues. • poor attachments to others. • have a need to be very private

Looked After Children may (or may not) have some or all the following issues:

- low self-esteem
- poor education standards due to time out of school
- delayed emotional/social/cognitive development
- be bullied or bully others
- be prone to mental health issues
- be isolated and have few friends
- have behaviour issues
- poor attachment to others
- have a need to be private

This makes them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life-chances. The governing body of The Priory Primary School is committed to ensuring that these children are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following is in place and working effectively.

- a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children
- Personal Education Plans for all Looked After Children
- all staff to have a clear understanding of confidentiality and issues that affect looked after children
- effective strategies that supports the education of the vulnerable group

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNING BODY

The governing body of this school will

- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for Looked After children
- be aware of whether the school has Looked After Children and how many (no names)
- ensure that there is a named DT for Looked After Children
- liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure that the DT is enabled to carry out their responsibilities in relation to Looked After Children
- support the Head Teacher, DT and other staff in ensuring the needs of LAC are met
- nominate a governor who links with the DT, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body (these reports should not include any names of the individual children for child protection and confidentiality reasons)
- review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every 3 years.
- review the effective implementation

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

Designated teacher (DT)

The role became statutory in September 2009 under the Children and Young Persons' Act 2008 (the 2008 Act). The designated teacher must be a qualified teacher or a member of staff who is likely to gain QTS by September 2014. Ideally, s/he should be a senior member of staff who has enough status and experience to

advise and provide training to school staff on issues relating to LAC. They need to be able to influence decisions about the teaching and learning of these children.

The Designated teacher in school will:

- Maintain an up to date record of all Looked After Children who are on the school roll. This will include:
 - Status i.e. care order or accommodated.
 - Type of Placement i.e. Foster, respite, residential.
 - Name of Social Worker, area office, telephone number.
 - Daily contact and numbers e.g. name of parent or carer or key worker in children's home.
 - SEN Code of Practice
 - Child Protection information when appropriate.
 - Baseline information and all test results.
 - Attendance figures
 - Exclusions
- Ensure that there is a Personal Education Plan (PEP) for each child/young person to include appropriate targets and above information. This must be compatible with the child's/young person's Care Plan and where applicable include any other school plan, e.g. Statement of Special Education Need, and associated plans, Transition Plan, Pastoral Support Programme.
- Ensure that someone attends Children's Services Reviews on each child/young person and/or always prepares a written report which promotes the continuity and stability of their education.
- Attending relevant training about LAC and acting as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to LAC.
- Liaise with the Virtual School for Looked After Children on a regular basis with regard to the performance, attendance and attainment of Looked After Children.
- Ensure that if/when the child transfers school all relevant information is forwarded to the receiving school as a matter of priority.
- Ensuring any LAC new to the school are welcomed positively and assessed when they start at the school to identify strengths and weaknesses in their learning. This will be used to inform planning and teaching.
- Arranging for a mentor or key worker to whom the young person can talk to. Arranging for the LAC to be supported by peers
- Ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when Looked After Children are underachieving and have early interventions to improve this in line with existing school policy. Ensure that LAC may be prioritised for any 1-1 tuition that may be available and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home as a way of improving life chances for LAC - . Promote good home-school links.
- Ensure that systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about Looked After Children where and when appropriate. As well as ensuring that a culture of high expectations and aspirations for LAC are fostered through the understanding of issues that may affect the learning of LAC
- Ensure that Looked After Children, along with all children are listened to and have equal opportunity to pastoral support in school. For example, ensuring that LAC have a voice in setting their learning targets as part of their PEP.
- Leading on developing and implementing the PEP within the school. The social worker is responsible for initiating the PEP process completing via the Asset system. Monitoring the child's progress against the targets on the PEP and extending these targets if they have been achieved.
- Ensure that they keep the school up to date with current legislation and its implication for the school in respect of Looked After Children.

- Convening urgent multi-agency meetings if a LAC is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion.
- Produce at least one annual report to the Governing body on the performance of the looked after children who are on the school roll. This should include:
 - Current progress, attendance and exclusions (if any)
 - Any concerns regarding behaviour
 - How the PEP has been implemented and whether the actions put in place are effective in addressing the learning needs of LAC
 - How the DT works in partnership with the LA
 - training undertaken for carrying out the role effectively.
 - The report must not mention the children's names for confidentiality reasons

CONFIDENTIALITY

- Information on looked after children will be shared with school staff on a 'need to know basis'
- the DT will discuss what information is shared with which school staff at the PEP meeting
- once this has been agreed with the social worker, carer, young person and other relevant parties, complete confidentiality is to be maintained.

TRAINING

The Head Teacher and/or DT will be responsible for ensuring that all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy

PERSONAL EDUCATION PLAN (PEP) COMPLETION

The Hampshire Virtual School now uses an electronic PEP via the ASSET system in order to streamline the creation and sharing of the PEP documents between Social workers and schools.

All Designated Teachers will have access to the system if they have a Hampshire-looked-after child on roll. If school does not have a Hampshire looked-after child, you do not need to access the system until you have a Hampshire looked-after child on roll. Asset will send the DT an email to log into the system.

All preschool and post-16 children and those who are statutory school-age will be expected to have a PEP.

- social worker informs school of a child becoming looked after (or a Looked after child enters the school)
- DT sent email login details for the PEP system - The PEP is very intuitive, with built-in training and guidance notes on each page, which Designated Teachers can access as soon as they log into the platform.
- relevant meetings are arranged with the allocated social worker and dates are set for the completion of the PEP - PEPs need to be initiated within ten working days of a child becoming looked after or starting a new school, wherever they are placed, in line with statutory guidance. As everyone will have access to the new system, all PEPs should be completed on Asset; the previous Word-based system will no longer be accepted or used.

FOR ALL ENQUIRIES ABOUT A LOOKED AFTER CHILD AND THEIR PEP WE CAN CONTACT THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL AT the Virtual School inbox virtualschool@hants.gov.uk

For more information about Looked After Children, please see:

DfE – Looked After Children Detailed Information

<https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/looked-after-children>

Improving the Educational Attainment of Children in Care (Looked after Children)

<http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-00523-2009.pdf>

Improving the attainment of looked after children in primary schools – Guidance for Schools

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190244/01047-2009.pdf

This policy links with a number of other school policies and it is important that Governors have regard to the needs of Looked After Children when reviewing them:

- The school code of conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy