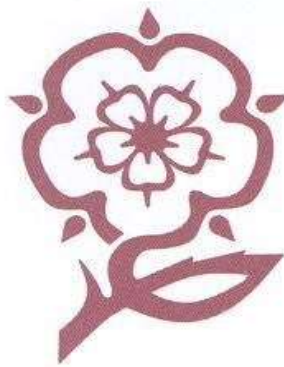


BULLERS WOOD SCHOOL

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



Quod Potes Tenta
Strive to your Utmost

Policy created by: Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children	Date of adoption: November 2023	Next review due by: October 2024
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Designated teacher for LAC & PLAC :

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Governor for LAC & PLAC:

Peter Selby

Aims

Many LAC (Looked After Children) & PLAC (Previously Looked After Children) will have experienced; trauma connected to their birth family, unstable living arrangements and disrupted schooling. In addition, a significant proportion of LAC & PLAC have some form of Special Educational Need, poor physical or mental health, display unregulated behaviour and may have been excluded from school.

This lived experience has acted as a barrier to progress and has resulted in the attainment of this group not being in line with the attainment of their peers nationally, the impacts of which continue into adult life. As a school we aim to ensure that we:

- Provide a safe, inclusive and stable environment for all LAC & PLAC, where their educational experience is valued, high aspirations are encouraged and belief in the potential of all children is held by all.
- Provide all LAC & PLAC with support to enable them to have every opportunity to enjoy, learn and achieve in line with their peers. Thus promoting equality of opportunity.
- Have policies and procedures for LAC & PLAC that meet the requirements outlined within 'The designated teacher for looked after and previously looked-after children, Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities, DfE February 2018.'

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.

Definitions

Looked-after children (LAC) 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 (PLAC) 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 whom 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

A Personal Education Plan (PEP)

The termly PEP meetings act as a focus to ensure that everyone is actively prioritising the education needs of the LAC. The DT will lead on how the PEP is used as a tool in school to make sure the student's progress towards education targets is monitored. Within this the DT has overall responsibility for PEPs as set out in this document.

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 them as if they were in a single school. The VSH is also responsible for providing information and advice to schools, parents, and guardians regarding previously looked-after children.

Pupil Premium Plus grant – LAC

Pupil Premium+ (PP+) Grant for LAC is provided by the Local Authority to assist the school with ensuring that students meet the targets outlined within their PEP. It can be used to support:

- Academic achievement and progress
- Wider achievement e.g., in an area in which they have shown a talent, e.g sports
- Attendance
- Inclusion (by reducing internal and external exclusion)
- Social skills
- Transition into the next key stage and/or a new learning provider

Exact funding arrangements differ between Boroughs. Where further funding is needed for support, advice from the Virtual School will be sought.

Pupil Premium Plus Grant – PLAC

The PP+ Grant for PLAC is provided directly to the school, rather than via the local Authority. Whilst PP+ for PLAC is not a 'personal budget', the PP+ will be used to fund any support over and above that which is provided for any other student.

PP+ for PLAC is also 'pooled' and used to provide additional support and services to raise the attainment of PLAC within school as outlined by our online Pupil Premium Strategy Statement and as part of a 3 – year Pupil Premium Strategy, for instance;

- Attachment Training for all staff
- Purchasing additional screening tools for SEND identification
- Mentoring
- One to one tuition

Entitlement of looked – after and previously looked-after children

All looked – after and previously looked – after students will be entitled to;

- A dedicated mentor (if appropriate), in addition to a designated Teacher and pastoral support
- Priority access to interventions and support
- Priority entry to extra – curricular clubs and activities
- Priority access to careers advice
- Priority places on educational school trips and visits
- Funding from Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)

Responsibilities

The Governing Body

Governor for LAC & PLAC

Peter Selby

The named Governor will ensure that:

- The needs of LAC & PLAC are considered, reflected and supported within all relevant school policies.
- Governors and senior leadership are aware of the legal responsibilities and guidance LAC&PLAC in education.
- Admissions practices continue to give LAC & PLAC the highest priority admission to the school, as outlined within 'School Admissions Code' DfE 2021.
- PP + spending is scrutinised ensuring that it is used appropriately and effectively.
- Resources are available to address the needs specific to LAC & PLAC, and that disparity in academic progress in comparison to their peers within the school, including patterns of attendance and exclusion and provision for high prior attainers are highlighted and swiftly addressed.
- An appropriate member of staff is appointed as Designated Teacher, who has access to training and resources (including time) to undertake their responsibilities and has the seniority to influence Senior leadership, and to meet and champion the needs of LAC & PLAC throughout the school.
- All staff are supported in recognising and meeting the needs of LAC/PLAC

The Headteacher

Is responsible for ensuring that;

- The role of the designated Teacher (DT) is always by an appropriate member of staff (including arrangements to allow for staff absences and resignation). The DT should have the seniority to work with Senior Leadership, Governors, and all staff to provide information, advice and champion the achievement and needs of LAC & PLAC students.
- The DT is provided with time to fulfil their role and attends the Local Authority DT Forum
- All school staff are aware of 'keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance, particularly in relation to vulnerable groups and their propensity towards being both victims and perpetrator of criminal and Child Sexual exploitation and abuse.
- Policies and procedures to monitor and address the needs of, and support for LAC & PLAC students are in place and adhered to, with reference to academic progress, admissions, attendance, safeguarding and exclusions, and swift action is taken when concerns arise.

- The Department for Education, Ofsted and the Local Authority have data relating to LAC and PCLA made available or reported to them as required.
- The permanent exclusion of LAC & PLAC is avoided, alternatives to exclusion are considered and additional support is put in place to support those students at risk of exclusion.
- An Anti-bullying Policy is in place and stringently followed which recognises that a significant portion of LAC have experienced bullying at some point.

The Designated Teacher

The designated teacher takes lead responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children at our school. They are the initial point of contact for any of the matters set out in the section below.

The following is based on the responsibilities listed in the [DfE's statutory guidance](#). Although the designated teacher must always have lead responsibility, the school can decide how individual functions, including pastoral and administrative tasks, can be appropriately delegated.

Leadership responsibilities

The designated teacher will:

- Act as a central point of initial contact within the school for any matters involving looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Promote the educational achievement of every looked-after and previously looked-after child on roll by:
 - Working with Virtual Schools
 - 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
- 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

Supporting looked-after children

The designated teacher will:

- 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
- If a child is not on track to meet their targets, be instrumental in agreeing on the best way forward with them in order to make progress and ensure that this is reflected in their PEP
- Ensure the identified actions of PEPs are put in place
- During the development and review of PEPs, help the school and relevant local authority decide what arrangements work best for pupils
- Put in place robust arrangements to have strengths and difficulties questionnaires (SDQs) completed for looked-after children in line with the local authority requirements, and use the results of these SDQs to inform PEPs
- Ensure that:
 - 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 an agreed provision is being delivered
 - PEPs are clear about what has or has not been taken forward, noting what resources may be required to support the child further 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
- 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

Supporting both looked-after children and previously looked-after children

The designated teacher 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
- 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
- Access training and keep up to date with good practice, to ensure that they and other staff have strong awareness and training around the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children and how to support them.
- Play a crucial part in decisions on how pupil premium funding is used to support looked-after children previously
- Encourage parents' and guardians' involvement in deciding how pupil premium funding is used to support their child, and be the primary 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
- Be aware of the special educational needs (SEN) of looked-after and previously looked-after children, and make sure teachers also have awareness and understanding of this
- Ensure the [SEND code of practice](#), as it relates to looked-after children, is followed
- Make sure PEPs work in harmony with any education, health and care (EHC) plans that a looked-after child may have
- Ensure that, with the help of VSHs, they have the skills to identify signs of potential SEN issues in looked-after and previously looked-after children and know how to access further assessment and support where necessary
- 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
- Put in place robust arrangements to have strengths and difficulties questionnaires (SDQs) completed for looked-after children, and use the results of these SDQs to inform PEPs
- Put in place mechanisms for understanding the emotional and behavioural needs of previously looked-after children

Relationships beyond the school

The designated teacher 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 other relevant parties in the local authority regarding any decisions about changes in care placements that 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 to 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 is 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
- Where a looked-after child is at risk of exclusion:
 - 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, talk to the child's parents or guardians before seeking advice from the VSH on avoiding exclusion

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked after children. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Admissions
- Pupil premium statement and strategy
- Equalities
- Exclusions
- SEN
- Supporting pupils with medical needs