



Looked After Children

Policy updated by:	J Bogges
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Agreed by Headteacher:	N Anderson
Agreed by LAC Lead:	Z Omar-Davies



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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 Leicester City Primary PRU believes that we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children.

Who are Looked After Children?

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is '**looked after**' by a local authority if he/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.

Aims

The aims of the Primary PRU are to:

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



- ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for looked after children as for all children;
- ensure that all Looked After Children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum;
- provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual's needs and ability
- ensure that looked after students take as full a part as possible in school activities;
- ensure that the Virtual School, carers and social workers of Looked After Children are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment;
- 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?**'
- and to ensure that Looked After Children are involved, where possible, in decisions affecting their future provision.

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
- Promoting inclusion
- Achieving stability and continuity
- Early intervention and priority action
- Listening to children
- Promoting health and well-being
- Reducing exclusions and promoting stability
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Primary PRU will nominate a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them.

The Designated Teacher is Zaheera Omar-Davies (Deputy Headteacher).

The Primary PRU will nominate a member of the PRU Management Committee to ensure that the needs of Looked After Children are taken into account at a school management level and to support the designated teacher.



Designated Teacher

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, but 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 will have the following responsibilities within school:

- knowing who all the LAC are in school and ensuring that availability of all relevant details from school record-keeping systems as required
- attending relevant training about LAC and acting as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to LAC
- promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how LAC should learn
- helping school staff understand the issues that affect the learning of LAC such as differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children and in making full use of formative assessments
- making sure that LAC are prioritised in one-to-one tuition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home
- removing the barriers to learning for LAC
- ensuring any LAC new to the school are welcomed positively and assessed when they start at the school to identify strengths and weaknesses in the learning. This will be used to inform planning and teaching.
- developing personalised learning packages for LAC in conjunction with the relevant teaching staff
- ensuring that the LAC in their school have a voice in setting learning targets for themselves
- championing for LAC
- leading on developing and implementing the PEP within the school. The social worker is responsible for initiating the PEP process
- monitoring the child's progress against the targets on the PEP and extending these targets if they have been achieved
- ensuring the child makes a smooth transition to the new school and that the child's records are transferred without delay



- liaising with the Virtual School in all aspects of the LAC progress and support
- convening urgent multi-agency meetings in a LAC is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion
- arranging for a mentor or key worker to whom the young person can talk to; arranging for the LAC to be supported to its peers
- producing at least one annual report to the Management Committee which 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 Designated teacher works with the LA, training undertaken for carrying out the role effectively. The report must not mention the children's names for confidentiality reasons
- promoting good home-school links and the importance of education as a way of improving life chances for LAC.

The Management Committee

The Management Committee will have the following responsibilities within school:

- Support the local Authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children.
- Ensure that the Designated Teacher is given the appropriate level of support in order to fulfil their role.
- in partnership with the Headteacher, ensure that, through their training and development, the Designated Teacher has the opportunity to acquire and keep up-to-date the necessary skills, knowledge and training to understand the response to the specific teaching and learning needs of LAC.
- Governing bodies and the SLT should make sure that the Designated Teacher role contributes to the deeper understanding of everyone in the school who is likely to be involved in supporting LAC to achieve.
- The Management Committee, in partnership with the Headteacher, is responsible for monitoring how well the role is working. As part of this monitoring, an annual report will be received from the Designated Teacher.

Links with External Agencies/Organisations

The Primary PRU recognises the important contribution that external support services make in supporting Looked After Children. Colleagues from the following support services may be involved with individual Looked After Children:



- Social care worker / Community care worker / Residential child care worker
- Virtual School for Looked After Children
- Other Virtual Schools for Looked After Children from other Local Authorities
- Educational Psychologists and others from the Local Authority SEN services
- Medical officers
- School nurses
- CAMHS
- Education Welfare Officers
- Youth Offending Service
- External Learning Providers

Links to Other Policies

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

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Home-School Agreement
- Equality, Diversity and Cohesion Policy

Monitoring and Review

The Designated Teacher for LAC will monitor, review and evaluate the impact of the Looked After Children policy and practice on an annual basis, reporting their findings to the Management Committee.

Sources of Additional Advice and Information

Leicester City Virtual School

- Telephone: 0116 454 1920 (option 3)
- Email: vst-lac@leicester.gov.uk

[Promoting the Education of Looked After Children](#) - DfE Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities, July 2014)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021](#)