



St Leonard's C of E Primary School
Nurturing hearts, minds and bodies through Christ

Policy for the Education of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

Introduction

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Matthew 19:14

Whatever may be happening in the lives of Looked after Children, the fact that they are in care usually means that something traumatic has occurred in their family life.

The best chance Looked After Children have of overcoming these difficulties is if we, as professionals, vigorously take on the role of 'Corporate Parent' ensuring that they get the service we would want "as if they were our own children."

'As the corporate parent of children in care, the state has a special responsibility for their wellbeing. Like any good parent, it should put its own children first. This means being a powerful advocate for them, to receive the best of everything.'

Care Matters; Transforming the Lives of Children and Young People in Care. DfES 2006

'Looked After Children have a right to expect the outcomes we want for every child to achieve these outcomes for looked after children, LA's as their 'corporate parents' should demonstrate the strongest commitment to helping every child they look after to achieve the highest educational standards he or she possibly can'

Promoting the Educational Achievements of Looked After Children. Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities DCFS 2010



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What is meant by a Child Looked After?

Care Order (under section 31 of the Education Act 1989)

This is a court order and the Local Authority shares parental responsibility with the parents. A care order is made when a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm and the making of the care order is better for the child than if no order was made. A care order can last until the child is 18, or an alternative order is made (i.e. Adoption), or the order is discharged. (An interim Care Order placed the child in the care of the LA and allows the court a period of time to decide whether or not a full order should be made)

Accommodated (Section 20 of the Children's Act 1989).

Parents retain primary responsibility with the LA acting as a corporate parent. A person with parental responsibility can remove the child from LA accommodation at any time, without giving notice.

Section 44

An ' Emergency Protection Order' is sometimes issued in an emergency situation, where a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, harm or abuse and is a temporary arrangement pending an Interim Care Order hearing.

- Adopted children and children in Special Guardianship or child arrangement orders (formally residence orders) are no longer a looked after child.



Our Role as a School

Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.

Proverbs 22:6

At St Leonard's School we believe in approaching everything we do from a place of love and understanding and we put emotional support at the heart of this. In all of our policies we look to support children using our FRUITS ethos, Emotion Works, Philosophy for Children, Thinking Moves, Forest Schools, Educational Visits and Active Learning.

FRUITS

As a Church of England school, everything we do is built around our FRUITS ethos. This is how this relates to our work with looked after children and their families.

Aim:	
Faith - develop courage, resilience and patience, through their own personal faith in God, so they can retain hope and joy even during hard experiences. (John 1:12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We support children and families to find strength, patience and courage during the difficult times they may face during a child's life.• We find ways to bring joy and celebration into each child's time at school such as fun events, school trips and in school celebrations.• We provide prayer spaces and spaces indoors and outdoors for quiet reflection – whatever faith the child and their family.• We encourage children to have resilience and faith in themselves
Relationships - flourish through strong relationships with themselves, each other, creation and God. (Luke 10:27)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We build mutually respectful and strong relationships with children.• We see families as working partners and learn from them as we support their child.• We encourage and support children in building and maintaining friendships.• We build constructive and supportive relationships with all professionals around the child and family such as those giving emotional, medical or social work support• For children who still retain contact with their birth parents we encourage



	attendance at PEP meetings and ensure updates from school are available (Subject to Social Worker advice and guidance)
<p>Uniqueness - have the self-confidence to understand their uniqueness and God-given purpose to become the person God created them to be. (Matthew 10:30)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We help children to explore their talents and interests • We encourage children to build on their unique interests • We celebrate achievements with Head Teacher awards and in class praise and awards • We embrace each unique personality and work with children as we follow their unique needs • We help children to reach their full potential • We have staff with a broad range of experience and training in a variety of different special education needs, intervention programmes, and communication approaches • We have regular support from an autism specialist consultant to build supportive packages and plans for any child requiring this support • We celebrate uniqueness in all of the diverse members of our school and world community and respect their unique qualities, beliefs and individuality
<p>Intellect – develop a keen intellect and use this talent and ability wisely to protect and enhance themselves, their communities and the environment. (Proverbs 3:13)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We give targeted intervention as needed, both in small groups and one-to-one • We support areas in which children need further support and encourage areas in which they have a God given talent or interest • We offer a wide ranging way in which to explore each child's intellect including Philosophy for Children, Thinking Moves and Emotion Works • We use outdoor learning and Forest School throughout the week as we teach children how to respect and care for our planet • We support the people of the world with ventures such as the Food Bank, charity days and the Christmas Shoe Box appeal



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Treat themselves and others with dignity and respect maintaining a healthy body and thriving community. **(1 Peter 2:17)**

- We ensure all staff are fully trained in Safeguarding and their training is regularly updated
- We explore body autonomy, internet safety, use of social media and gaming, and being safe in all ways both through the EYFS and in our PSHE, RE and ICT curriculums.
- We explore what our bodies can do and how our bodies work in Science and in PE and have specially trained PE staff who deliver lessons to all classes
- We teach children to respect their own bodies and also other people's bodies and rights to say no. This starts from nursery class and continues through school in an age appropriate way.
- We offer healthy options at school dinners and snack times
- Through our Design Technology curriculum we explore Healthy Eating and other issues around food such as air miles, Fair Trade food and sustainable living

Salvation – have a recognition that we need to seek forgiveness through Jesus to become friends with God. **(Ephesians 2: 8-9)**

- We encourage children to take responsibility for their actions and make restitution if they do something wrong e.g. if they broke something on purpose we would ask them to help us to fix it once the incident was over
- We support children in resolving conflict between themselves
- We look at ways to use social stories, Philosophy for Children, Emotion Works and Thinking Moves to teach children about social and emotional skills and conflict resolution
- Through stories such as the Easter Story we explore the concept of forgiveness



Emotion Works

Our Emotion Works scheme gives all staff a flexible way to personalise learning for classes and individual children. It is also used for intervention and this is often one of the key interventions used with Looked After Children who need emotional support or need support in working on understanding feelings.

Emotion Works is an educational programme for emotional learning and literacy. Based around a visually supportive framework for learning and talking about emotions, the goal is to build emotional language and understanding in children and young people to help develop emotional competence and resilience.

The 'Cog Model' framework identifies seven categories of emotional knowledge and competence that link together to help show how 'emotion works'. The links between the different cog categories demonstrate the causal connections between concepts such as emotion triggers, body sensations, emotion behaviours, intensity and regulation strategies.

The Cog Model framework and tools can also be used for staff consultation and pupil voice activities when there is an interest or need to discuss real-life emotional events and experiences, and supporting children to communicate their feelings

Forest Schools and Outdoor Learning

By exploring the wider world and being in nature children work on feeling their connectedness to the earth and to each other. For some of our looked after children who need additional emotional or special educational needs support, this can often mean additional Forest School sessions throughout the year.

In exploring tree climbing, mud pie making, skills such as whittling and chatting around the firepit with hot chocolate, children have the wonderful opportunities to build fine and gross motor skills, build sensory processing skills, build proprioceptive and vestibular awareness and just have great fun!

In learning about planting, growing, life cycles, weather, composting and recycling, children learn that they are a part of a bigger picture and a wider world and begin to build their sense of global awareness and citizenship.



Educational Visits

We offer several educational visits in each class throughout the school. Some of these may be day trips and some may be residential trips. For all trips children get experiences and skills that they may not normally get in their day to day life. We also have sports intervention activities which happen off site such as fishing, inclusion competitions and various other events.

For all looked after children we try to cover the cost of the trip using Higher Needs Funding, which the Designated Teacher applies for on the family and school's behalf. Unfortunately this is not available for previously looked after children however, if a family is struggling, families can contact the Designated Teacher or Headteacher to see what school or government support may be available.

Philosophy for Children and Thinking Moves

Philosophy for Children gives children a way to explore their own thoughts and feelings on different subjects and questions. This teaches children the 4Cs of being Caring, Critical, Creative and Collaborative. This approach can be used in class or in intervention to explore any question or concept, putting the child and their thoughts at the centre with the adult as a facilitator – helping children to explore then reach their own conclusions in a well thought out way. Important dimensions of p4c include thinking *with* others (collaborative thinking), thinking *of* others (caring thinking), thinking about thinking (metacognition) and thinking about what matters to oneself and others (reflection).

Thinking Moves

Thinking Moves teaches children the true power of their thinking skills. This approach provides a toolkit of 26 thinking skills which children can use in all areas of their school and home life. They can be used to fully explore any concept, topic or event. The Thinking Moves which might be used to support a looked after child could be;

Ahead – as children think about what they want to achieve in the next day/week/year/long term

Back – When children do Life Story work with their Social Worker or CANW

Connect – Making connections between past events (Back), current feelings and future emotional wellbeing (Ahead)



Explain – Learning to talk about thoughts and emotions

Formulate – Deciding how to tackle a job, task or situation

Group – Grouping activities in a variety of ways e.g. “Subjects I Enjoy” “Subjects I Need Help In”

Headline – Being able to succinctly explain how they feel or what has happened

Listen/Look – Building the skill of being able to listen to their own feelings, emotions and thoughts.

Order – For children with working memory issues – learning how to list what order to tackle tasks in e.g. how to order what they want to write down in their English work. How to order the steps needed to solve a maths problem, etc.

Picture – Learning to picture what they want to achieve (short term e.g. by the end of the lesson or today)(long term e.g. what do I want to do as a future career?)

Question and Respond – Building up these conversational skills in order to build effective relationships and explore the questions they want answers to

Use - Finding tools to support emotional wellbeing. Finding tools to support academic work

Weigh Up – The ability to weigh up various approaches and situations in order to make good choices, initially with support and working towards independent good decision making as a young adult and beyond.

Zoom In/Out – Zooming in to emotions and causes for negative emotions. Zooming out to be able to look at the bigger picture so as not to be overwhelmed by emotions or problems in the moment.



Roles and Responsibilities Within School

The Role of The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children

The role of the Designated Teacher is pivotal to meeting the needs and promoting wellbeing, and progress of looked after children in their school. The Designated Teacher will:

- Ensure the school register for Looked After Children is kept up to date.
- Ensure that the school holds a current Personal Education Plan/EPM for each Looked After Child.
- If there is not an up-to-date PEP in place, they ensure that the child's social worker is contacted and a PEP meeting is arranged.
- Monitor the progress of all Looked After Children within the school and inform senior staff, governors and the Virtual School for CLA.
- Report annually to the governing body on progress.
- Ensure that the school has suitable catch up programmes to support Looked After Children who may have been out of school for a period or have fallen behind.
- Keep up to date with developments and requirements for the education of CLA.
- Ensure that staff are informed, trained and updated on Looked After Children issues.
- Work to maintain a culture of high expectation regarding Looked After Children 'As if they were our own children'.

The Role of the Head Teacher

The Head Teacher will:

- Identify a Designated Teacher for LAC and PLAC
- Ensure cover arrangements are put in place should the Designated Teacher not be available to carry out these legal duties
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor and track the admission, progress, attendance and exclusions (if any) of LAC and PLAC and that appropriate action is taken where outcomes fall below expectations
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of LAC and PLAC
- Ensure that all staff receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance
- Ensure that all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy



The Responsibilities of All Staff

All our staff will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of LAC and PLAC, as for all pupils
- Maintain LAC and PLAC confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively
- Respond positively to a pupil's request to be the named member of staff with whom they can talk to when they feel it necessary
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information
- Work to enable LAC and PLAC to achieve stability and success within the school
- Promote self-esteem for LAC and PLAC
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of LAC and PLAC.

Responsibilities of the Governors

It is considered good practice for a Governing Body to appoint a named governor for Children Looked After. The 2008 Children and Young Persons Act placed a duty upon governing bodies to ensure that they designate a teacher (the Act stipulates that it must be a teacher) who has responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of the school's Looked After Children. This is the case whether or not the school has any Looked After Children currently on roll.

Statutory guidance for governing bodies (*The role and responsibilities of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children DCSF 2009*) includes the requirements that they receive an annual report from their Designated Teacher and they ensure that the Designated Teacher has the necessary support and training in order to undertake their duties.

Governors need to have the following information for their school community:

- The number of Looked After Children on roll and how well they are performing compared to other young people in their school and nationally. They should be aware that there are national and local targets for Looked After Children around end of key stage tests and GCSEs.
- They should know the name of their school's Designated Teacher and how the school specifically supports this group of young people.
- Attendance and exclusion data for Children Looked After and what strategies are in place to address attendance issues and prevent exclusions.



What Do We Do When a Child Becomes Looked After?

The Social Worker should:

- Contact the Designated Teacher at the child's school to arrange a meeting to complete the Personal Education Plan as soon as a child becomes 'Looked After' or a Looked After child joins the school.
- Forward a copy of the PEP to the school so they can complete appropriate sections before the meeting to save time.
- Ensure that the young person and their carer are invited.
- Others that may be invited could be the class teacher or learning support, relevant health professionals, SEND in the case of a child with SEN Statement/Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- The Social Worker should make sure all relevant parts such as the legal status etc. are filled in prior to PEP meetings to save time.
- The Social Worker should be invited to contribute/attend the review and must inform the school/update relevant parts of the PEP if there have been any changes to the care plan which the school needs to be aware of. There are key times when it is important that the Social Worker always attends a PEP review i.e. transition between key stages, changes of school placement, prior to end of statutory school age, changes in home placement or other circumstances that may have a significant impact on learning or emotional wellbeing.

The Designated Teacher should:

- Meet with the young person before PEP meetings to ensure they are aware of the purpose of the meeting and to help with the young person's contribution to the plan.
- Liaise with teachers to set information such as the short term targets, Key Stage results, attendance and current national curriculum target levels are gathered before the meetings for inclusion into the plan.
- Set a time and date for the PEP review meeting (to be reviewed every term)
- Send a copy of the PEP to be sent to the Virtual School: For pupils in Lancashire schools this should be done via the School Portal.
- Arrange the review with the involvement of pupil and carer.
- Check progress against short term targets in the Personal Education Plan.

Funding to support the progress of Children Looked After

Pupil Premium Grant: Funding is allocated to each Local Authority to support educational progress for CLA. This funding is based in £1900 per CLA. The Head Teacher for the Virtual School for CLA in the LA administers this funding. Statutory guidance requires the funding allocated to reflect the needs of the child/young person and there needs to be clear evidence on the use and impact of the funding.



The Personal education Plan provides this evidence. Each submitted PEP is quality assured by the Head of the Virtual School and subsequent payments of PPG made to the school. Currently a maximum of £500 per term is available. High Needs Funding has been made available for those pupils with significant additional needs. Independent schools who have Lancashire CLA placed with them, usually through an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan /SEN Statement) or residential children's home providing in house education, do not receive a separate PPG+ payment. All needs of the pupil should be met through the funding provided to meet the EHCP/Statement/school/residential place.

High Needs Funding: This funding is part of the PPG. All non- independent schools are able to apply for additional funding when the additional needs of the pupil cannot be met from their current PPG. Requests for this funding is made to the Head of the Virtual School. Forms are accessed from the School Portal. Schools are required to provide feedback on the impact of the additional funding to the Virtual School.

Personal Educations Plan Support Allowance (PEPSA): This funding is designed to provide educational activities/resources identified through the PEP process, outside of school to promote progress and engagement. Applications for PEPSA funding is made by the Social Worker and all CLA are eligible

Closing the Gap

Children Looked After as a cohort, make significantly less progress, and achieve less well, than their peers who are not looked after. This gap in progress and achievement can have a huge impact on their life chances and prospects. One measure of how well we are doing in supporting CLA, is how well we are narrowing that gap and at what rate. This 'gap' in attainment and progress makes it especially important that we closely monitor our Looked After Children's educational outcomes. This is not only important at the end of Key Stages and at GCSE but also at regular intervals throughout the school year.

At St Leonard's CofE Primary School we use a variety of approaches to help close this gap including (but not limited to);

- Working closely with NHS medical professionals
- Working with our Educational Psychologist and School Nurse
- Accessing advice and support from our Reachout ASC advisor when there may be concerns about possible autism
- Lego Therapy
- Providing first choice access to residential trips, day trips, PE additional activities in school and out of school and after school clubs
- Providing small group and 1:1 intervention and ongoing support



- Providing a 1:1 Teaching Assistant where necessary and possible
- Approaching all of our involvement with children with the “as if they were our own children” ethos and an ethos of love (please read our school Ethos Policy which can be found on the school website)

Exclusions

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Matthew 5:9

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:2-3

Schools should be especially sensitive to exclusion issues where Looked After Children are concerned and be aware of how their life experiences can impact on their emotional, social and behavioural responses, especially if they feel they are being rejected.

Looked After Children are particularly vulnerable to exclusions; the effect on them can be catastrophic. On occasions foster/home placements break down as the exclusion takes effect.

Schools need to be proactive, providing support and perhaps alternative educational packages to prevent this from happening. Early dialogue with all involved with the young person is essential and the mechanism of the PEP can assist this.

Schools should try every practicable means to maintain the child in school and should seek Local Authority and other professional advice as appropriate. The Designated Teacher in school may be best placed to do this. The child's social worker and carer should, in all cases, be involved at the earliest opportunity in working with school to avoid the need to exclude.

The Personal Education Plan//Pastoral Support Plan should reflect strategies being employed to avoid a permanent exclusion for an individual pupils where exclusion is a risk.



Requests for a CLA to be Absent From School on Holiday During School Time

As with all children, taking time away from school in term time, except in exceptional circumstances, is not permitted in law. The ultimate decision regarding whether a leave request meets the criteria of exceptional circumstances rests with the Head teacher but Lancashire policy and guidance for Social Workers in relation to this is below:

Approval to request holiday within term time must be given by the Head or Senior Manager of Children's Social Care. The Social Worker has to have this approval before approaching the school.

Taking into account the national principles, and In order to ensure that the educational needs of Children Looked After are promoted, Lancashire County Council, as corporate parents, will only in very exceptional circumstances agree to any child or young person looked after being absent from school on holiday during term time. Approval for any request will only be given by the head or deputy head of Children's Social Care Services as designated managers before an application is made to the school.

Any fair and equitable decision supporting a request for holiday absence from school must include relevant information from the school's head teacher or designated CLA teacher as well as the child's and foster carers social workers or residential worker. Where appropriate the child's parents may also be consulted. The reason and circumstances of the request for leave will then be considered.

Where a school is approached by a foster carer, residential carer or in the case

of an interim care order, a parent, requesting holiday absence from school the head teacher or designated CLA teacher should inform them that any request must be made by Lancashire County Council before any decision can be made. The County Council should be informed if any approach is made.

Legislation

Key legislation that underpins the legal status of Looked After Children includes the following:

Section 52 of the Children Act 2004, places a duty on Local Authorities to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children, and for Social Workers to develop PEPs as part of the Care Plan. Looked After Children have a right to expect the outcomes we want for every child.



"To achieve these outcomes, LAs as the 'corporate parent' should demonstrate the strongest commitment to helping every child they look after to achieve the highest educational standards he or she possibly can."

(Promoting the educational Achievement of Looked After Children. Statutory Guidelines for LAs DCSF 2010)

Children and Young Persons Act 2008, requires schools' Governing Bodies to appoint a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children, underpinned by statutory guidance.

Ofsted's inspection framework for schools places a strong emphasis upon the support and achievement of vulnerable children, especially those Looked After. Inspectors will require listings of Looked After Children, copies of PEPs and how school policies support their education. They will want to know how Looked After Children compare academically and socially with other children. They will ask Governors about their knowledge of this discrete group and how the school's admission policy actively supports this group.

Previously Looked After Children

Although children who are classed as previously looked after do not have PEP meetings or involvement from the Local Authority, their life events will often mean that they encounter similar difficulties and barriers to looked after children therefore St Leonard's C of E Primary School make every effort to support these children in mostly the same way as children who are looked after.

Previously looked-after children are those who are no longer looked after by a local authority in England and Wales because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order; or they were adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales.

'State care' is care provided by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other organisation whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

Other Relevant Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the St Leonard's policies on;

- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety



- Determined Admissions
- Ethos Policy
- Equality Policy
- Pupil Premium Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Attendance Policy
- SEN Policy
- Educational Visits
- Health and Safety

St Leonard's School will ensure that the needs of LAC and PLAC are reflected in all aspects of our provision, e.g. through assemblies and Personal, Social and Health (PSHE) education. We will raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them to ensure that they achieve their full potential.

Confidentiality

Information on LAC and PLAC will be shared with school staff on a 'need to know basis'. The Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with which school staff at the PEP meeting. Once this has been agreed by the social worker, carer, young person and other parties, complete confidentiality will be maintained and will comply with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) guidance.

Further Information

Further information can be found on the Government website at the following URL:
<https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/looked-after-children>

Designated Teachers: Mrs Dulcinea Norton-Morris

Headteacher: Mrs Beverley Holmes

SENDCO: Mrs Andrea Gaukroger

Governor: Mr Kit Walker

For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.

Romans 8:14