



Alderman Peel High School

Policy for Looked After Children and Post Looked After Children

Written by	Mr B Tawana (Assistant Principal)
Ratified by APHS Local Advisory Board on	
Review Date	September 2022

Vision

Our vision is for all of our students, regardless of background and circumstance, to make outstanding progress and achieve grades which will open the door to the future of their choice. We want our students to be curious and develop a thirst for knowledge; we want them to be resilient and to value effort; we want them to understand that sometimes failure is an essential part of the learning process and to recognise that developing a positive, 'can do' attitude will help them to set and achieve aspirational goals.

Aims

Many LAC (Looked After Children) & PLAC (Looked After Children & Previously Looked After Children) will have experienced disrupted schooling and gaps in learning. In addition, a significant proportion of LAC & PLAC have some form of Special Educational Need and or have been excluded from school. This has resulted in the attainment of this group not being in line with the attainment of their peers nationally.

At Alderman Peel High School, we will address this by:

- providing a safe 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.
- Ensuring that all LAC & PLAC are provided with, and have access to, support to enable them to have every opportunity to enjoy, learn and achieve in line with their peers.
- Ensuring that our policies and procedures for LAC & PLAC 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.'
- Allocation of PPG funding for PLAC pupils is informed by the Education Endowment Fund guidance, is outlined within the school's online pupil premium statement and Example schools Pupil Premium Strategy and is spent appropriately and to benefit the needs of LAC and PLAC students at Alderman Peel High School.
- All staff are aware of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance, particularly in relation to vulnerable groups and their propensity towards being both the victims and perpetrator of Criminal and Child Sexual Exploitation and abuse.

Definitions: 'Looked after children' (LAC)

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
- children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order
- children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection
- 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.

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.

Definitions: 'Previously looked after children' (PLAC)

The February 2018 guidance stated that: 'a previously looked after 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'.

Designated Teacher LAC/PLAC (Mr Bal Tawana: Assistant Principal)

Following amendments made by the 2017 Act, section 20A of the 2008 Act and Section 2E of the Academies Act 2010 various duties were placed on the governing body of a maintained school in England and the proprietor of an academy in England. Therefore, we will:

- designate Mr Tawana to have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of looked after and previously looked after children who are no longer looked after in England and Wales because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order, or were adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales;
- ensure the designated person undertakes appropriate training; and
- ensure he Designated Teacher has regard any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

We understand that the Secretary of State has the power to make regulations to prescribe the necessary qualifications or experience of the designated member of staff for previously looked after children.

Eligibility

The Designated Teacher will satisfy themselves that a child is eligible for support by asking the child's parents for evidence of their previously looked after status. For children adopted outside England and Wales, the child must have been looked after by a public authority, a religious organisation or other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society. Where parents are unable to provide clear evidence of their child's status, designated teachers will need to use their discretion. In such circumstances, designated teachers will discuss eligibility with the Virtual School Head (VSH) to agree a consistent approach.

Why looked after and previously looked after children need the support of a designated teacher?

We recognise that, nationally, there is educational underachievement of looked after children, when compared with their peers, and we are committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in the statutory guidance, "The roles and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children" and "The Children and Young Persons Act 2008", also the "Designated Teacher (looked after children etc.) (England) Regulation 2009". Also, the guidance of "Improving the attainment of looked after young people in Secondary Schools". The Children Act places a duty to safeguard looked after children, to promote their educational

achievements and to ensure that they are able to “achieve to and reach their full potential”. We will be guided by the ‘Improving Attainment Guidance’, which recognises the collective responsibility of Local Authorities and schools to support looked after young people by setting out these principles:

1. Doing the things they do for all young people but more so
2. Balancing high levels of support with real challenge
3. Making it a priority to know the young people well and to build strong relationships
4. Developing strong partnerships with carers, local authorities and specialist agencies
5. Making things happen and seeing things through
6. Ensuring consistency as well as discrete flexibility
7. Actively extending the horizons of each young person
8. Planning for future transitions and Induction to the school

We recognise that many looked after and previously looked after children have suffered disrupted learning, may have missed extended periods of school, and many of them have special educational needs (SEN). The gaps in their learning and, in many cases the emotional impact of their experiences, are likely to have become significant barriers to their progress. The complexity of this fragmented educational experience with high incidence of SEN, needs careful assessment and planning.

We recognise that the support that our school and designated teachers give to children who are looked after and previously looked after should not be seen in isolation. All looked after and previously looked after children will have a wide range of support mechanisms that will assist in promoting their educational achievement. At times the role of the Careers Leader will also be pivotal in ensuring that the Careers Education Information and Guidance raises aspirations and challenges stereotypes. The child’s foster carer (or residential care worker), social worker or, for previously looked after children, parents or guardian, will have day-to-day responsibilities for the child. Within Norfolk Local Authority, the Virtual School will provide more strategic support or advice and information for both the child and the school.

The Role of the Designated Teacher (DT):

The Designated Teacher will be a central point of initial contact within the school. At times this point of contact may be delegated to a member of the Pastoral Team who will report directly to the Designated Teacher. This will help to make sure that we play our role to the full in making sure arrangements are joined up and minimise any disruption to a child’s learning.

We recognise that the most effective designated teachers have a leadership role in promoting the educational achievement of every looked after and previously looked after child on the school’s roll. The designated teacher will therefore be a member of the school senior leadership team. The designated teacher will work with the Virtual School to promote the education of looked after and previously looked after children and promoting a whole school culture where the personalised learning needs of every looked after and previously looked after child matters and their personal, emotional and academic needs are prioritised.

The Designated Teacher will take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand the things which can affect how looked after and previously looked after children learn and achieve and how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these children. For example, raising awareness of possible Mental Health needs and the impact of poor attachment and trauma on behaviour and learning.

The Designated Teacher will carry out 'The role of the designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children' as outlined within the statutory guidance.

In addition the DT will ensure:

- The exclusion of LAC & PLAC is avoided, alternatives to exclusion are considered and additional support is put in place to support those pupils at risk of exclusion.
- The Local Authority (Social Workers and the Virtual School) are informed of the exclusion from school of any LAC student.
- An Anti-bullying Policy is in place and stringently followed which recognises that a significant proportion of LAC have experienced bullying at some point.
- LAC & PLAC are encouraged and supported to continue engaging and achieving post 16.
- Information in regard to LAC & PLAC is treated confidentially, but also provided swiftly to relevant agencies and new schools.
- The SENCO is aware of those LAC/PLAC children in school, works closely with the DT and prioritises their access to additional support both internally and externally (including EHCP assessment).
- Ensuring that PEP's for LAC are accurate, effective, relevant and completed within the identified timescales with the child, social worker, carers and any other relevant professionals.
- Alderman Peel High School acknowledges and ensures that LAC & PLAC students are given priority for School Admissions via Norfolk LA Admissions Code.
- A significant proportion of LAC (and therefore PLAC) have undiagnosed Speech and Language needs which impacts on educational outcomes. In recognition of this, all LAC & PLAC (with the consent of parents & carers) are screened on entry for Speech, Language and Communication Needs. The outcome of LAC screening is communicated to the Virtual School and areas of concern are addressed swiftly with in-school support. Significant or continuing concerns are referred to specialist support from Speech and Language services.
- While the PP+ for PLAC is not a 'personal budget,' should a PLAC require support over and above that which is provided for any other pupil, the PP+ will be used to fund this. 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