

Looked After Child/Child Looked After and Previously Looked After Children Policy

White Spire School



Written by:	M Bartle
Last reviewed on:	September 2025
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KEY CONTACTS in school/setting

Name	Role	Contact details
Headteacher	Michelle Bartle	01908 373266
Chair of governing body	Shanie Jamieson	01908 373266
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Anton De Beer	01908 373266
Out of hours contact for DSL	Safeguarding Team	safeguarding@whitespire.milton-keynes.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	Michelle Bartle	01908 373266
Other members of the safeguarding team (DSLs')	Sophie Lunnon Sally Elton Karen Richards Laura Halsey Katie Marlborough	01908 373266
Prevent lead	Anton De Beer	01908 373266
Child sexual exploitation lead	Anton De Beer	01908 373266
Child Looked After/ Previously Looked After	Anton De Beer	01908 373266
Mental health lead	Anton De Beer	01908 373266
Designated governor for safeguarding	Tanya Stevens	01908 373266
Designated governor for mental health and well being	Tanya Stevens	01908 373266
Safer recruitment governor	Shanie Jamieson	01908 373266

Introduction

Looked-after children (LAC)/ Child Looked-after (CLA) and previously looked-after children start with the disadvantage of their pre-care experiences and, often, have special educational needs. (Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children statutory guidance for local authorities February 2018).

Definitions

A child who is looked after by a local authority (referred to as a looked-after child) as defined in section 22 of the Children Act 1989 means a child (0-18 years of age) who is subject to a care order (or an interim care order) or who is accommodated by the local authority. Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if s/he is in their care or is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority.

They include the following:

Accommodated (Section 20 of the Children Act 1989)

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

Under a Care Order (Section 31 of the Children Act 1989) or interim care order (section 38)

This is a court order and the local authority shares parental responsibility with parents. A Care Order will be made when a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm and the making of the order would be 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 (e.g. adoption) or the order is discharged. The term 'In Care' refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the Court 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. An Interim Care Order places the child into the care of the local authority and allows the court a period of time to decide whether or not a full order should be made.

An Emergency Protection Order (Section 44/46 of the Children Act 1989)

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

Compulsorily accommodated

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).

School Responsibility

It is important that staff who are in contact with the child or young person are aware that he/she is being looked after by the Local Authority or that they have been previously looked after. The responsibility for the transfer of this information is of the Head Teacher and/or the Designated Teacher for looked-after/ child looked-after and previously looked after.

In the absence of the usual class teacher, some information regarding the child's circumstances should be shared with the teacher covering the class. The extent of this sharing should be determined by the Headteacher or the Designated Teacher.

Aims

The aims of the school are to

- Ensure that all looked after children have access to a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum
- Ensure that looked after students take as full a part as possible in school activities
- Ensure that carers and social workers of looked after students are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment
- Ensure that looked after students are involved, where possible, in decisions affecting their future provision.
- To ensure that all care leavers are fully supported within school and outside of school

Designated Lead

The role of White Spires designated child looked after lead is to:

- Work with the Local Authority to ensure that there is an up-to-date Personal Education Plan (PEP) for each child/ young person in care;
- If the PEP is out of date, work with the child's designated social/virtual school lead to ensure that the PEP is updated;
- Monitor progress of all children/young people in care (CCR) and inform all senior staff and governors of the child/ young person's progress ensuring that information is passed to the local authority when requested;
- Report annually to your Governing Body on the progress of children/young people in care;

- Ensure that catch-up and intervention programmes are implemented to meet the needs of children/ young people in care;
- Make certain that staff are updated, trained and informed on issues relating to children/ young people in care and previously in care;
- Promote and maintain a culture of high expectation and achievement for children/ young people in care or previously in care within the school ;
- Ensure that your Pupil Premium is used appropriately to support the progress of children/ young people in care;
- Have high expectations of looked-after and previously looked after children's learning and set targets to accelerate educational progress;
- Are aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation (attachment awareness) from birth families and that some children may find it difficult to build relationships of trust with adults because of their experiences, and how this might affect the child's behaviour;
- Not to publicly treat pupils differently from their peers, and show sensitivity about who else knows about their looked-after or previously looked-after status;
- For previously looked-after children, understand the importance of involving the child's parents or guardians in decisions affecting their child's education, and be a contact for parents or guardians who want advice or have concerns about their child's progress at school.
- Ensure that there are effective policies and procedures in place to ensure that looked-after and previously looked-after children are not put at a disadvantage to their peers.
- Promote a culture that involved the looked-after and previously looked-after child to be part of setting their own targets and taking their views seriously.
- Being a source of support for teachers.
- Promoting good home school links.
- Ensuring that previously looked after children are supported well when moving into adulthood. This includes that they maintain strong links with the appropriate professionals and are supported in their living choices/next steps.

Admission Arrangements

On admission, records will be requested from the pupil's previous school and a meeting will be held with carer/parent/social worker as appropriate - but always involving someone with parental responsibility. This will provide information to inform the Personal Education Plan. An appropriate school induction will take place.

Involve the Young Person

It is important that a young person is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. How this is shared with them clearly depends on their age and understanding. The explanation should emphasise that the school, the Social Worker, and their carer(s) are working together to promote their education.

It is important that the young person is:

- Supported to complete the Pupil Voice section of the Personal Education Plan by the Designated Teacher/form tutor to inform the PEP and Care Plan review meetings;
- Establish the child's view of their changed circumstances and what they want others to know and
- It is also important to ensure that a Social Worker/teacher/carer prepares the child for situations when they may be asked about home, e.g. by other pupils in the playground.

Communication with Other Agencies

White Spire School will ensure that:

- A copy of all reports (e.g. End of year reports) are forwarded to the young person's Social Worker in addition to the foster carer or Residential Social Worker and if appropriate parent/s.
- Schools, education and social work colleagues within Children's Services will co-ordinate review meetings, e.g. to have an Annual or EHC Plan Review, CCR and a Personal Education Plan or electronic PEP meeting or review.
- Good communication is essential between formal reviews if there are significant changes in the young person's circumstances, e.g. if school is considering an exclusion, there is a change of care placement or there are significant attendance issues.
- To work with other agencies to support looked-after and previously looked-after children.

Learning

Learning can sometimes be a challenge for pupils who are or have been in care. This may be due to:

- Separating from their primary carer(s);
- Sharing the attention of someone important;
- Trusting the motives and intentions of the adults at school;
- Following the lead of an adult by relinquishing some control;
- Managing expectations;
- Managing self-consciousness/feeling different;
- Knowing how to repair relationships; when things go wrong;
- Being able to ask for help;
- Managing stress and uncertainty;
- Coping with having missing pieces of information from their early history around their identity;
- Being able to express what is going on internally and
- Having an integrated view of themselves

There are many other factors that may affect a pupils learning.

Assessment, Monitoring and Review Procedures

Each pupil in care will have a Care Plan that will include a Personal Education Plan (PEP) that is developed jointly by the Social Worker and Designated Teacher. There are specific areas of focus which include

- Targets and associated actions to improve performance, progress or educational achievement.

Areas for consideration will include:

- Achievement Record (academic or otherwise);
- Development needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge or subject areas and experiences);
- Long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations).
- Educational Data so that progress may be easily tracked between Key Stages
- Effective use of the Pupil Premium and evidence of impact
- Extended learning opportunities;
- Involvement in Out of School Hours Activities;
- EHCP (Education, Health Care Plan)
- Attendance;
- Behaviour

The PEP/ePEP will be updated and reviewed each term or at the point of any major change and contribute to the statutory reviewing process carried out by the Independent Reviewing Officer.

The Designated Teacher is accountable for the implementation and review of the educational action to meet the targets within the Plan.

The named governor will report annually to the Governing Body on the progress of all looked-after and previously looked-after children.

Transfer of the official school PEP record

If a child leaves school, we will ensure that set documents are transferred to the new school in a prompts manner.

Sources of Additional Advice and Information:

Virtual Head for Milton Keynes
Katy Enser

Corporate Parenting
Duty number 01908 253740