

# Richard Challoner School

## Designated Teacher for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children

Policy Date: March 2024



### Key Roles in School

<b>Designated Teacher for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children</b>	Mr Ian O'Brien, Deputy Head
<b>Staffing Lead</b>	Mr Richard Gooud, Head of Learning Support
<b>Governor for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children</b>	Mr Kevin Beatty

### Definitions

**Looked After Children (LAC)** a child or young person is looked after by a local authority if:

- they are in the care of the local authority (including children or young people who are the subject of a Care Order, Interim Care Order, or emergency Orders for their protection); or
- they are provided with accommodation by the local authority for more than 24 hours (often under a voluntary agreement with their parents or guardians).

### **Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) means:**

children no longer looked after by a local authority in England and Wales because they are:

- the subject of an adoption order,
- special guardianship order, 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 (but not which governs only where a child is to spend time and/or contact); or
- children who were adopted outside England and Wales from 'state care' (care that is provided by a public authority, religious or other organisation, the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society).

**The Designated Teacher** is an appropriately qualified and experienced member of staff who is appointed to undertake the responsibilities to promote and lead on the educational achievement of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.

**Personal Education Plan (PEP)** See Page 7 below

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**Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)** LAC and PLAC (except those PLAC adopted from state care outside England) are eligible for PP+ funding to improve attainment and close the gap with their peers. For LAC only this is managed by the Virtual School Head, who will work with the school to agree how the funding can be used most effectively. For PLAC it is paid directly to the school (based on the number of eligible PLAC recorded at the Autumn Census). Like the Pupil Premium Grant it is not a personal budget and is managed for the cohort according to its needs.

**The Virtual School Head** is a local authority officer. For LAC they are responsible for discharging the local authority's duty to promote their educational achievement, as if they were in a single school. For PLAC the role is limited to providing information and advice to parents and schools, including training.

### Introduction

Richard Challoner School understands that Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children are more likely to experience the challenges of social, emotional and mental health issues than their peers and that this can impact on their learning and behaviour. They may also have suffered disruptions to their education.

We recognise that Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children will have specific, individual needs and will require varying amounts of support throughout their school careers. We will:

- seek to understand these needs and put in place strategies to promote their educational achievement, wellbeing and success;
- provide a safe and secure environment; and
- promote a whole school culture in which the personal, emotional and academic needs of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children are prioritised.

This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to the following:

- Children and Young Persons Act 2008 [Children and Young Persons Act 2008](#)
- Children and Social Work Act 2017 [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#)
- DfE (February 2018) [‘The designated teacher for looked after children and previously looked after children’](#)
- DfE (September 2023), [School suspensions and permanent exclusions](#)
- DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- DfE (March 2022) [‘The Schools Admissions Code](#)
- DfE (February 2018) [‘Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children’](#)

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This policy also operates in conjunction with other school policies, in particular:

- Admissions Arrangements
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Behaviour, Discipline, Exclusions Policy
- Home School Agreement
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEN Disability Policy
- Assessment Marking and Reporting Policy

Copies are published on the school website.

- **Purpose**

This policy aims to set out how the school will meet the needs of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children and meet its statutory responsibilities to promote their educational achievement.

## Roles and responsibilities

### Roles and responsibilities: The Governing Body

Will appoint a Governor to lead on the oversight of the effectiveness of the provision for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children and will support the Designated Teacher and the Senior Leadership Team to promote their educational achievement.

The Governing Body will also ensure that:

- an appropriately qualified and experienced member of staff, the Designated Teacher, undertakes the responsibilities within the school to promote and lead on the educational achievement of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.
- the Designated Teacher undertakes appropriate training.
- all Governors are aware of the legal requirements to promote the achievement of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children.
- it has regard to the statutory guidance [‘The designated teacher for looked after children and previously looked after children’](#) (February 2018) and any other relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

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### **Roles and responsibilities: The Headteacher**

Is responsible for:

- appointing the Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children;
- allowing the Designated Teacher the time and facilities to succeed in carrying out their duties
- ensuring all members of staff are aware that supporting Looked After and Previously Looked After Children is a priority

### **Roles and responsibilities: The Designated Teacher**

Is responsible for championing Looked After and Previously Looked After Children within the school and promoting and leading on their educational achievement, having regard to the statutory guidance [‘The designated teacher for looked after children and previously looked after children’](#) (February 2018) and any other relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State. In particular:

#### **For Looked After and Previously Looked After Children**

- maintaining an up-to-date record of the Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children in school, which will include:
  - Their status (for LAC care order or accommodated, for PLAC adoption order, special guardianship order, child arrangements order or adopted from state care outside England and Wales).
  - For LAC: the type of placement eg. foster, respite, residential.
  - For LAC: Name of Social Worker, Virtual School Head and (for LAC and PLAC) other key professionals and their contact details.
  - For LAC: details of who holds parental responsibility and daily contact names and numbers
  - Whether they have an EHCP or receive SEN support.
  - Child protection information when appropriate.
  - Baseline information and all assessment results.
  - Attendance figures.
  - Exclusions.
- supporting transition (whether mid-year or as part of the normal admission round) and ensuring the school has all relevant information, including for LAC the Personal Education Plan (and when the pupil leaves ensuring that the Designated Teacher at the new school is provided with all the information they need to help the transition process).
- promoting good home-school links



- taking time to get to know and building a positive relationship with Looked After and Previously Looked After Children and seeking their views regarding the interventions and strategies that will best help them to achieve their goals and ensuring they are involved in target setting.
- seeking to understand and identify the child's specific needs, including liaising with the SENCo and Designated Safeguarding Lead as required and ensuring that appropriate support and interventions are put in place.
- liaising with other members of staff, including the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that progress is rigorously monitored and evaluated.
- ensuring that systems are in place to identify when Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children are underachieving and to put in place early interventions to improve this.
- ensuring that LAC and PLAC are prioritised for interventions, one-to-one tuition and support.
- promoting a culture in which staff and pupils have high expectations regarding learning and high aspirations for future success
- ensuring there are no barriers to accessing the activities and experiences the school offers to all of its pupils (for example anticipating possible delays in obtaining permissions for trips).
- being proactive in building strong links with the Virtual School Head to access training and forum events and to keep up to date with good practice.
- keeping the school up to date with any changes to legislation and statutory guidance and its implication for the school in respect of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children.
- ensuring that they and other key staff have the skills to understand the emotional needs of children and the impact trauma, attachment disorder and other mental health issues can have on their ability to engage in learning and on their behaviour.
- providing training to staff members, when applicable, on issues that Looked After Children face and how to best support their achievement, including
  - advising staff on teaching strategies.
- Ensuring that the students are tracked in the relevant data produced by the school (and where appropriate this information is made available to the Governing Body through the curriculum committee).
  - assessment scores as a cohort and individuals, compared to other pupil groups
  - the attendance of LAC and PLAC, compared to other pupil groups
  - the level of fixed term and permanent exclusions, compared to other pupil groups

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- reporting to the The Governing Body annually on the performance and progress of the Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children who are on the roll of the school (or who have been during that academic year), how they have been supported and how the Pupil Premium Plus is used.

#### **Roles and responsibilities: Staffing Lead for Looked After Children**

- acting as the main point of contact in school for the social worker and Virtual School and encouraging strong working links and cooperation with these and others involved in providing support.
- Seeking clarification from the social worker as to who has parental responsibility, who day to day contact should be with, who requires copies of School Reports, how the school should engage with birth parents, who may give permissions for trips and other matters (this may be delegated to carers or may be the social worker), who should sign the Home School Agreement and be invited to parents evenings and other school events and what information can be shared with whom. Ensuring this information is recorded in the MIS ,and for confidential information on CPOMS, and kept up to date and that form teachers and Heads of Year are made aware.
- contacting the Virtual Headteacher if the PEP does not arrive with the Looked After Child and taking lead responsibility for the development and implementation of the PEP within school in partnership with others (such as the SENCo where appropriate). Ensuring that the PEP is updated and shared with the social worker and Virtual School ahead of each statutory review of the care plan
- ensuring attendance at care plan reviews and/or preparing a written report which promotes the continuity and stability of the child's education.
- liaising with the Virtual School on a regular basis with regard to the performance, attendance and attainment of Looked After Children.
- ensuring mechanisms are in place to identify and inform the Virtual School where Looked After Children are absent without authorisation and to work with the responsible authority to take appropriate action to safeguard the child.
- liaising with the Virtual School to discuss and contribute to decisions about how Pupil Premium Plus will support improving the child's educational outcomes.
- ensuring continuity in meeting educational needs is provided following a change to a child's care status and maintaining links with the Virtual School.
- helping raise parents' and carers' awareness of the Pupil Premium Plus and other support for previously looked-after children (including encouraging parents to tell the school if their child is eligible to attract Pupil Premium Plus funding).



- playing a key role in decisions on how the Pupil Premium Plus is used to support Previously Looked After Children and encouraging parents and guardians' involvement.
- Working with the designated teacher to review the progress, attainment and wellbeing of Previously Looked After Children

#### **Roles and responsibilities: Staff are responsible for**

- being aware of the Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children in their classes, providing them with support and encouragement and promoting self-esteem.
- preserving confidentiality, where appropriate, and showing sensitivity and understanding.
- being vigilant for any signs of bullying, underachievement, mental health issues, or any other cause for concern around their general wellbeing.

#### **Admissions**

Looked After Children and Previously Looked After children' are a priority for admission in accordance with the DfE statutory guidance '[The Schools Admissions Code](#)' and will be admitted in line with the school's admissions policy and oversubscription criteria (Note: the definition of 'previously looked after children' in the Code does not include children adopted from state care outside of England and Wales).

#### **Personal Education Plans (Looked After Children only)**

All LAC must have a care plan drawn up by the local authority to provide a framework to work with the child and their carers in relation to their emotional and behavioural development, identity, relationships and self-care skills. It must include a health plan and a PEP.

The PEP will be initiated by the social worker as part of the care plan, but then developed by the Designated Teacher to ensure it is effective in supporting the child to make good educational progress

The PEP forms part of the child's official school record (and transfers with them when they move school). It is an evolving record of the child's education (both academic achievements and participation in the wider activities of the school), describing what needs to happen to enable them to make the expected progress and fulfil their potential. It will record the child's views on the support they consider most to be most effective. It should work in harmony with any EHCP and will also set out steps taken to identify and support any mental health needs relevant to the child's education. Key elements and actions of the PEP will be shared securely with the relevant key staff via CPOMS.



## **Behaviour and Exclusion**

For Looked After Children, where the school has concerns about a child's behaviour, the Virtual School, the social worker and carers will be informed at the earliest opportunity and we will work with them to put in place behaviour management strategies to ensure challenging behaviour is managed in the most effective way for that individual child. Where a child is at risk of exclusion this will include consideration whether an alternative placement may be required and assessing the suitability of provision for SEN.

Regard is given to the DfE's statutory guidance [School suspensions and permanent exclusions](#) and, as far as possible, the Head teacher will avoid permanently excluding any Looked After Child.

When a child leaves care we recognise that their past experience may continue to impact on their behaviour. The Designated Teacher will ensure support is provided to improve behaviour and with the child's parents or guardian's consent may seek advice from the Virtual School Head.

The school will take into account the past experience of looked after children and previously looked after children when applying the school's Behaviour Policy (copy available on the policy page of the school website).

## **Review and Monitoring**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Designated Teacher, Staffing Lead and the lead Governor for LAC and PLAC, and ratified by the Governing Body. The impact of the provision for LAC and PLAC will be monitored and evaluated by an annual report by the Designated Teacher to the Governing Body which will cover:

- Any workload issues arising as a result of the number of LAC and PLAC on roll at the school and the number of local authorities (LAs) which are involved
- Progress made by LAC and PLAC who are currently on roll, or have been on roll within the past 12 months, in relation to all children at the school (for example educational, social and emotional progress)
- Whether the pattern of attendance and exclusions for LAC and PLAC is different to that for all pupils
- Any process or planning issues arising from personal education plans (PEPs)
- How the needs of LAC and PLAC are being met
- Whether any have special educational needs or a disability (SEND) and whether those needs are being met through SEND provision





- How the teaching and learning needs of LAC and PLAC are reflected in school improvement plans and are being met in relation to interventions and resources
- Training provided for the Designated Teacher to impart knowledge and understanding about the education and wellbeing of LAC and PLAC to staff
- Work with virtual school heads or their equivalents in LAs
- The impact on LAC and PLAC of any of the school's policies

**Policy Review Due:** March 2025

**Review Cycle:** Annual