




Nether Hall School

# LOOKED-AFTER CHILDREN (LAC) AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED- AFTER CHILDREN (PLAC) POLICY

<b>Policy Date:</b>	December 2024	<b>Policy Review Date:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2026
<b>Responsible Person:</b>	Helen Robinson		
Sarah Naylor Headteacher	Signature: 	Date: 14.11.2023	
Adrian Keene Chair of Governors	Signature:	Date:	

## **Rationale:**

Nether Hall school is committed to promoting the educational achievement and welfare of looked after children within the School. We recognise that looked after and previously looked after children may have faced significant trauma in the form of adverse childhood experiences (ACES) including abuse, neglect, loss and/or rejection. When children are exposed to these adverse and stressful experiences, it can have a long-lasting impact on their learning, as well as on their ability to think and to interact with others.

We recognise that, nationally, the educational achievement of Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) as a group, remains a real concern and gaps in their learning and/or emotional impact of their experiences may have formed barriers to progress. LAC are one of the most vulnerable groups in society, Nether Hall School intends LAC and PLAC who attend the school enjoy making excellent progress and find school the place where they maintain friendships, feel safe and thrive.

## **Legislation and statutory responsibilities**

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

- Children Act 1989
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- DfE (2018) 'Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2018) 'The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies and documents:

- Admissions arrangements Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour and discipline Policy
- Anti bullying Policy
- Safeguarding and child protection policy
- Equality information and objectives Policy
- SEND Information Report

## **Definitions**

### **Looked after children (LAC)**

The term 'looked after' has a specific, legal meaning, based on the Children Act 1989: a child is 'looked after' by a local authority if they fall into one of the following:

- is provided with accommodation, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours, [Children Act 1989, Section 20 and 21]
- is subject to a care order [Children Act 1989, Part IV]
- is subject to a placement order

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

PLAC children are those who:

- are no longer LAC by a local authority in England and Wales (as defined by the Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014) because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order; or
- 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

## **Introduction**

Nether Hall School aims to promote the educational attainment, achievement and welfare of looked after children.

## **Governing Body**

The governing body is committed to providing a quality education for all its pupils based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes. This policy includes requirements set out in "Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004" (Nov 2005) and associated guidance on the education of looked after children.

All governors should be fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of LAC and PLAC.

The governing body will appoint a named governor for LAC and PLAC. The named Governor will work in co-operation with the Head Teacher and Designated Teacher as the named staff responsible for implementing this policy.

The named Governor should:

- ensure the school has a coherent policy for LAC and PLAC that is regularly reviewed in light of the relevant statutory guidance and that other school policies support their needs.
- ensure the school has a Designated Teacher, and the Designated Teacher has the necessary time, resources and training to be able to carry out his or her responsibilities.
- ensure LAC have equal access to all areas of the curriculum
- allocate resources to meet the needs of LAC and PLAC.

The governing body should receive an annual report setting out:

- The number of LAC and PLAC students on the school's roll.
- Their attendance, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils.
- Their progress and attainment, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
- The number of fixed-term and permanent exclusions.
- The destinations of LAC pupils who leave the school.
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The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.

## **The Headteacher**

The Headteacher will:

- Appoint a Designated Teacher for looked after and previously looked after children who is a qualified teacher and who is a Senior Leader who has sufficient authority to influence the provision for Looked after Children.
- Ensure the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out their responsibilities and receives the appropriate and adequate training.
- Oversee the policy and monitor its implementation, feeding back to the governing board annually.

## **The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children is Helen Robinson, Assistant Head Teacher.**

The designated teacher for LAC and PLAC is the initial contact and is responsible for:

- Building relationships with health, education and social care partners and other partners so they and the Virtual School (VS) understand the support available to LAC and previously-LAC.
- Ensuring a smooth welcome and induction for LAC and their carers.
- Acting as the main contact for social services and the DfE.
- Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations for LAC and PLAC.
- Ensuring LAC are involved in their PEP (Personal Education Plan).
- Leading on how the child's PEP is developed and monitor the child's progress towards targets with key staff.
- Working alongside the school's mental health lead to promote the well being and mental health of LAC and PLAC.
- Working with the child's VS and social worker to develop and implement their PEP
- Working with the VS to discuss how funding can be used to support the child's progress and meet the needs identified in their PEP.
- Working with the headteacher to submit an annual report to the governing board, which details the progress of all LAC and previously-LAC.

## **Aims**

The aims of the school are to:

- ensure school policies and procedures are followed for looked after children as for all children
- ensure 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 looked after pupils take as full a part as possible in school activities
- ensure all staff are aware of the impact of trauma on children's development, their ability to build relationships and the affect it may have on behaviour
- identify any signs of mental health issues and access further assessment and support where necessary.
- ensure carers and social workers of looked after pupils are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment

- ensure looked after pupils are involved, where possible, in decisions affecting their future provision.

### **Admissions**

The Governing Body endorses the LCC policy for the admission of Looked After Children. Due to changes in care placements, looked after children may enter school at any time in the term. At Nether Hall School we believe it is vital all new pupils receive a positive welcome and full support for their inclusion in our learning community.

### **Inclusion**

This policy recognises all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broadly based curriculum. Our LAC Policy reinforces the need for teaching and learning that is fully inclusive and individualised. The Governing Body will ensure the school makes appropriate provision for all looked after pupils.

### **Allocation of Resources**

The Governing Body will ensure the school allocates resources to support appropriate provision for LAC, meeting the objectives set out in this policy. We will work in partnership with Leicester City Virtual School for looked after children and other Virtual Schools for pupils who are from other Local Authorities, to ensure looked after children receive the full range of support to which they are entitled to enable them to make progress and achieve.

### **Monitoring the progress of Looked After Children**

This school assesses each looked after pupil's attainment on entry to ensure continuity of learning. The social worker for the looked after child initiates an Electronic Personal Education Plan –E PEP (part of the Care Plan) - within 20 days of the pupil joining the school, or of entering care, and ensures that, where possible, the young person is actively involved.

Following the initial PEP, the role of the Designated Teacher is to liaise with other agencies involved to arrange further e-PEP review meetings and provide access to the PEP for the social worker, specialist teacher from Leicester City VS (or other VS, where the child is from another Local Authority) and other agencies. There must be an e-PEP meeting once per term i.e. three times in a full school year. Carers should be encouraged to take an active role in the PEP and be supported with the education of the children they look after. The allocation and purpose of the Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) will be included within the PEP and agreed with the Virtual School. All PEPs are completed electronically through the online system coordinated by the Virtual School. The PEP is part of the official school record and the up to date PEP must be transferred to any new educational setting in a timely manner.

### **Record Keeping**

The Designated Teacher knows all the looked after children in school and has access to their relevant contact details including parents, carers, Leicester City Virtual School specialist staff, teacher/support worker and social worker. The status of looked after children is identified within the school's information systems so information is readily available to all classroom teachers and relevant associate staff. LAC are identified as a vulnerable group when tracking, monitoring and reporting on attainment and progress.

### **Partnership with parents/carers and care workers**

We believe in developing strong partnerships with parents/carers and care workers to enable LAC to achieve their potential to aid their future economic well-being. Parents and carers are supported to attend review meetings and provide an important opportunity to further collaboration and partnership working.

### **Links with external agencies/organisations**

We recognise the important contribution external support services make in supporting LAC.

Colleagues from the following support services may be involved with individual LAC:

- Social care worker/ Community care worker/ Residential child care worker
- Virtual School for Looked After Children (Looked After Children in Education Team)
- Other Virtual Schools for looked after children from other Local Authorities
- Educational psychologists and others from Local Authority SEN services
- Medical officers
- School nurses
- CAMHS
- Education Welfare Officers
- Youth Offending Service
- External Learning Providers

### **LAC Policy Review and Evaluation**

The Designated Teacher for LAC will undertake a thorough review and evaluation of the impact of the looked after children policy and practice each year and report to the Governing Body.

### **Sources of Additional Advice and Information:**

- Headteacher of the Leicester Virtual School for Looked After Children Tel: 0116 454 5007  
[vst-lac@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:vst-lac@leicester.gov.uk)
- Promoting the education of looked after and previously looked after children. (DfE Statutory guidance for local authorities February 2018)
- The designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children. (DfE Statutory guidance for local authorities February 2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education – updated September 2023

### **Linked policies:**

Safeguarding and child protection policy  
Behaviour and discipline Policy  
Attendance policy