



Looked After Children (LAC) Policy

Including Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)

Approved by	CEO	Date Approved	24 June 2024
Review cycle	3 Years	Date of next review	23 June 2027

Designated Staff member: Mrs N Searle

Designated Governor: Mrs D Mason

Nationally, LAC and PLAC underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared to their peers. Our schools play a vital part ensuring that LAC and PLAC are well prepared for the next stage of their lives.

Definitions

Looked After Children (LAC) are defined as:

- Children or young people who are the subject of a care order or an interim care order under the Children Act 1989.
- Children who are placed in foster care, children's residential homes, with relatives or friends, in semi-independent or supported independent accommodation.
- Children subject to a care order or interim care order whilst placed with a parent, where the LA has parental responsibility.
- Children who are not subject to an order but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents or respite care.

Previously Looked After Children are defined as:

- Children who are no longer looked after by an LA in England or Wales because they have either been adopted or are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship, or child arrangements order.
- Children who were adopted outside of England and Wales from 'state care' (care that is provided by a public authority, religious organisation, or other organisation whose main purpose is to benefit society).

Aims

- To provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a steadfast belief in the abilities and potential of all children.
- To support our LAC and PLAC and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential and enjoy learning.
- To fulfil our schools' role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our LAC and PLAC, by asking the question, 'Would this be good enough for my child?'

Our approach to encouraging and supporting the educational achievement of LAC and PLAC is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising Education including early intervention.
- Maintaining high expectations and aspirations.
- Promoting inclusion – changing and challenging attitudes.
- Achieving continuity and stability.
- Prioritising reduction in exclusions and promoting attendance.
- Listening to the child's voice at all stages of care and education planning.

Enlighten Learning Trust believes that our schools, in partnership with local authorities, have a special duty as Corporate Parents to safeguard and promote the education of LAC/PLAC.

Personal Education Plans

A Personal Education Plan (PEP) is required for every LAC/PLAC and forms part of their Care Plan. The PEP is an evolving record of what needs to happen for LAC/PLAC to enable them to make at least expected progress and fulfil their potential and should reflect the personalised approach to learning used to meet each child's needs.

A PEP should be initiated within 10 working days and finalised a maximum of 5 working days later. PEPs should be reviewed at least once a term.

Responsibilities

The Senior Leadership Team in each school will:

- Nominate a Designated Teacher (DT) for LAC/PLAC who acts as their educational and pastoral advocate and co-ordinates support for them.
- Ensure a member of the Local Governing Body is nominated who then ensures that the needs of our LAC/PLAC are prioritised. This governor will also support the DT in their role as advocate and educational champion.
- Support the DT in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend, at a minimum, statutory training provided by Surrey Virtual School (SVS) and external agencies.

The Designated Teacher (DT) will:

- Act as an advocate for LAC and PLAC.
- Have high expectations for achievement of LAC/PLAC, academically and pastorally.
- Monitor the educational progress of all LAC/PLAC to ensure they are reaching their potential and feel a part of the school community.
- Maintain an up-to-date record of all LAC/PLAC on the school roll. This will include:
 - Status i.e. care order or accommodated.
 - Type of placement i.e. foster, respite, residential.
 - Name of social worker, area office, email address and telephone number.
 - Daily contacts and numbers e.g. name of parent or carer or key worker in children's home.
 - SEN Code of Practice.
 - Child Protection information when appropriate.
 - Baseline information and all test results.
 - Attendance figures.
 - Exclusions.
- Ensure that there is a termly Personal Education Plan (PEP) for each LAC which includes appropriate targets and the child's views. This must be compatible with the child's/young person's Care Plan and where applicable include any other school plan, e.g. EHCP, SEND Support Arrangements etc. Each PEP meeting will be attended by either the DT or staff member with delegated responsibility with all possible sections of the PEP completed before the meeting date.
- Ensure that each PLAC child for whom a PEP is felt appropriate has this in place and there is clear rationale for those that do not.
- Ensure that if/when the child transfers school all relevant information is forwarded to the receiving school. Where possible, the DT will attend the first PEP at the new school to assist transition.
- Ensure systems identify and prioritise intervention when LAC/PLAC are underachieving.
- Ensure that an appropriate staff member attends LAC/PLAC reviews and/or prepares a written report which promotes the continuity and stability of their education.
- Swiftly intervene when individual underachievement is identified or there is significant absence from school, taking appropriate action.
- Be the named point of contact for staff seeking information on the educational, social, emotional and wellbeing needs of LAC/PLAC.

- Be the named contact for liaising with carers, Surrey Children’s Services and the Virtual School, ensuring the speedy transfer of information.
- Provide a programme of transition support, as appropriate, for any child leaving school in the middle or end of the academic year.
- Present regular reports to Governors, including an annual report setting out (at minimum)
 - The number of LAC/PLAC on roll and their attendance levels as a discrete group.
 - Their progress and attainment data, as a discrete group and how this compares to their peers.
 - Discrete suspension and exclusion data.
- Access statutory training events organised by Surrey Virtual School (as a minimum requirement) and other external agencies. This includes ensuring staff are kept up to date with current legislation including DfE Statutory Guidance and its implications in respect of LAC/PLAC.
- Cascade training to school staff and governors as appropriate.

The nominated School Governor will:

- Ensure the appointment of a fully qualified (QTS) Designated Teacher.
- Champion the needs of LAC/PLAC, supporting the work of the DT by ensuring they have access to all support and training needed to fulfil their role.
- Monitor the school’s policies ensuring their effectiveness in reflecting the needs of LAC/PLAC.
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of legal requirements and guidance on the education of LAC/PLAC, including [DfE Statutory Guidance](#) on Promoting the Education of LAC/PLAC.
- Ensure the school is making the fullest possible use of all available resources, including Pupil Premium Plus funding, to maximise progress and attainment.
- Ensure that LAC/PLAC are placed on school roll without delay.