



ST PAUL'S SCHOOL
Est. 1509

Policy for the Education of Looked After Children

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This policy is available on the Handbook page of the School Intranet and policies page of the School website and can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required; such requests can be made by email to the Chief Operating Officer: OpsDir@stpaulsschool.org.uk.

1. Definitions

- 1.1 The term Looked After Children has a specific legal meaning based on the Children Act. A child is looked after by a local authority if he or she has been provided with accommodation for a continuous period of more than 24 hours, in the circumstances set out in sections 20 and 21 of the Children Act 1989, or is placed in the care of a local authority by virtue of an order made under part IV of the Act.
- 1.2 The majority of children who are looked after by the local authority are placed with foster carers as it is believed to be best for children to live within a family environment. For some children however, residential care may be more appropriate.

2. Background

- 2.1 Nationally, Looked After Children significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that Looked After Children are supported to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being, in line with the precepts laid out in [Every Child Matters 2004](#).

3. Statutory Framework

3.1 Helping Looked After Children (hereafter LACs) succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority for St Paul's School and Colet Court (hereafter '**the School**'). This policy therefore takes account of:

- Statutory guidance: [Promoting the education of looked-after children](#) (July 2014)
- Statutory guidance: [Designated teacher for looked-after children](#) (November 2009)

3.2 The School notes that this statutory guidance currently applies only to **maintained** Schools in England.

3.3 However, the Independent Schools Inspectorate published updated guidance in relation to the responsibilities of independent Schools in this area in September 2014, as follows:

Proprietors should also ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep safe children who are looked after by a local authority. This includes ensuring that staff have up to date assessment information from the relevant local authority, the most recent care plan and contact arrangements with parents, and delegated authority to carers, and information available to the designated person.

3.4 As such, St Paul's and Colet Court will, so far as is possible given the School's status, work within the framework established by the statutory guidance for maintained Schools in supporting any LACs on the School roll. It is expected that in doing so, the School will be able to demonstrate compliance with the regulatory requirements imposed by the ISI guidance.

4. Principles

4.1 The approach of supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education;
- Promoting attendance;
- Targeting support;
- Having high expectations;
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes;
- Achieving stability and continuity;
- Early intervention and priority action;
- Listening to children;
- Promoting health and wellbeing;
- Reducing exclusions and promoting stability;
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals.

5. Aims

- 5.1 As for all our pupils, the School is committed to helping every Looked After Child (hereafter LAC) to achieve the highest standards they can, including supporting aspirations to achieve in further and higher education. This can be measured by improvement in their achievements and attendance.
- 5.2 The Governing Body of the School is committed to providing quality education for all and will:
- Ensure Looked After Children are prioritised in the school's admission procedure, consistent with the Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006, subject to the School's admissions criteria;
 - Ensure a Designated Teacher for LACs is identified and enabled to carry out the responsibilities set out below;
 - Ensure a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is put in place, implemented and regularly reviewed for every LAC, in line with statutory guidance on PEPs;
 - Identify a governor as Designated Governor for LACs – this will be the same as the Child Protection Governor, as identified in the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

6. Related Policies and Procedures

- 6.1 This policy links with a number of other school policies and procedures and it is important that Governors have regard to the needs of LACs when reviewing them:
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures;
 - Admissions procedures;
 - The Schools Rules;
 - Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy;
 - Anti-bullying Policy;
 - Equal Opportunities Policy;
 - Policy for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.
- 6.2 The School will champion the needs of Looked After Children, raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them, in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 *The Governing Body*

The Governing Body (GB) will carry out those responsibilities outlined in statutory guidance: [Promoting the education of looked-after children](#), including but not limited to the following:

- Identify a nominated Governor for LACs.

- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of LACs.
- Ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of LACs.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of LACs.
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.
- Monitor the academic progress of LACs, through an annual report supplied by the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs);
- Ensure that LACs are given top priority when applying for places subject to the School's admissions criteria;
- Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school, by ensuring the school implements policies and procedures to ensure LACs achieve and enjoy their time at the school, by recognising the extra problems caused by excluding them and by using exclusion only as a last resort;
- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher for each LAC, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Support the High Master, Headmaster and DSLs, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of LACs are recognised and met.
- Receive a report once a year from the DSL setting out:
 - The number of looked-after s on the school's roll (if any).
 - Their attendance, as a discreet group, compared to others.
 - Their results in public exams, as a discreet group, compared to others.
 - The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any).
 - The destinations of pupils who leave the school.
- The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of those concerned.

7.2 *The High Master(SPS) and Head (SPJ)*

The Headmaster and High Master are responsible for carrying out all responsibilities outlined in statutory guidance: [Promoting the education of looked-after children](#), including but not limited to ensuring implementation of the following:

- A Designated Teacher is identified for every LAC, whose role is set out below and another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take leave. At both St Paul's School and Colet Court, the Designated Teacher will usually be the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and their respective Deputy DSLs will usually act as the Designated Teacher should the DSL leave the School or take leave.
- Procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusion of LACs and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.

- Maintain accurate records and report on the progress, attendance and conduct of LACs, so that Governors or inspectors may select a number of LACs, and are able to track their results and the support they have received.
- In the event of a LAC on the School roll, that staff at the School receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance and that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep safe children who are looked after by a local authority. This includes ensuring that staff have up to date assessment information from the relevant local authority, the most recent care plan and contact arrangements with parents, and delegated authority to carers, and information available to the designated person.

7.3 The Designated Teacher

The School's Designated Teacher(s) will take on those responsibilities outlined in statutory guidance: [Promoting the education of looked-after children](#), including but not limited to the following:

- Undertake appropriate training as and where necessary to be able to support any LACs on the School roll.
- Contribute as required to inter-agency working or development planning in respect of LACs on the School roll.
- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the PEP to plan for that transition in consultation with the child's social worker;
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people, in good time before any Care Plan reviews;
- Ensure that each Looked After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher, but should be based on the child's own wishes;
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately;
- Co-ordinate any support for the LACs that is necessary within school;
- Ensure confidentiality for individual s, sharing personal information on a need to know basis;
- Encourage LACs to join in extra-curricular activities and out of school learning;
- Ensure, as far as possible, attendance at planning and review meetings;
- Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of LACs;
- Set up timely meetings with relevant parties where the is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion;
- Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and – if the changes school – to a new school;
- Be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education;
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately;

- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life;
- Be aware that 60% of LACs say they are bullied, so will actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy;
- Ensure that the audit on attendance and numbers and any other relevant information is returned to the Social Workers, parents and/or 'Virtual School Head' as necessary and every term as a minimum (where the number of LACs on the School roll is greater than zero in that term).

7.4 Responsibilities of All Staff

7.4.1 All staff of the School will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of LACs, as for all s.
- Maintain LACs's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond positively to a request to be the named member of staff whom they can talk to when they feel it is necessary.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- Work to enable LACs to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all LACs.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of LACs.
- Be aware that 60% of LACs say they are bullied so work to prevent bullying in line with the School's policy.
- Develop the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep safe children who are looked after by a local authority.
- Read, record and act upon, as necessary, all relevant information shared with them in relation to LACs, including:
 - Up-to-date assessment information from the relevant local authority;
 - The most recent care plan and contact arrangements with parents and delegated authority to carers;
 - Information available to the Designated Teacher.

7.4.2 The DSL will ensure that all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

7.4.3 Advice and support is available from Richmond County Council's Children's Services LACs team. The Richmond website has a LAC Education section, which includes relevant guidance and strategy documents. http://www.richmond.gov.uk/children_looked_after