



“Together we learn, Together we succeed”

Looked After Children Policy

This policy has been written to ensure that the school’s ethos, curriculum, and practices promote shared values. It also encourages staff, children and other members of the Welbourne community to understand others and to value diversity, irrespective of gender, race, belief and sexual orientation.

As a Rights Respecting School, we put the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of our planning, policies, practice and ethos.

Policy Agreed	Reviewed by	Ratified on	Approved by	Signature on behalf Finance Committee GB	Next Review
June 2019	Dara O’Reilly, October 2022	21/11/2022	FGB	R Moffat	November 2024

Looked After Children Policy

Looked After children are registered pupils that are:

- In the care of a local authority or
- Provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services functions, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours.

These may be children who live:

- With a foster carer(s)
- At home with their parents or another family adult but under the supervision of Social Care
- In a residential Children's Home
- Another residential setting, like a school or secure unit.

Previously Looked After Children are registered pupils that fall into either of these categories:

- A child arrangements order, which includes arrangements relating to who the child lives with and when they are to live with them.
- An adoption order

Children cease to be "looked after" when:

- They are adopted
- They are returned to their parents or carers after certain criteria are met
- They turn 18.

The Governing body of Welbourne Primary School is committed to providing high quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. The governing body recognises the need to champion performance, for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children and is committed to improving outcomes for them. We recognise that our school plays a vital role in providing a stable base for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children and in promoting their academic, social and emotional development. We promote staff training in their specific needs so that all adults are sensitive to issues and feel able to support the children discretely and confidentially, as needs arise. Our school community aims to champion the needs of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children to ensure that they make rapid progress during their time at our school.

Whilst every child who is or has been looked after needs to be treated as individual in terms of their education and learning needs, at a national level the educational outcomes for children who are or have been looked after tend to be lower than for children who have not been in care and these pupils are at greater risk of exclusion, compared with their peers. Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children are supported in order that they reach their full potential in school and that their well - being in all areas is supported.

Our Aims for Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children

- To provide a safe and secure environment, where education is always central to the planning, and all adults understand the specific needs of Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children

- To narrow the gap between the attainment of Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children and their peers, ensuring accelerated and rapid progress
- That they benefit from school- based interventions as appropriate.
- For all Looked After Children have a PEP meeting each term and for this joint planning to actively impact on each child's learning on a daily basis, to ensure accelerated and rapid progress.
- For all adults to provide discrete support as appropriate.
- That Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children will be advantaged within school policies and procedures, with their needs explicitly considered and provided for.
- Looked After Children and their foster families will feel a part of the school community and will be actively welcomed into the community, in recognition of the particular needs of this group.
- To ensure that staff, parents, carers and guardians are aware of the identity of the designated teacher, how to contact them and what they are responsible for.

The governing body is committed to ensuring that LAD and Previously Looked After Children are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following are in Looked After Children, and are working effectively:

- A designated governor for Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children
- A designated teacher for Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children
- Personal Education Plans (PEPs) for all Looked After Children
- The designated teacher annual training opportunities specific to factors and impact on the attainment of Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children
- All staff in school will have a clear understanding of the issues that affect Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children, their learning needs, how to support them in school and issues relating to confidentiality.
- Policies, procedures and strategies to promote the achievement and well-being of this vulnerable group.

The Designated Teacher is Ms Gina Cattini.

You can contact Ms Cattini by telephoning the School Reception.

Our Designated Teacher takes lead responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children at our school. They are your initial point of contact for any of the matters set out in the sections below.

The role of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children

1. The Designated Teacher is the central point of initial contact with in Welbourne Primary School. The Designated Teacher will ensure that the school plays its role to the full in making sure arrangements are joined up and minimise any disruption to a child's learning.
2. The Designated Teacher has a leadership role in promoting the educational achievement of all Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children on the school's role. This involves, working with the Virtual School Head to promote the education of Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children and promoting a whole school culture where the personalised learning needs of these children matter and their personal. Emotional and academic needs are prioritised.

3. Promote a school culture which is supportive and has high expectations for Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children
4. The Designated Teacher takes lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand the things which can affect how Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children learn and achieve and how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils and provide training and advice to school staff as required.
5. The Designated Teacher promotes the educational achievement of Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children by contributing to the development and review of whole school policies.
6. The Designated Teacher promotes a culture in which Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children
 - Are able to discuss their progress and be involved in setting their own targets, have their views taken seriously and are supported to take responsibility for their own learning.
 - Are prioritised in any selection of pupils who would benefit from one - to - one tuition, a or school based interventions / additional support, even if the young person does not meet the criteria and ensure that they have access to academic focused study support as appropriate.
 - Are encouraged to participate in school activities and in decision making within the school and the care system.
 - Believe they can succeed and aspire to further and higher education or highly skills jobs: and can discuss difficult issues (such as SEND, bullying, attendance) in a frank manner with a sympathetic and empathetic adult.
7. The Designated Teacher is a source of advice for teachers about:
 - differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual pupils who are Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children
 - the use of Assessment for Learning (AfL) approaches to improve the short and medium term progress of Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children and help them and their teachers understand where they are in their learning (including any knowledge gaps), where they need to go and how to get there.
8. The Designated Teacher works directly with Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children and their carers, parents or guardians to:
 - Promote good home - school links
 - Support progress by paying particular attention to effective communication
 - Ensure they understand the potential value of one - to - one tuition and are equipped to engage with it at home.
 - Ensure they are aware of how the school teaches key skills such as reading and numeracy,
 - Encourage high aspirations and working with the child to plan for their future success and fulfilment.
9. The Designated Teacher has lead responsibility for the development and implementation of PEPs for Looked After Children within the school in partnership with others as necessary.
10. The Designated Teacher is responsible for ensuring that the PEP is completed within statutory timescales and a copy is returned to the Virtual School Head as outlined in the PEP guidance.
11. The Designated Teacher works closely with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children are quickly and effectively responded to.

12. The Designated Teacher is aware that the Virtual School Head provides information and advice to parents and Designated Teacher on meeting the need of Previously Looked After Children. The Designated Teacher should fully involve parents and guardians in decisions affecting their child's education, including any requests to the Virtual School Head for advice on meeting their individual needs.
13. To convene an urgent multi - agency meeting if a Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children is experiencing difficulties.
14. To produce at least one annual report to Governors ensuring they are up - to - date with all aspects of the education of Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children This report should also outline school resources available and any staff training needs for working with this group of children.

All staff in this school will promote improved educational life chances for Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children by:

- Reading the school policy and school policy guidance for Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children
- Attend training as appropriate
- Playing their part in creating a Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children friendly culture.
- Referring to the Designated Teacher for advice.
- Supporting Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children by ensuring they benefit from any additional school - based support available, as appropriate.
- Ensure that all adults, including carers, are clear of the importance of education as a way of improving life chances for Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children
- Ensure that all staff are aware of who the Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children are and that all relevant information is made available to staff to support them in the work they are completing with children.
- Receive any relevant training to support them with their work with Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children
- Ensure that any new Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children CHILDREN joining the school are made to feel welcome, are accurately assessed and that this is used to inform planning and teaching.
- Relevant staff will attend any meetings in relation to Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children
- To remove barriers to learning
- Have high expectations of Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children learning and set targets to accelerate educational progress, extending these targets if they have been achieved. Ensure that the pupils have a voice in setting learning targets for themselves and have a say in the provision that is in Previously Looked After Children for them.
- Be 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.
- Understand how important it is to see Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children as individuals rather than as a homogeneous group, not publicly treat them differently from their peers, and show sensitivity about who else knows about their looked after or previously looked after status.
- Appreciate the central importance of the PEP in helping to create a share understanding between teachers, carers, social workers and most importantly the

child's own understanding of how they are being supported and ensure that the PEP is implemented.

- Have the level of understanding they need of the role of social workers, Virtual School Head and carers and how the function of the PEP fits into the wider care planning duties of the authority which looks after the child.
- For 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 Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children make a smooth transition to any new school or setting e.g. at the end of key stage 2.
- To promote strong home / school links for Looked After Children

Role and Responsibility of the Head Teacher and Governing Body

The Governing Body of this school will:

1. Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children
2. Ensure they are committed to promoting improved educational life chances for Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children
3. Ensure that there is a named Designated qualified Teacher, for Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children and that this person has the appropriate experience to fulfil this statutory role.
4. They will monitor the role of the Designated Teacher to ensure that all Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children make accelerated and rapid progress/
5. Through the Designated Teacher, hold the school to account on how it supports its Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children (including how the Pupil Premium Plus is used) and their level of progress.
6. Be aware of whether the school has Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children and how many (no names).
7. Liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out her / his responsibilities in relation to Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children.
8. Ensure the Designated Teacher is able to access training needed to fulfil the role of Designated Teacher. Most Virtual School Heads agree that, Designated Teachers should have ongoing training opportunities specific to factors that impact on the attainment of Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children
9. Ensure that all staff receive appropriate training to support Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children
10. Support the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children are met.
11. Review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years.

Attendance

School attendance procedures reflect the specific needs of Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children to ensure that they have good attendance. Where there is a concern about attendance and punctuality, the school contacts the carer, social

worker and other professionals as an early intervention, outlined in the attendance policy.

Admissions / Transitions

School procedures to support Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children during admission and transition follow Haringey procedures for admissions. We also ensure:

- The swift transfer of information between schools.
- Early identification of a staff mentor and peer buddy if appropriate.
- Additional support for Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children at times of transition.
- Structured activities to 'say goodbye' in recognition of the impact of broken attachments and loss.

Additional Educational Needs

All staff endeavour to secure accelerated and rapid progress for Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children with additional educational needs by:

- Having high expectations
- Ensuring that they are prioritised for additional school – based support, even if they do not meet the criteria, ensuring that planning is coordinated, appropriate interventions identified, and teaching to the plan is systematic.
- Ensuring that the progress is regularly monitored and reviewed, with an expectation that the pupils will make progress that reflects their starting point each academic year.

Special Educational Needs

All staff endeavour to secure accelerated and rapid progress for Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children who have Special Educational Needs by:

- Ensuring that they are accessing school based targets support which 'additional to and different from' the universal and additional needs provision (in line with the SEND Code of Practice) as appropriate to their individual needs.
- Ensuring that all plans are coordinated, appropriate interventions identified and teaching to the plan is systematic.
- Ensuring that progress is regularly monitored and reviewed, in line with the SEND Code of Practice.
- Ensuring that any work undertaken by non – teaching staff has teacher oversight.
- Ensuring that the provision put into Looked After Children for the pupils reflects their individual needs.
- Ensuring that carers are supported by class teachers in order to be able to assist the children at home with homework and reading.

Safeguarding

School staff will be vigilant for any safeguarding issues which can impact particularly on Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children by familiarising themselves with the 'School Policy Guidance' for Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children and following the school's child protection, anti – bullying, E-safety and behaviour policy, if there are any safeguarding concerns. All staff will be aware of safeguarding procedures in school and will promptly share any concerns with the relevant staff, following school procedures.

Exclusion

We will make every effort to avoid excluding a Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children. This is in recognition of the increased risk this poses in terms of the pupils quickly disengaging from the school and due to their early experience of broken attachments and loss. If there is no option other than exclusion, then we will make every attempt to reduce the number of days of the exclusion. School procedures are in place to reduce the risk of exclusion of Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children

Multi - Agency Working

School staff will engage with colleagues from other agencies and facilitate their work. This will enable colleagues to successfully perform their roles and positively impact on the education and wider needs of Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children The Designated Teacher will ensure that any advice and support from outside agencies is shared with the class teacher and with other adults who work with the child.

This policy is based on the Department of Education's statutory guidance - The Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children guidance on their roles and responsibility (February 2018).