



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 | Rose Cappello November 2024 | | FGB | | November |

Looked After Children Policy

Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children Policy

Definition of Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)

Looked After Children (LAC) are pupils who are:

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

These children may live in various settings, such as:

- Foster care.
- At home with parents or another adult family member, but under social care supervision.
- In a residential children's home.
- In other residential settings, including secure units or schools.

Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) are those who:

- Have been subject to a child arrangements order, including arrangements regarding their residence.
- Have been adopted.

When a child ceases to be "Looked After":

- Upon adoption
- When they are returned to their parents or carers following certain criteria being met.
- At the age of 18.

The Governing Body of Welbourne Primary School is committed to providing high-quality education for all pupils, ensuring equality of opportunity, access, and outcomes. We acknowledge the unique challenges faced by Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) and are dedicated to improving their educational outcomes. Our school plays a crucial role in offering a stable environment, fostering the academic, social, and emotional development of these children. We promote staff training to ensure that all school personnel are aware of the specific needs of LAC and PLAC, enabling them to offer support in a discreet, confidential, and sensitive manner.

While every child is treated individually, it is important to note that educational outcomes for children who are or have been in care are generally lower than those of their peers. These children are also at greater risk of exclusion. Therefore, schools must ensure that Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children receive the necessary support to help them achieve their full potential and support their wellbeing.

Aims for Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children

- To provide a safe, secure environment where education remains central, and all adults understand the specific needs of LAC and PLAC.
- To reduce the attainment gap between LAC/PLAC and their peers, promoting rapid academic progress.
- To ensure access to appropriate school-based interventions.
- To ensure all LAC have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) meeting each term, with this planning influencing learning to ensure rapid progress.
- To ensure discrete support is available for LAC/PLAC as required.
- To ensure that school policies and procedures explicitly consider and meet the needs of LAC/PLAC.
- To ensure that LAC/PLAC and their foster families feel welcomed and integrated into the school community.
- To ensure that all staff, parents, carers, and guardians are aware of the role of the Designated Teacher and how to contact them.

The governing body is fully committed to ensuring that Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) receive the support they need to thrive academically and personally. To this end, the following measures will be implemented and regularly reviewed to ensure their effectiveness:

- The appointment of a designated governor for Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children to oversee the provision of support.
- The appointment of a designated teacher for Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children, responsible for coordinating and monitoring support.
- The development and review of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) for all Looked After Children to ensure their educational needs are met.
- Annual training opportunities for the designated teacher, focusing on the unique challenges faced by Looked After and Previously Looked After Children, and their impact on attainment.
- All school staff will receive training to ensure they understand the specific issues affecting Looked After and Previously Looked After Children, including their learning needs, strategies for support, and the importance of confidentiality.
- The implementation of policies, procedures, and strategies that promote the achievement, well-being, and overall welfare of these vulnerable students.

These provisions will be regularly monitored and adapted to ensure that the needs of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children are being effectively met.

Designated Teacher for Looked After Children / Previously Looked After Children

The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children at Welbourne Primary School is **Ms. Cappello**, our School SENCO.

Ms. Cappello is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of LAC/PLAC and is the first point of contact for any related concerns.

Role of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher is responsible for the following:

1. Serving as the central point of contact for all matters concerning LAC/PLAC.
2. Ensuring coordinated efforts within the school to minimise disruption to the child's learning.
3. Working with the Virtual School to promote the educational success of LAC/PLAC and fostering a whole-school approach that prioritises their emotional, academic, and social needs.
4. Promoting a culture that supports high expectations for LAC/PLAC.
5. Providing staff with advice on effective teaching strategies.
6. Collaborating with carers, parents, and guardians to foster strong home-school links, encourage high aspirations, and support academic progress.
7. Coordinating the development and review of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and ensuring they are completed within statutory timescales.
8. Ensuring prompt responses to any safeguarding concerns, in collaboration with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
9. Engaging with parents and guardians of Previously Looked After Children to provide advice and support as needed.

Responsibilities of School Staff

All staff at this school will promote improved educational outcomes for Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) by:

- Familiarising themselves with school policies and guidance on LAC/PLAC.
- Attending relevant training and contributing to a supportive school culture.
- Consulting the Designated Teacher for advice and guidance.
- Ensuring LAC/PLAC benefit from available school-based support.
- Promoting the importance of education to carers and adults involved with LAC/PLAC.
- Ensuring staff are aware of LAC/PLAC students and have access to relevant information.
- Ensuring that LAC/PLAC are made to feel welcome in the school community and are assessed accurately to inform planning and teaching.
- Attending meetings related to LAC/PLAC as necessary.
- Removing barriers to learning and setting high academic expectations for LAC/PLAC.
- Engaging students in setting learning targets and ensuring their voice is heard in educational planning.
- Recognising the emotional and psychological impact of loss, trauma and separation (attachment awareness) on LAC/PLAC.
- Treating LAC/PLAC as individuals and maintaining sensitivity regarding their status.
- Supporting the Personal Education Plan (PEP) process and ensuring its implementation.
- Understanding the roles of social workers, Virtual School Heads, and carers in the education and welfare of LAC/PLAC.
- Involving parents/guardians in educational decisions where applicable.

- Supporting smooth transitions for LAC/PLAC to new schools or settings.
- Promoting strong home-school partnerships for LAC/PLAC.

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

1. Ensure that all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance relating to LAC/PLAC.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. Monitor the effectiveness of the Designated Teacher's role and hold the school accountable for the educational progress of LAC/PLAC.
5. Ensure that appropriate training and resources are available for staff to support LAC/PLAC.
6. Review the implementation of this policy and assess its effectiveness, at least annually.

Attendance and Transitions

The school will prioritise the attendance of LAC/PLAC and will intervene early where concerns arise regarding punctuality or attendance. In any cases of concern, the school will contact the carer, social worker or any other professional as an early intervention. In cases of transition, the school will ensure that information is transferred promptly and that LAC/PLAC receive the necessary support.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding procedures will be closely followed, with staff vigilant to the particular vulnerabilities of LAC/PLAC. The school will also work in collaboration with external agencies to ensure that the needs of LAC/PLAC are met.

Exclusion Procedures

The school will take every step to avoid excluding any LAC/PLAC, recognising the significant risks of disengagement. If exclusion is unavoidable, we will work to minimise its duration and impact.

Multi-Agency Working

The Designated Teacher will facilitate communication with external agencies to ensure that advice and support are shared effectively, benefiting the education and wider well-being of LAC/PLAC. The designated teacher will ensure that advice and support from outside agencies is shared with the class teacher and other adults who work with the child.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains aligned with statutory guidance and effectively supports the needs of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children.