



Hayfield Cross
Church of England School

LOOKED-AFTER & PREVIOUSLY LOOKED-AFTER CHILD POLICY

Date ratified by the Governing Board	March 2023
Review date (by)	March 2024

Remember that I commanded you to be strong and brave. So don't be afraid. The Lord your God will be with you everywhere you go' (Joshua 1:9)

As the harvest grows from the soil, Hayfield Cross came to life in 2015. From nothing, we have grown at the heart of our new community, persevering through challenge into a flourishing school. Guided by our Christian values the seeds of Joy, Integrity and Fellowship are planted as we instil this pioneering spirit in our children, challenging them through exciting learning to aspire to greatness in all that they do.

This policy is written with reference to the following legislation:

Section 20 of the **Children and Young Persons Act 2008**

Section 20A of the 2008 Act inserted by section 5 of the **Children and Social Work Act**

2017

Section 2E of the Academies Act 2010 inserted by section 6 of the 2017 Act.

The Designated Teacher (Looked-After Pupils etc.) (England) Regulations 2009.

This policy covers Looked-After Children and previously Looked-After Children.

This policy links to the Hayfield Cross Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Pupil Premium Policy and Strategy Statement.

Aims:

This policy sets out Hayfield Cross Primary School's approach to encouraging and supporting the educational achievement of Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children is based on the following principles:

- Ensuring an appropriately trained Designated Teacher is appointed, who will be responsible for all Looked-After and Previously Looked After children.
- All Looked-After Children will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) drawn up between the school, the child, and the child's social worker, which will identify the child's individual needs and the support they require
- Having high expectations for every child and ensuring equal access to a balanced and broadly based education.
- Recording, monitoring, and improving the academic achievement of the child in addition to their health and wellbeing.
- Achieving stability and continuity prioritising high expectations of behaviour and promoting attendance.
- Promoting the inclusion of Looked-After and Previously Looked-After children through challenging and changing attitudes.
- Promoting good communication between all those involved in the child's life and listening to the child.
- Maintaining and respecting the child's confidentiality wherever possible.
- Ensuring staff awareness of, and sensitivity to the difficulties and educational disadvantages of Looked-After Children.

Definition of Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children;

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is Looked-After by a local authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority.

They fall into four main groups:

- children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
- children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21).

The term 'in care' refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 - they may live with foster carers, in a Children's home, in a residential school, with relatives or with parents under supervision. Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are 'accommodated' by the local authority under section 20 of the Children Act – they may live in foster care, in a Children's home or in a residential school. All these groups are said to be 'Looked-After Children' -LAC. They may be Looked-After by our local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

Previously Looked-After Pupils are defined as children who were Looked-After, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order).

Context

Many children and young people who are in care have suffered abuse or neglect. Despite having as broad a range of abilities as their peers, Looked-After Children are particularly vulnerable to underachievement.

Nationally, Looked-After Children (LAC) significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Their academic and social progress is likely to be affected by their experiences, and compounded by instability in their personal circumstances. 75% of Looked-After children leave education with no formal qualifications. Only 12% go on to further education compared with 68% of the general population.

Helping LAC succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority in our school.

At Hayfield Cross we recognise that Looked-After Children can experience specific and significant disadvantage within a school setting, and is committed to ensuring that they reach their potential in all areas. We are aware that Looked-After Children may have specific difficulties in transport and attendance, doing homework, getting parental consent for activities, obtaining funding for extra activities, obtaining correct uniform and equipment, as well as stigma about their circumstances. Hayfield Cross Primary School recognises that Looked-After Children may have very specific needs and may be coping with trauma, abuse or rejection, and are likely to experience personal distress and uncertainty.

We believe that the educational experience of all children should be positive and powerful and aims to provide a learning environment in which every Looked-After Child can be successful. This school

has a major part to play in ensuring that LAC are able to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic wellbeing.

Responsibility of the Head teacher

- Identify a Designated Teacher for Looked-After Children, whose role is set out below.
- It is essential that another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take sick leave.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusion of Looked-After Children and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of Looked-After Children to all parties involved.
- Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

Responsibility of the Governing Body

- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Looked-After Children:
- Ensure that the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Looked-After Children.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of Looked-After Children.
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.
- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Support the Head teacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of Looked-After Children are recognised and met.
- Receive termly information (included in the headteacher's report) setting out:
 1. The number of looked-after pupils on the school's roll (if any).
 2. Their attendance, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
 3. Their Teacher Assessment, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
 4. The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any).
 5. The destinations of pupils who leave the school.
 6. 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 Inclusion Link Governor, incorporating LAC / Previously LAC pupils, is: Mrs Lindsey Atkins/Mrs Bernadette Leather

The role of the Designated Teacher

At Hayfield Cross the role of Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children:

Rachael Stolz, SENDCO.

01536 606093

Email: senco@hayfieldcross.org.uk

The designated teacher will be a central point of initial contact within the school and will:

- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan to plan for that transition in consultation with the child's social worker and arrangements are put in place to ensure their needs identified and met.
 - This may include providing basic equipment and resources if necessary and providing appropriate support in meeting uniform requirements if needed.
 - Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people, at least two weeks before the Care Plan reviews.
 - Maintaining an up-to-date record of the Looked-After Children in school, including those in the care of other authorities and ensuring all necessary information is passed to other staff as required
 - Ensure that each Looked-After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This may 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 Looked-After Children that is necessary within school liaising with teaching and non-teaching staff in school, including other Designated Safeguarding Deputies as well as pastoral and subject staff to ensure they are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage LACs may face.
- Establish and maintain regular contact with home, statutory and voluntary agencies.
 - Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
 - Promote inclusion in all areas of school life and encourage Looked-After Children to join in extracurricular activities and out of school learning.
 - Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of Looked-After Children.
 - Set up meetings with relevant parties where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion.
 - Ensure the rapid transfer of information between individuals, agencies and if the pupil changes school – to a new school.
- Be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education.
- Ensure staff are aware that Looked-After Children are vulnerable to being bullied, so will actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy.
 - Ensure that attendance of Looked-After Children and previously looked-after children is monitored.
 - Attending training as required to keep fully informed of latest developments and policies regarding Looked-After Children.

Previously Looked-After Children:

In addition to the actions outlined above, the designated teacher has a specific role in the care of Previously Looked-After children in the school:

- promoting high expectations for previously looked-after children to achieve their full potential in education;
- working closely with the local authority's Previously-adoption support team where appropriate to support children to access the support they need
- accessing the support available to previously looked-after children (e.g. mental health services), effectively liaise with service providers and signposting parents to those services as required;
- share good practise across school in supporting previously looked-after children's education.

The responsibility of all the staff:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked-After Children, as for all pupils.
- Maintain Looked-After Children's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- Work to enable Looked-After Children to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all Looked-After Children.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of Looked-After Children.
- Be aware Looked-After Children are vulnerable to bullying and working to prevent bullying in line with the School's policy.

Confidentiality

Information on Looked-After children will be shared with school staff on a "need to know" basis.

The Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with which school staff at the PEP meeting. Once this has been agreed with the social worker, carer, young person, and other parties, complete confidentiality is to be maintained.

Record keeping and information sharing

The Designated Teacher will keep an up-to-date record of Looked-After Children and Young

People in school and will ensure that relevant information is made known to appropriate staff.

A Personal Education Plan will be initiated within 20 school days of the Looked-After Child or Young Person starting at the school or being taken into care and will be reviewed regularly and as necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the LAC/YP.

The PEP will provide a regular opportunity to review progress, note any concerns and ensure that all relevant parties are informed accordingly.

Copies of reports and appropriate documentation will be sent to authorised carers and agencies involved with the child as well as any receiving school at point of transition.

It is vital that the Looked-After Child or Young Person is aware of information being recorded, in what circumstances and who will have access to it. How this is shared with them will depend on their age and level of understanding.

Exclusions

Hayfield Cross recognises that Looked-After Children are particularly vulnerable to exclusions. Where a LAC is at risk of exclusion the school will try every practicable means to maintain the child in school. A multi-professional meeting will be arranged, bringing together all those involved with the young person to discuss strategies to minimise the risk of exclusion. The child or young person's Personal Education Plan will reflect strategies to support the child and where relevant those employed in the Pastoral Support Plan. All relevant measures and resources will be considered to provide support and provide alternative educational packages to prevent an exclusion from happening. Please refer to the school's Behaviour Policy for more information.

Staff development

Training arrangements will be made to ensure that the Designated Teacher is kept up to date with developments relating to the education and attainment of Looked-After Children. Other staff will receive relevant training and support to enable them to work sympathetically and productively with Looked-After Children, including those who are underachieving or at risk of underachieving or who have additional needs. These may include EAL, Most Able or having learning or physical needs. Teachers will be informed of those Looked-After Children who have particular gifts, talents or learning needs and will work with them appropriately.

Support and resources

The Governing body will ensure that the school allocates resources, including professional time and expertise, to support appropriate provision for Looked-After Children and Previously Looked-After Children, meeting the objectives set out in this policy.

Home-school liaison

The school recognises the value of a close working relationship between home and school and will work towards developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable Looked-After Children and Previously Looked-After Children to achieve their potential. Parent/Carer evenings as well as PEP and Care Plan review meetings (for LAC) provide opportunities to continue to develop this partnership working.

Admission arrangements

We recognise that due to care arrangements LAC may enter school mid-term and that it is important that they are given a positive welcome and where appropriate additional support and pre-entry visits to help them settle. The school recognises that Looked-After children are an 'excepted group' and will prioritise Looked-After Children in the school's oversubscription criteria following the DfE Admissions Code (Admissions of Looked-After Children (England) Regulations 2006).

Links with other agencies

The school recognises the value of working together with other agencies and organisations and will work closely with colleagues from services involved with the Looked-After Child or Previously Looked-After Child including Social Care teams, the Post Educational Psychologist; Health Services, CAMHS.

The government have published full guidance, last updated February 2018.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/3561/The_designated_teacher_for_looked-after_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf