

Plymstock School - Children in Care Policy

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Designated Teacher for Looked after Children: Tamsin Summers

Governor Link: Dave Chapman

Updated: March 2022

Review Date: March 2023

Abbreviations used in this policy

LAC – Looked after Children

PLAC – Previously Looked after Children

ePEP – Electronic Personal Education Plan

EWO – Education Welfare Officer

LA – Local Authority

SENCo – Special Educational Needs Coordinator

Linked Documentation

- DfE The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children, February 2018

Aims of this policy

Looked After Children (LAC) and previously Looked After Children (PLAC) are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational under achievement when compared to other groups. Raising levels of achievement has been strongly and clearly highlighted as a major part of improving the life chances of looked after children and schools play a pivotal role in this. Plymstock School is committed to ensuring that all children receive access to a broad and balanced curriculum which motivates and inspire them to learn. This policy aims to ensure that careful planning, monitoring and evaluation of all LAC and PLAC students is carried out to ensure best educational outcomes are achieved.

1. Definition

Looked after Children (LAC) is a term that refers to children in the care of the Local Authority.

This can happen either with parental agreement or when a court makes a Care Order. The child may be:

- living with foster carers
- in a residential unit
- with family members
- sometimes with their parents.

Plymstock School recognises that Looked after Children may have very specific needs.

2. Plymstock School's Commitment to Looked after Children (LAC) and Previously Looked after Children (PLAC)

- 2.1 The educational achievement of looked after children as a group remains unacceptably low. There are five key reasons why children in care underachieve in education:

- 2.1.1 Too many young people's lives are characterised by instability;
 - 2.1.2 Young people in care spend too much time out of school or other place of learning;
 - 2.1.3 Children do not have sufficient help with their education if they get behind;
 - 2.1.4 Carers are not expected, or equipped, to provide sufficient support and encouragement at home for learning and development;
 - 2.1.5 Children in care need more help with their emotional, mental or physical health and wellbeing.
- 2.2 Plymstock School is committed to helping every child achieve the highest educational standards he or she possibly can.
- 2.3 Looked after Children are a priority for admission and Plymstock School will follow the LA's admission criteria.

3. Action Plan

- 3.1 Plymstock School is committed to enhancing the achievement and welfare of Looked after Children (LAC).
- 3.2 Plymstock School will ensure equal access to a broad, balanced and ambitious education and appoint a named governor for Looked after Children (LAC).
- 3.3 Plymstock School will nominate a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children (LAC) who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them.
- 3.4 However, the Designated Teacher will be supported in the day-to-day responsibilities towards Looked after Children (LAC) by:
 - 3.4.1 Acting as a resource and advocate for Looked after Children (LAC);
 - 3.4.2 Ensuring that the young person has a voice in setting his or her own learning targets;
 - 3.4.3 Record and monitor academic progress and attendance, and report to the Virtual School Headteacher for LAC and the Designated Governor for LAC;
 - 3.4.4 Monitor attendance and exclusions weekly and liaise with Deputy Headteacher (Inclusion and Welfare), as appropriate;
 - 3.4.5 Maintain Electronic Personal Education Plans (ePEPs) along with the child's social worker and review as part of the care review process;
 - 3.4.5 Promote good communication between all those involved in the child's life and ensure staff are aware of all relevant information;
 - 3.4.6 Liaise pro-actively with Virtual School Team and Social Care Team;
 - 3.4.7 Take an active interest in the use of funding to support Looked after Children;
 - 3.4.8 Ensure that a member of staff attends care reviews, whenever possible;
 - 3.4.9 Provide additional support for transition between schools/key stages and liaise with new Designated Teacher;
 - 3.4.10 Link with SENCo to ensure any Special Educational Needs are assessed on arrival and met. All Looked after Children (LAC) will have an IEP to outline their needs.

- 3.4.11 Encourage engagement in school clubs or activities and ensure participation in school trips and curriculum enhancement activities.

4. Responsibilities

To ensure that Looked after Children are given the best opportunities to succeed:

4.1 The Tutor will:

- 4.1.1 Be aware of any students in their Tutor Group who are LAC;
- 4.1.2 Be a friendly and welcoming face each day for the LAC;
- 4.1.3 Monitor attendance of the LAC carefully and highlight attendance concerns to Head of Year;
- 4.1.4 Monitor the student planner, keeping track of homework set;
- 4.1.5 Monitor rewards and sanctions that the LAC may receive and raise concerns with Heads of Year, if appropriate;
- 4.1.6 Monitor progress data such as Progress Checks carefully and discuss these with the LAC;
- 4.1.7 Ensure that the LAC is properly dressed for school and is carrying the correct equipment;
- 4.1.8 Encourage the LAC to take part in the wider curriculum such as after-school clubs and activities;
- 4.1.9 Liaise with the carers of LACs over any concerns related to the above.

4.2 The Head of Year will:

- 4.2.1 Act as a resource and advocate for Looked after Children (LAC)
- 4.2.2 Record and monitor academic progress and attendance, and report to the Virtual School Team;
- 4.2.3 Monitor attendance and exclusions weekly and liaise with Deputy Headteacher (Inclusion and Welfare);
- 4.2.4 Maintain ePEPs along with the child's social worker and review as part of the care review process;
- 4.2.5 Promote good communication between all those involved in the child's life and ensure staff are aware of all relevant information;
- 4.2.6 Liaise pro-actively with the Virtual School Team, Social Care Team and Virtual School Headteacher;
- 4.2.7 Take an active interest in the use of funding to support LAC;
- 4.2.8 Ensure that a member of staff attends care reviews, whenever possible;
- 4.2.9 Link with SENCo to ensure any Special Educational Needs are assessed on arrival and met;
- 4.2.10 Encourage engagement in school clubs or activities and ensure participation in school trips and curriculum enhancement activities;
- 4.2.11 Lead the Assistant Head of Year to support in exercising the duties above;
- 4.2.12 Conduct round-robins on LAC when required.

4.3 The Assistant Head of Year will:

- 4.3.1 Add LAC to their caseloads;
- 4.3.2 Attend the ePEP meetings with the Head of Year;
- 4.3.3 Assist the Heads of Year in maintaining ePEPs along with the child's social worker and review as part of the care review process;
- 4.3.4 Meet with the LAC once every half term to discuss progress and wellbeing. A record of the meeting is kept (ePEP record form).
- 4.3.5 Support the relevant Head of Year to ensure that LAC make the best possible progress in school – this may involve attending LAC review meetings, where appropriate.

4.4 The subject teacher will:

- 4.4.1 Be aware of which students in their class are LAC;
- 4.4.2 Ensure that LAC information is recorded in mark books;
- 4.4.3 Highlight any general causes of concern to the Tutor and HOY;
- 4.4.4 Ensure that LAC in their class are making 'expected progress' and, if not, intervention strategies are put in place in conjunction with HOD.

4.5 The Head of Department will:

- 4.5.1 Be aware of which students in each year group are LAC;
- 4.5.2 Ensure that LAC in their subject are making 'expected progress' and, if not, intervention strategies are put in place in conjunction with the subject teacher;
- 4.5.3 Highlight any general causes of concern to the Tutor and HOY.

4.6 The Governing Body will:

- 4.6.1 Ensure that designated teachers for LAC undergo appropriate training;
- 4.6.2 Receive and consider an annual report from the designated teachers;
- 4.6.3 Act, in conjunction with the school leadership team, on any issues raised in the annual report so as to support the designated teachers and maximise the impact of the role.

5. Review

The Designated Teacher will review this policy and present to governors annually.

Policy History

Policy / Version Date	Summary of change	Contact	Implementation Date	Review Date
Summer 2017	Policy review	Deputy Headteacher Pastoral	September 2019	Bi-annual Review
Autumn 2020	Policy review	Deputy Headteacher Pastoral	January 2021	Annual (recommended)
Spring 2021	Policy review	Pastoral and Inclusion Lead	March 2022	Annual (recommended)