

Looked After and Previously Looked After Children Policy

Waddesdon Village Primary School – a *Pathway to Excellence*



Approved by: Laura Forchione

Date: September 2025

Last reviewed on: September 2025

**Next review due
by:** September 2028

1. Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

- A suitable member of staff is appointed as the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children
- The designated teacher promotes the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, and supports other staff members to do this too
- Staff, parents, carers and guardians are aware of the identity of the designated teacher, how to contact them and what they are responsible for

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance on the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

It also takes into account section 20 and section 20A of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008.

3. Definitions

Looked-after children (LAC) 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

Previously looked-after children (PLAC) are registered pupils that fall into either of these categories:

- They were looked after by a local authority but ceased to be as a result of any of the following:
 - A child arrangements order, which includes arrangements relating to who the child lives with and when they are to live with them
 - A special guardianship order
 - An adoption order
- They appear to the governing board to have:
 - Been in state care in a place outside of England and Wales because they would not have otherwise been cared for adequately, and
 - Ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted

Personal education plan (PEP) is part of a looked-after child's care plan that is developed with the school. It forms a record of what needs to happen and who will make it happen to ensure the child reaches their full potential.

Virtual school head (VSH) is a local authority officer responsible for promoting the educational achievement of their authority's looked-after children, working across schools to monitor and support these pupils as if they were in a single school. The VSH is also responsible for providing information and advice to schools, parents and guardians in respect of previously looked-after children.

4. Identity of our designated teacher

Our designated teacher is Miss Laura Forchione, Headteacher.

You can contact them by telephone (01296 651237) or email (office@waddesdonprimary.com)

Our designated teacher takes lead responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children at our school. They are your initial point of contact for any of the matters set out in the section below.

5. Role and responsibilities of the designated teacher

- The designated teacher is the central point of initial contact within Waddesdon Village Primary School. They 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.
- The designated teacher has a leadership role in promoting the educational achievement of every LAC and PLAC on the school's roll. This involves, working with the Virtual School Head to promote the education of LAC and PLAC and promoting a whole school culture where the personalised learning needs of these children matter and their personal, emotional and academic needs are prioritised.
- The designated teacher takes lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand the things which can affect how LAC and PLAC learn and achieve and how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils.
- The designated teacher promotes the educational achievement of LAC and PLAC by contributing to the development and review of whole school policies.
- The designated teacher promotes a culture in which LAC and PLAC:
 - 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.
 - 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 achieve their potential; and learn to discuss difficult issues (such as SEN, bullying, attendance) with a sympathetic and empathetic adult.
 - The designated teacher is a source of advice for teachers about: differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual pupils who are LAC or PLAC; and the use of Assessment for Learning (AfL) approaches to improve the short- and medium-term progress.
- The designated teacher works directly with LAC and PLAC 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 maths;
 - Encourages high aspirations and working with the child to plan for their future success and fulfilment.

- The designated teacher is responsible for ensuring that the PEPs are completed within statutory timescales and a copy is returned to the Virtual School Head as outlined in the PEP guidance.
- The designated teacher is the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and they ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding LAC and PLAC are quickly and effectively responded to.
- The designated teacher is aware that the Virtual School Head provides information and advice to parents and designated teachers on meeting the needs of PLAC. 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.

6. Role and responsibilities of all staff

All staff in this school will:

- Have high expectations of LAC and PLAC's learning and set targets to accelerate educational progress;
- 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 LAC and PLAC 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 shared understanding between teachers, carers, social workers and, most importantly, the child's own understanding of how they are being supported;
- Have the level of understanding they need of the role of social workers, Virtual School Heads 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 PLAC, 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.

7. Role and responsibilities of the governing body

The governing body of this school will:

- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for LAC and PLAC;
- Ensure that there is a named designated teacher for LAC and PLAC;
- Through the designated teacher, hold the school to account on how it supports its LAC and PLAC (including how the Pupil Premium Plus is used) and their level of progress;
- Be aware of whether the school has LAC and PLAC and how many (no names);
- Liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure that the designated teacher is enabled to carry out their responsibilities in relation to LAC and PLAC;

- Ensure the designated teacher is able to access training needed to fulfil the role of designated teacher. Most Virtual School Heads agree that, as minimum, designated teachers should have two days a year for training opportunities specific to factors that impact on the attainment of LAC and PLAC;
- Support the Head Teacher, DSL and DDSL and other staff in ensuring the needs of LAC and PLAC are met;
- Review the effective implementation of this policy, at least every three years.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Headteacher. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour
- Child protection and safeguarding
- SEN
- Supporting pupils with medical needs