

Looked After and Previously Looked After Child Policy

Application of the policy

This applies to all staff, students, parents and relevant stakeholders.

Responsible Staff Member	RRC
Committee to Review	Full Governing Board
Ratification date by Committee	Spring 2026
Review Due	Spring 2027

Contents

Section 1	Definitions.....	3
Section 2	Aims.....	4
Section 3	Legislation and statutory requirements.....	5
Section 4	Links with other policies.....	6
Section 5	Roles and responsibilities.....	6
5.1	The Governors.....	6
5.2	The Headteacher.....	6
5.3	Designated Teacher.....	6
5.4	Staff.....	7
Section 6	Admissions	8
Section 7	Behaviour, Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions.....	8
Section 8	Monitoring Arrangements.....	8

Section1 Definitions:

Looked After Children (LAC) a child or young person is looked after by a local authority if:

- they are in the care of the local authority (including children or young people who are the subject of a Care Order, Interim Care Order, or emergency Orders for their protection); or
- they are provided with accommodation by the local authority for more than 24 hours (often under a voluntary agreement with their parents or guardians).

Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) means:

- children no longer looked after by a local authority because they are:
 - the subject of an adoption order,
 - special guardianship order, or
 - child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person (but not which governs only where a child is to spend time and/or contact); or
 - children who were adopted outside England and Wales from 'state care' (care that is provided by a public authority, religious or other organisation, the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society).
 -

Designated Teacher is an appropriately qualified and experienced member of staff, the 'Designated Teacher' is appointed to undertake the responsibilities to promote and lead on the educational achievement of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.

Personal Education Plan (PEP) will be initiated by the social worker of a LAC but then developed by the Designated Teacher to ensure it is effective in supporting the child to make expected educational progress. The PEP forms part of the child's official school record and a termly meeting between all professionals involved is the requirement. It is an evolving record of the child's education (both academic achievements and participation in the wider activities of the school), describing what needs to happen to enable them to make the expected progress and fulfil their potential. It will record the child's views on the support they consider being most effective. It should work in harmony with any EHCP or special educational needs and will also look to identify any additional support that may be necessary that is relevant to and could impact on the child's education.

Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) LAC and PLAC are eligible for PP+ funding to improve attainment and close of the gap between them and their peers of the same cohort. For LAC only this is managed by the Virtual School Head, who will work with the school to agree how the funding can be used most effectively. For PLAC it is paid directly to the school (based on the number of eligible PLAC recorded at the January Census). Like the Pupil Premium Grant it is not a personal budget and is managed for the cohort according to its needs.

The **Head of the Virtual School** for children in care, adoption, SGO, GRT and EAL is Keeley White. For LAC they are responsible for monitoring and ensuring the local authority's duty to promote their educational achievement, as if they were in a single school. For PLAC the role is limited to providing information and advice to parents and schools, including training.

The role of the Virtual School is:

- Provide advice, guidance and support to schools, professional colleagues, foster carers and children
- Administer the Pupil Premium Plus
- Ensure that all children have an effective high-quality Personal Education Plan (PEP). They also link the allocation of Pupil Premium monies to PEP targets effectively
- Monitor attendance, and track progress data and attainment for all Norfolk looked after children
- Provide training for schools, foster carers, and professional colleagues
- Identify and pilot interventions and resources to improve learning
- Provide out-of-school activities to support learning

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 set out new duties for local authorities, maintained schools and academies, effective from September 2018. It has extended the role of virtual school heads and designated teachers to certain previously looked-after children. This is because these children may continue to experience educational challenges after leaving care. The new remit extends to those children with:

- Child arrangements orders
- Special Guardianship Orders (SGO)
- Adoption orders

The role of the Virtual School Head for previously looked-after children is to promote their educational achievement. This is through the provision of information and advice to their parents, educators, and others.

However, Virtual School Heads are not expected to monitor the educational progress of individual children or be held to account for their educational attainment. Any intervention in the education of a previously looked-after child, must be with the agreement of the person(s) who have parental responsibility for the child. They, like all parents, are responsible for overseeing their child's progress in education.

The English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) team, also now sit within the Virtual School structure, under its inclusion strand.

Section 2 Aims:

This policy aims to set out how the school will meet the needs of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children and meet its statutory responsibilities to promote their educational achievement.

Nationally, 'Looked After Children' (LAC) and 'Previously Looked After Children' (PLAC) significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion/suspension compared with their peers due to the challenges they are or have previously experienced. Their academic progress, social, emotional and mental health is likely to be affected by their experiences, and compounded by instability in their personal circumstances. They may also have suffered disruptions to their education. Providing support for our LAC and PLAC to succeed and leading to a better future for them is a key priority at Taverham High School. We recognise that LAC and PLAC can experience specific and significant disadvantage within a school setting as they will have individual needs, requiring varying amounts of support. We are aware that LAC and PLAC 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. Taverham High School is committed to enhancing the achievement and welfare of LAC and PLAC in the following ways:

- Provide a safe and secure environment.
- Seek to understand individual needs and put in place strategies to promote their educational achievement, wellbeing, and success.
- Promote a whole school culture in which the personal, emotional, and academic needs of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children are prioritised.
- Having high expectations for the 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.
- Prioritising reduction in suspensions and promoting attendance.
- Promoting good communication between all professionals involved and listening to the views of the child and where practicable, allowing decisions to be made that affect their future provision.
- 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.
- Ensuring an appropriately trained Designated Teacher is appointed, who will be responsible for all Looked After children.
- All LAC will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) drawn up between the school, the child, and the child's social worker on a termly basis, which will identify the child's individual needs and the support they require.

Section 3 Legislation and statutory requirements:

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to the following:

- [Children and Young Persons Act 2008](#)
- [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#)
- [DfE \(February 2018\) 'The designated teacher for looked after children and previously looked after children'](#)
- DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66d7301b9084b18b95709f75/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2024.pdf
- [DfE \(September 2015, updated March 2022\) 'The Schools Admissions Code'](#)
- [DfE \(February 2018\) 'Promoting the education of looked after children and previously looked after children'](#)
- [DfE \(September 2024\) 'Exclusions from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England'](#)

Section 4 Links with other policies

This behaviour policy is linked to the following policies:

- Behaviour policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Admissions policy

Section 5 Roles and Responsibilities:

5.1 The Governors

The governors are responsible for monitoring and approving this Looked After and Previously Looked After Child Policy and checking its effectiveness and holding the Headteacher to account for its implementation. The governors must be familiar with and understand the content of the Looked After and Previously Looked After Child Policy.

5.2 The HeadTeacher

The Headteacher is responsible for reviewing this Looked After and Previously Looked After Child Policy. They should appoint a Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children and ensure all members of staff are aware that supporting Looked After and Previously Looked After Children is a priority.

5.3 Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children is responsible for championing Looked After and Previously Looked After Children within the school and promoting and leading on their educational achievement, having regard to the statutory guidance 'The designated teacher for looked after children and previously looked after children' (February 2018) and any other relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State. The Designated Teacher will work closely with each LAC students Head of Year, AHT responsible for Personal Development Equality and Diversity, Attendance and Transition Lead and SENCO in ensuring the following for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children are met:

- 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.
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed every term with the child, the social worker, the carer(s) and any other relevant professionals present at the PEP meeting.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately.
- Co-ordinate any support for the LAC and PLAC that is necessary within school.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
- Encourage LAC and PLAC to join in extra-curricular activities and out of school learning.
- Ensure, as far as possible, attendance of all professionals at planning and review meetings.
- Set up timely meetings with relevant professionals where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion/Suspension.

- Ensure the speedy 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.
- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life.
- Ensuring mechanisms are in place to identify and inform Virtual School Heads where Looked After Children are absent without authorisation and to work with the responsible authority to take appropriate action to safeguard the child.
- Promoting good home-school links with carers and social worker.
- Taking time to get to know and building a positive relationship with Looked After and Previously Looked After Children and seeking their views regarding the interventions and strategies that will best help them to achieve their goals and ensuring they are involved in target setting.
- Seeking to understand and identify the child's specific needs, including liaising with the SENCO and teaching staff as required and ensuring that appropriate support and interventions are put in place.
- Ensuring that LAC and PLAC are prioritised for interventions, one-to-one tuition, and support.
- Promoting a culture in which staff and pupils have high expectations regarding learning and high aspirations for future success
- Ensuring there are no barriers to accessing the activities and experiences the school offers to all its pupils (for example anticipating possible delays in obtaining permissions for trips).
- Being proactive in building strong links with the Virtual School Head to access training and forum events and to keep up to date with good practice.

For Previously Looked After Children

- Ensuring continuity in meeting educational needs is provided following a change to a child's care status and maintaining links with the Virtual School Head.
- Helping raise parents' and guardians' awareness of the Pupil Premium Plus and other support for previously looked-after children (including encouraging parents to tell the school if their child is eligible to attract Pupil Premium Plus funding).

5.4 All Staff

- Have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of Looked after Children.
- Positively promote the raising of looked after children's self-esteem.
- Ensure any Looked after child is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained.
- Liaise with the Designated Teacher where a Looked after child is experiencing difficulties.
- Give only official suspensions and only use suspensions as a last resort, in line with the local authority's suspension advice.
- Contribute to regular liaison with the Designated Teacher and other appropriate professionals to support the progress and target setting of the PEP.

Section 6 Admissions:

Looked After Children and 'previously looked after children' are a priority for admission in accordance with the DfE statutory guidance (September 2015) 'The Schools Admissions Code' and will be admitted in line with the school's admissions policy and oversubscription criteria (Note: the definition of 'previously looked after children' in the Code does not include children adopted from state care outside of England and Wales).

Section 7 Behaviour, Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion:

For Looked After Children, where the school has concerns about a child's behaviour, the Virtual School Head, the social worker and carers will be informed at the earliest opportunity and we will work with them to put in place behaviour management strategies to ensure challenging behaviour is managed in the most effective way for that individual child. Where a child is at risk of exclusion/suspension this will include consideration whether an alternative placement may be required and assessing suitability of provision for SEN. Regard is given to the DfE's statutory guidance 'Exclusions from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England' and, as far as possible, the Headteacher will avoid permanently excluding any Looked After Child. When a child leaves care we recognise that their past experience may continue to impact on their behaviour. The Designated Teacher will ensure support is provided to improve behaviour and with the child's parents or guardian's consent may seek advice from the Virtual School Head. The school will take into account the past experience of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children Policy when applying the school's Behaviour Policy

Section 8 Monitoring arrangements:

This behaviour policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher and governors every year. At each review, the policy will be approved by the Headteacher.

The name of our appointed Designated Governor is: Mrs June Sewell

The name of our school's Designated Teacher is: Sean Blowers Behaviour Lead