



Pirton Hill Primary School

Looked After Children Policy (September 2024)

Originated by: C Ellis and C Keane
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1. Overarching Values

Expect:

*We all **expect** to work hard, and meet our own high expectations, in a safe environment with access to high quality resources and opportunities that broaden our horizons.*

Believe:

*We all **believe** in ourselves, and each other, and know that everyone has something special to contribute.*

Achieve:

*We all have the opportunity to **achieve**, and fulfil our potential, regardless of our backgrounds.*

Enjoy:

*We all strive to develop passionate and determined life-long learners who **enjoy** learning, understand how to progress and take pleasure in succeeding.*

2. Introduction

Policy Objective: *To promote the educational achievement and welfare of Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) on the roll at Pirton Hill Primary School.*

At Pirton Hill Primary School we will ensure that children who are looked after (CLA) and children previously looked after (PLA) have access to an excellent educational provision and are prioritised for additional support through school-based interventions. We will use the PP+ funding to accommodate this additional provision to ensure that the children achieve as well as possible, *in accordance with the 'DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018.*

We recognise that our school plays a vital role in providing a stable base for LAC and in promoting their academic, social and emotional development. We promote whole school staff training in their specific needs, so that all adults at this school are sensitive to the barriers to learning that LAC experience and feel able to support the children discretely and confidentially, as needs arise. We

understand the need to work in a 'relationship-based' way so that children looked after and previously looked after feel valued and a part of our school community.

Our aim is to champion the needs of LAC to ensure they make rapid educational and social progress during their period in care on the roll of this school.

3. Aims for LAC and PLAC:

- To provide a safe and secure environment where educational progress and stability is always central to the planning and all adults understand the specific needs of the LAC and PLAC within our setting
- To narrow the gap between the attainment of LAC and PLAC and their peers, ensuring accelerated and rapid progress
- That they benefit from school-based interventions using the allocated Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) to ensure effective impact on their emotional and educational well-being
- For all LAC to have at least termly Personal Education Planning (ePEP) meetings each academic year and for the joint planning and quality first teaching to have measurable impact on each child's learning on a daily basis, (DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018)
- For all adults to provide sensitive, child-led support, adopting a relationship based approach and with at least one key adult with whom the child or young person has a trusted relationship and who will act as an advocate for them and take a special interest in their progress in all school activities.
- That school systems facilitate discrete support, that includes a strong relationship between schools staff, carers and children looked after on roll.
- LAC will be advantaged within school policies and procedures, with their needs explicitly considered and provided for (DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018.)
- Our Behaviour Policy maintains clear boundaries and expectations about behaviour but we understand that not all behaviour is a matter of choice. We will not enforce sanctions that shame and ostracise children looked after from their peers, school, community or family. In this school we seek to create an inclusive and positive school ethos for every pupil.
- Links to other relevant school policies that reference LAC and PLAC may be found within our Pupil Premium and Behaviour policy.
- LAC, PLAC and their families will feel part of the school community; they will be actively welcomed, involved and engaged into this school community (DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and

previously looked-after children statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018).

4. Roles and Responsibilities:

The Headteacher and Governing Body are committed to promoting improved educational life chances for LAC and PLAC. They will ensure that the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After has qualified teacher status, appropriate seniority in the leadership team and time and experience to fulfil this statutory role and have at least 2 days per year training to remain fully informed. They will monitor the role of the Designated Teacher to ensure that all LAC and PLAC make accelerated and rapid progress and that the whole school staff receive appropriate training.

The Designated Teacher for Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After in Pirton Hill Primary School is **Cristelle Ellis. She is the Deputy Headteacher and will promote improved educational life chances for CLA and PLA by:**

- Ensuring that the LAC or PLAC has access to quality first teaching
- Tracking the progress of LAC and PLAC across the curriculum using data, teacher reports and book looks
- Ensuring that the PP+ is used effectively and efficiently
- Performing a coordinating role with school staff and outside agencies
- Ensuring effective communication with the school's assigned Education Adviser from the Virtual School
- Developing expertise in the field of LAC, including attachment theory, and trauma informed practice
- Promoting a school culture which is supportive, relationship-based and has high expectations for LAC and PLAC
- Regularly reporting to the Head and Governing Body on the attainment of LAC and PLAC and school resource and staff training needs for working with this group
- Prioritising LAC for school-based additional support, even when the young person does not meet the criteria (DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018).
- Ensuring that LAC and PLAC are not overlooked for positions of student responsibility within the school because of their care status
- Completing the annual Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) of each LAC as requested, to inform their annual LAC health review.

All staff will promote improved educational life chances for LAC and PLA by:

- Reading this 'school policy' for LAC
- Providing accurate information and data when asked by the Designated Teacher
- Referring to the Designated Teacher for advice and ensuring that all targets assigned at the ePEP are considered, planned for and addressed. The aim is for all LAC children to make accelerated progress to ensure the gap between them and their peers disappears

5. Attendance:

School attendance procedures reflect the specific needs of LAC and PLAC to ensure good school attendance. Where there is a concern about attendance or punctuality the school will contact the carer, social worker and other professionals including the Virtual School, as an early intervention, as outlined in our attendance policy.

6. Admissions/ Transitions:

School procedures to support LAC during admission and transition include:

- Prioritising LAC and PLAC at the point of admission
- The swift transfer of information between schools that may include school visits and at times of transition, teaching at the previous school
- Early identification of staff mentor and peer buddy
- Additional support and planning for LAC and PLAC at times of transition
- Structured activities to 'say goodbye', in recognition of the impact of broken attachments and loss

7. Additional Educational Needs:

All staff will work creatively to secure accelerated and rapid progress for LAC and PLAC with additional educational needs by:

- Having high expectations
- Ensuring that they are prioritised for additional school-based support, even if they do not meet the criteria (in line with the DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children 28th February 2018).

- Ensuring that planning is coordinated, appropriate interventions identified and teaching to the plan is systematic; ensuring that any work undertaken by non-teaching staff has teacher over-sight (in line with the Lamb Report, Dec '09)
- Ensuring that progress is regularly monitored and reviewed, against the targets set as agreed in the termly Virtual School visit and EPEP

8. Special Educational Needs:

All staff will work creatively to secure accelerated and rapid progress for LAC who have special educational needs by:

- Having high expectation of progress each academic year (in line with the expectation set out in the ePEP)
- Ensuring that they are accessing school-based targeted support which is 'additional to and different from' the universal and additional needs provision (in line with the SEND Code of Practice)
- Ensuring that all plans are coordinated, appropriate interventions identified, and teaching to the plan is systematic
- Ensuring that progress is regularly monitored and reviewed, in line with the SEND Code of Practice
- Ensuring that any work undertaken by non-teaching staff has teacher over-sight
- That with the school SENCO the EHCP review is held in a timely way with all relevant professionals invited and their views obtained.

9. Safeguarding:

School staff will be vigilant for any safeguarding issues which can impact particularly on LAC by familiarising themselves with the 'School Policy Guidance for

Children in Care' and following the school's child protection policy and the 'DfE: Keeping

Children Safe in Education' (All staff), if there are any safeguarding concerns.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

10. Alternative Provision:

We will make every effort to ensure that any arrangements for provision alternative to daily attendance at school will be:

- A plan that will retain the LAC on the roll of the school or clarify in writing which educational establishment will be responsible for essential reporting and accountable for the PP+

- An agreed part of the overall ePEP for the student
- Full time (25 hours) or contribute to full time attendance and be of high quality
- meet the educational needs of the LAC or PLAC
- Will provide the opportunity to make rapid progress in the course of study provided by the setting
- Will be monitored regularly and that ePEPs will include the school and the alternative provider

11. Exclusion:

- We have reviewed the school behaviour policy (2024) in line with the statutory guidance published in February 2018 (DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children 28th February 2018).
- We will make every effort to avoid excluding a LAC, in recognition of the increased risk this poses in terms of them quickly disengaging from the school, due to their early experience of broken attachments and loss. Before acting, we will discuss the rationale for exclusion with the assigned Education Adviser from the Virtual School.
- We will use the following methods to avoid excluding a child looked after or previously looked after; utilising New Horizon's behaviour provision, introducing a behaviour plan which will be reviewed frequently, allocating a key worker within school, pastoral support and accessing outside agency professionals (such as EP, LSS and speech and language) if applicable.
- If there is no option other than exclusion, then we will make every attempt to reduce the number of days of the exclusion.
- School procedures are in place to reduce the risk of exclusion of LAC and PLAC. LAC and PLAC with special educational needs should have exclusion as a behaviour management action as a last possible resort (Regulation 4(1)(c) of the Equalities Act 2010 which means that a head teacher could only lawfully exclude a child for a reason relating to their disability, even a disability that results in the child having a tendency to physical abuse, if reasonable adjustments have been made).

12. Multi-Agency Working:

- School staff will make every effort to develop positive professional relationships with colleagues from other agencies and facilitate their work. This will enable colleagues to successfully perform their roles and positively impact on the education and wider needs of LAC and PLAC.

13. Associated documentation and website links:

Pirton Hill Primary School Special Educational Needs Policy and Information Report

<https://www.pirtonhill.com/send/>

Pirton Hill Primary School Safeguarding Policy

Pirton Hill Primary School Attendance Policy

Pirton Hill Primary School Behaviour Policy

Pirton Hill Primary School Accessibility Policy

<https://www.pirtonhill.com/policies/>

Pirton Hill Primary School Pupil Premium Policy

Pirton Hill Primary School Teaching and Learning Policy

<https://www.pirtonhill.com/pupil-premium/>

Luton Local Offer

<https://directory.luton.gov.uk/kb5/luton/directory/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=0>

Luton Virtual Schools Advice Website

https://www.luton.gov.uk/Education_and_learning/virtual/Pages/default.aspx

Government guidance for designated teachers

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-children>

Luton Emotional Wellbeing Information Resource

<https://directory.luton.gov.uk/kb5/luton/directory/advice.page?id=PgsBGYw6CMg&localofferchannel=0>