

Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children Policy

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.

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 Child and Young Persons Act 2008.

Definitions

Looked-after children 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 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 records 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.

Welfare-call and E-PEP are the two online LAC portals used by local authorities who currently have LAC students attending ACE / ALPS and are accessed by the Designated Teacher to

record progress, maintain PEPs and complete PEP and LAC reviews. These systems are also used by external local authorities to request regular progress reports on demand.

Identity of our Designated Teacher

Our designated teacher is **Simon Jump**

You can contact them by email on deputy@avenuecentre.co.uk

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.

Given the nature of the PRU, the work of the designated LAC teacher is supported by

- The ACE Safeguarding Team (will lead on cases where safeguarding, CSE, Gang activity etc are major concerns).
- The ACE Pupil Progress Team (who will act as Coaches for these students and contribute to / attend LAC, PEP and Progress Review meetings).

The Teaching and Learning Leads and the Behaviour and Welfare Leads will also have an important role to play in supporting, monitoring and reporting on the progress of LAC / previously LAC students and will oversee the wider dissemination to and reporting from the wider staff team.

All relevant information is available to all staff through the Ace SMARTs database, which is also used to recording and tracking interventions, educational provision and the ACE Contract of Education.

ACE Safeguarding Lead **Martin Watson** martin.watson@avenuecentre.co.uk
ACE Pupil Progress Manager **Hayley Bewley** hayley.bewley@avenuecentre.co.uk

Role of the Designated Teacher

Leadership Responsibilities

The designated teacher will:

- Act as a central point of initial contact within the school for any matters involving looked-after and previously looked-after children (supported by the students named Coach and / or Pupil Progress link).
- Promote the educational achievement of every looked-after and previously looked-after child on roll by:
 - Working with the relevant Virtual School.
 - Promoting a whole school culture where the needs of these pupils matter and are prioritised.
 - Work with the relevant and appropriate internal ACE teams to maximise student engagement, achievement and personal outcomes.
- Take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand:
 - The things which can affect how looked-after and previously looked-after children learn and achieve and the recommendations for strategies to use to promote positive outcomes.
 - Whole staff responsibility for promoting and supporting student outcomes
 - the relevant student specific information and use this to inform lesson preparation and delivery.

- Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies to ensure they consider the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- Promote a culture in which looked-after and previously looked-after children are encouraged and supported to engage with their education and other school activities.
- Act as a source of advice for teachers about working with looked-after and previously looked-after children; supported by the students named Coach and the Pupil Progress Team.
- Support the work of the students named Coach and / or the Pupil Progress link teacher in working directly with looked-after and previously looked-after children and their carers, parents and guardians to promote good home-school links, support progress and encourage high aspirations.
- Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of looked-after children's PEPs; delegated to the wider Pupil Progress Team, Coaches and the Teaching and Learning Teams.
- Work closely with the school's designated safeguarding lead and wider safeguarding team to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to.
- Involve parents and guardians of previously looked-after children in decisions affecting their child's education.

Supporting Looked-After Children

The designated teacher will:

- Make sure looked-after children's PEPs meet their needs by working closely with other teachers to assess each child's specific educational needs. (aspects of this work may be delegated to coaches, Teaching & Learning Leads and Pupil Progress staff).
- Have overall responsibility for leading the process of target-setting in PEPs (supported by the Teaching and Learning Leads).
- Monitor and track how looked-after children's attainment progresses under their PEPs (delegated to Pupil Progress Team and named Coaches).
- If a child is not on track to meet their targets, be instrumental in agreeing the best way forward with them in order to make progress, and ensure that this is reflected in their PEP (supported by Pupil Progress).
- Ensure the identified actions of PEPs are put in place (delegated as appropriate to Teaching and Learning, Behaviour and Welfare and / or coaches).
- During the development and review of PEPs, help the school and relevant local authority decide what arrangements work best for pupils.
- Ensure that:
 - A looked-after child's PEP is reviewed before the statutory review of their care plan – this includes making sure the PEP is up to date and contains any new information since the last PEP review, including whether agreed provision is being delivered.
 - PEPs are clear about what has or has not been taken forward, noting what resources may be required to further support the child and from where these may be sourced.
- Transfer a looked-after child's PEP to their next school or college, making sure it is up to date and that the local authority responsible for looking after them has the most recent version.
- The updated PEP is passed to the child's social worker and VSH ahead of the statutory review of their care plan.

Supporting both Looked-After Children and Previously Looked-After Children

The designated teacher will:

- Ensure the specific needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children are understood by staff and reflected in how the school uses pupil premium funding (supported via Pupil Progress).
- Work with VSHs to agree how pupil premium funding for looked-after children can most effectively be used to improve their attainment.
- Help raise the awareness of parents and guardians of previously looked-after children about pupil premium funding and other support for these children (supported by Pupil Progress and Coaches).
- Play a key part in decisions on how pupil premium funding is used to support previously looked-after children.
- Encourage parents' and guardians' involvement in deciding how pupil premium funding is used to support their child, and be the main contact for queries about its use (delegated to coaches).
- Ensure teachers have awareness and understanding of the specific needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children in areas like attendance, homework, behaviour and future career planning (supported by Pupil Progress, Teaching and Behaviour leads and the students named coach).
- Be aware of the special educational needs (SEN) of looked-after and previously looked-after children, and make sure teachers also have awareness and understanding of this (supported via Pupil Progress (PIPS) and the SEND / Interventions updates).
- Ensure the SEND code of practice, as it relates to looked-after children, is followed (supported by SENCO and SEND focused staff within Pupil Progress).
- Make sure PEPs work in harmony with any education, health and care (EHC) plans that a looked-after child may have (supported by Teaching 7 Learning and Behaviour & Welfare lead teams).
- Ensure that, with the help of VSHs, they have the skills to identify signs of potential SEN issues in looked-after and previously looked-after children, and know how to access further assessment and support where necessary (Pupil progress assessments and reviews).
- Ensure that they and other staff can identify signs of potential mental health issues in looked-after and previously looked-after children and understand where the school can draw on specialist services (supported by Pupil Progress and access to a range of internal and external agencies, interventions and support systems).
- Put in place robust arrangements to have strengths and difficulties questionnaires (SDQs) completed for looked-after children, and use the results of these SDQs to inform PEPs (completed via Pupil Progress and / or coaches).
- Put in place mechanisms for understanding the emotional and behavioural needs of previously looked-after children (led by coaches and additional support can be accessed via Pupil Progress weekly meetings).
- Additional support services from the Pathway D strand (mentoring, counselling, anger management etc.) can be provided from internal resources and referrals to additional support services (Resolutions, CAMH, EP etc). are also arranged if appropriate.

Relationships Beyond the School

The designated teacher (and / or nominated Pupil Progress link staff member) will:

- Proactively engage with social workers and other professionals to enable the school to respond effectively to the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- Discuss with social workers how the school should engage with birth parents, and ensure the school is clear about who has parental responsibility and what information can be shared with whom.
- Be open and accessible to parents and guardians of previously looked-after children and encourage them to be actively involved in their children's education.
- Proactively build relationships with local authority professionals, such as VSHs and SEN departments.
- Consider how the school works with others outside of the school to maximise the stability of education for looked-after children, such as:
 - Finding ways of making sure the latest information about educational progress is available to contribute to the statutory review of care plans.
 - Ensuring mechanisms are in place to inform VSHs when looked-after children are absent without authorisation and work with the responsible authority to take appropriate safeguarding action.
 - Talking to the child's social worker and/or other relevant parties in the local authority regarding any decisions about changes in care placements which will disrupt the child's education, providing advice about the likely impact and what the local authority should do to minimise disruption.
 - Making sure that, if a looked-after child moves school, their new designated teacher receives any information needed to help the transition process.
- Seek advice from VSHs about meeting the needs of individual previously looked-after children, but only with the agreement of their parents or guardians.
- Make sure that for each looked-after child:
 - There's an agreed process for how the school works in partnership with the child's carer and other professionals, , in order to review and develop educational progress
 - School policies are communicated to their carer, social worker and appropriate 'others'.
 - Teachers know the most appropriate person to contact where necessary, such as who has the authority to sign permission slips.
- Where a looked-after child is at risk of exclusion:
 - Contact the VSH as soon as possible so they can help the school decide how to support the child to improve their behaviour and avoid exclusion becoming necessary.
 - Working with the VSH and child's carers, consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to address the causes of the child's behaviour.
- Where a previously looked-after child is at risk of exclusion, talk to the child's parents or guardians before seeking advice from the VSH on avoiding exclusion.

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by Simon Jump, Deputy Head / Designated LAC Teacher, with the wider Safeguarding, Pupil Progress, Teaching and Learning and Behaviour and Welfare Team leads involved. The policy is also reviewed in light of advice and guidance from Luton Virtual School.

At every review, the policy will be sent to the nominated Management Committee member for consultation and then will be approved by the full governing board.

Linked Policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour SEND
- Child protection and safeguarding Supporting Students with Medical Needs
- Exclusions Attendance

Monitoring and Review

The Senior Leadership Policy will monitor the Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children Policy.

The Management Committee will review and approve the Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children Policy annually.

The Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children Policy was last reviewed and approved by the Management Committee in February 2022. The next review and approval of the policy will take place by January 2023.