Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) Policy

Sir William Burrough Primary School

September 2024

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0. Document Control

The table below contains the changes made between the different final editions of this document set for approval. This is to help provide information to those reviewing and approving the document of the changes being made.

Document Edition	Section	Details of change

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1. Definitions

The "Trust" refers to the company known as the University Schools Trust, East London and all Trustees, Governors and Staff who work within it.

A "School" refers to an individual academy within the Trust, as denoted by their Unique Reference Number. As such a 'school' may span one or several phases of education to the individual academies within the Trust. Depending on the context the term "School" may refer to a singular academy or to all of the academies within the Trust but as separate entities.

"Staff" refers to any individual who is employed by the Trust or who operates on the Trust's behalf, e.g. Trustees and Governors.

A "Parent" includes the natural or adoptive parent of a pupil as well as any non-parent / carer who has parental responsibility including being involved in the day-to-day care of a pupil.

A "Pupil" includes any incoming or current pupil at any School within the Trust. It also includes any individual who was previously a pupil at any School within the Trust and who has left within the appropriate timeframe for consideration as necessary, e.g. complaints. The term pupil is used as standard by the UST in its policy documents but can be replaced with the term "student" or "child" with no change of definition.

The "Headteacher" is defined as the individual who has ultimate responsibility for a school in line with UST strategy, approach, ethos and values. Individual schools may have alternative titles for this position such as Executive Headteacher or Principal.

"Looked After Children (LAC)" or "Children in Care (CiC)" 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 because 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 because of being adopted.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all relevant adults who are defined as:

- Trust staff, including any agency workers and contractors;
- Teacher trainees and other trainees/apprentices;
- Volunteers and any other individuals who work for or provide services on behalf of or for the school to include, but not limited to, all those detailed in the single central record (as amended);
- Trustees and governors
- Parents/carers

3. Policy Aims and Ethos

At Sir William Burrough Primary School, we believe that all Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) have a right to expect the best possible outcome from their education.

Many LAC (Looked After Children) and PLAC (Previously Looked After Children) will have experienced disruption to their schooling and consequently gaps in their learning. In addition, a significant proportion of LAC and PLAC have been excluded from school; this has resulted in the attainment of this group not being in line with the attainment of their peers nationally.

At Sir William Burrough Primary School, we will address this by ensuring the following:

- 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 Children and Previously Looked After Children, and supports other staff members to also do this
- Staff, parents, carers and guardians are aware of the identity of the designated teacher, how to contact them and for which they are responsible.
- Providing a safe environment for all Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children, where their educational experience is valued, high aspirations are encouraged and belief in the potential of all children is held.

4. Links to Legislation and Guidance Documents

4.1. Relevant Internal Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Behavioural Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Early Years Policy
- Educational Visits Policy and Procedures
- E-Safety Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Induction Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

4.2. Relevant External Documents

This policy is written with reference to statutory guidance to governing bodies issued by the DCSF under Section 20 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008.

Staff and governors are also aware of the local authority's responsibility to promote the educational achievement of children and young people looked after under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004. This policy is also 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 2E of the Academies Act 2010.

This policy adheres to the following guidance and should also be read in conjunction with the following documents:

4.2.1. Legislation

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment)
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by the Serious Crime Act 2015)
- Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Apprenticeships, Children and Learning Act 2009
- Equality Act 2010
- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (referred to in this policy as the "2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations")
- Childcare Act 2006

- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022

4.2.2. Statutory Guidance

- DfE (2023) Statutory Guidance on the Prevent Duty
- DfE (2023) 'The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation'
- Children Missing Education 2016
- DfE (2023) Working Together to Safeguard Children
- DfE (2018) 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006'
- Section 5B (11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003/2019
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974/2020
- HM Government (2020) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation'
- DfE (2021) 'Teachers Standards'
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021
- HM Government (2021) 'Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism'
- Home Office and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (2023) 'Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage and Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage'
- Childrens' social care: national framework 2024

4.2.3. Non-Statutory Guidance

- DfE (2015) 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'
- DfE (2017) 'Child sexual exploitation'
- DfE (2018) 'Information sharing'
- DfE (2020) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'
- National Police Chief's Council (2020) 'When to call the police: guidance for schools and colleges'
- Department of Health and Social Care (2022) 'Virginity testing and hymenoplasty: multi-agency guidance'
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2023) 'Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2024) 'Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people'

5. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff and governors are committed to ensuring a safe and secure learning environment for all children and have high expectations of all pupils, including those looked after. Staff and governors are aware of the need for confidentiality/safeguarding in regard to any information about Looked After Children or Previously Looked After Children, including their care status.

The following people have additional responsibilities:

5.1. Named Governor for Looked After Children

The named governor for Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children will ensure the following:

- That a suitably qualified person has been appointed as the designated teacher for looked after children
- That the school has a clear and effective policy for looked after children
- That the designated teacher receives appropriate support and training in order to fulfil his or her role
- That the governing body receives a regular report on the performance of looked after children.

5.2. Executive Headteacher/Headteacher

The Executive Headteacher/Headteacher will ensure the implementation and adherence of this policy across their school and ensure that all those defined under 'scope of the policy' receive and have access to a copy of this document.

The Executive Headteacher/Headteacher will:

- Be responsible for all systems to support Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children
- Ensure that all school staff are aware of the powerful role they can play in significantly improving the quality of life and the educational experiences of Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children
- Recognise the importance of the role of the designated teacher and liaise with the governing body to appoint an appropriately experienced teacher to that role
- Liaise with the governing body to ensure that the designated teacher has the opportunity to acquire, and keep up to date with necessary skills, knowledge and training
- Ensure that all staff are aware who the designated teacher is and what their responsibilities are
- Ensure that the school has clear and effective protocols for gathering and sharing confidential information with the local authority and other agencies.

5.3. Designated Teacher (DT) for LAC & PLAC

The designated teacher takes lead responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children at our school. They are the initial point of contact for any of the matters involving Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children from both internal and external stakeholders. They will:

- Promote a whole school culture where the needs of these pupils matter and are prioritised
- Work closely with the school's designated safeguarding lead to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children are responded to quickly and effectively
- Keep a confidential and up to date record of all look Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children and previously looked after children in the school regardless of which local authority has parental responsibility
- Work directly with Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children and their carers, parents and guardians to promote good home-school links, support progress and encourage high aspirations

- Ensure that the teaching and learning needs of looked after children and previously looked after children in the school are assessed
- Promote a culture in which Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children are encouraged and supported to engage with their education and other school activities
- Ensure all looked after children and previously looked after children feel welcome and valued and their achievements are recognised in an appropriate way (respecting the need for confidentiality about their care status)
- Ensure that all school staff are made aware of difficulties and disadvantages generally faced by looked after children
- Ensure that school staff who need to know, are aware of any specific issues faced by individual looked after children, so as their needs can be met
- Be responsible for the prompt transfer of information including the PEP when a child changes school
- Liaise with other agencies as required, especially with regard to achievement, attendance and exclusions
- Ensure that information is kept confidential and shared on a strictly need to know basis and that the views of looked after children are taken into account in the sharing of information about them and their care status
- Ensure social workers and carers are aware of who the designated teacher is and what his or her role involves
- Report to the governing body on a regular basis regarding the number of looked after children in school, how they have achieved, their attendance and details of any exclusions that may have occurred
- Help raise the awareness of parents and carers of Previously Looked After Children about Pupil Premium Funding and other support for these children and play a key part in decisions on how this funding is utilised to support them
- 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.

5.4. All Staff

- Have high expectations in regard to the achievement of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children
- Ensure that the individual needs of the Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children are met through quality-first teaching
- Are aware that Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children have high rates of SEND and flag concerns regarding learning with the SENDCo and DT
- Are aware of the specific needs of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children and make appropriate adjustments to teaching and classroom management to meet these needs.
- Work proactively with the DT to ensure that Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children meet their targets and achieve. Ensuring that any barriers to learning, and inclusion are highlighted at the earliest opportunity.
- Work to ensure the inclusion of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children within the school community, maintaining their confidentiality while also providing support with raising their self-esteem, and supporting their relationship with peers in line with the Anti Bullying policy.

6. Personal Education Plans (PEP) for all Looked After Children

The Designated Teacher is responsible for working with teachers, social workers and other professionals to ensure that Personal Education Plans:

- Are in place within 20 days of joining the school, or going into care
- Are reviewed at least once per term
- Are made available for statutory care plan reviews
- Identify strengths as well as needs
- Include a review of previous educational targets and the setting of clear, measurable new ones
- Record the child's interests and talents both in and out of school
- Reflect and are informed by other educational plans, such as Individual Education Plans (IEPs), and Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs)
- Record and reflect the child's views
- Work with Virtual School to agree how Pupil Premium Funding for Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children can most effectively be used to improve their attainment
- Ensure the PEP monitors and tracks how Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children's attainment progresses in relation to a PEP

The Designated Teacher should also:

- 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
- With the help of teachers and the Virtual School, identify signs of potential SEN or mental health issues in Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children, and know how to access further assessment and support where necessary.

7. Admissions

Looked After Children are a priority for admission and the school's published admission criteria reflects this. As part of a student's induction, they will meet the Designated Teacher to introduce them to key staff and discuss a support plan.

8. Training

Staff and governors will attend local authority and other training regarding the roles and responsibilities involved in the education of Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children. The Executive Headteacher/Headteacher and Designated Teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the practice detailed in this policy.

9. Attendance

School attendance procedures reflect the specific needs of Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children to ensure good school attendance. Where there is a concern about attendance or punctuality the

school contacts the carer, social worker and other professionals including the Virtual School, as an early intervention, as outlined in the attendance policy.

10. Exclusions

The school will make every effort to avoid excluding a Looked After Child/Previously Looked After Child, 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. Where a Looked After Child/Previously Looked After Child, is at risk of exclusion the school will contact the child's parents or guardians and the Virtual School to consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to address the causes of the child's behaviour. If there is no option other than exclusion, we will liaise with the assigned Education Adviser from the Virtual School and the Local Authority to provide education at an alternative site from the first day of exclusion.

11. Approval Signature

Signature of (enter position e.g. Chair) _____

Print name _____

Date _____

12. Appendix 1 – Key Members of Staff Referenced

Named Governor	
Designated Teacher for Looked After Children	
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Siobhan Fehim/Heather Coney
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	David Hodges
Executive Headteacher	Siobhan Fehim
Chair of Governors	
Safeguarding Governor	

13. Appendix 2 – Links to Legislation & Guidance Documents

- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/665520/Teachers__Standards.pdfTeachers Standards 2021
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Keeping Chilren Safe in Education 2023
- Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2018
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- The Prevent Duty

- Promoting Fundamental British Values
- FGM procedural information
- Promoting the Education of Looked After Children
- Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities.
- Preventing Youth Violence and Gang Involvement.
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people
- Use of reasonable force: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2022
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015
- The Children Act 1989 (and 2004 amendment)
- Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2018
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Statutory Guidance on the Prevent Duty
- Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018
- the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021

Additional Guidance Sources

- NSPCC: http://www.nspcc.org.uk/
- Childline: http://www.childline.org.uk/pages/home.aspx
- Anti-Bullying Alliance: http://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/
- Beat Bullying: http://www.beatbullying.org/
- Childnet International – making the internet a great and safe place for children. Includes resources for professionals and parents http://www.childnet.com/
- Thinkuknow (includes resources for professionals and parents) https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/
- Safer Internet Centre http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/
- Transgender http://www.mermaidsuk.org.uk/