



# Layfield Primary School

## Looked After Children Policy

January 2021

**Review date:** January 2022

## **1. Introduction:**

1.1 The term “looked after” was introduced by the Children Act 1989. This refers to a child who is either accommodated (whereby the local authority provides accommodation for the child on an agreed basis with the person who has parental responsibility) or is subject to a care order (whereby a court order grants shared parental responsibility to the local authority in order to protect and promote a child’s welfare). Children in both instances could be living with foster carers, in a residential unit, in a residential school, with relatives, or even with parents on a part or full time basis. In Stockton, LAC pupils are known as Children and Young People in our Care and formerly in Care.

2.1 The governing body of Layfield Primary is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. We aim to be an inclusive school and offer equality of opportunity and diversity when needed to all groups of pupils within school. The governing body recognises that there is considerable educational underachievement of looked after children, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in the Children Act (2004). The Children Act places a duty to safeguard looked after children, to promote their educational achievements and to ensure that they are able to “achieve and reach their full potential”. The guidance recognises the collectible responsibility of local authorities and schools to achieve good parenting and sets out six principles:

- prioritising education;
- having high expectations;
- inclusion – changing and challenging attitudes;
- achieving continuity and stability;
- early intervention – priority action; and
- listening to children.

## **2. The Role And Responsibility Of The Head Teacher:**

2.1 The Head Teacher will:

- appoint the designated teacher
- ensure that the designated teacher has received appropriate training
- oversee the development of the policy on looked after children
- be responsible for all systems to support looked after children.
- report to the governing body on an annual basis on the following:
  - the number of looked after pupils in the school
  - an analysis of LAC pupils value added data, compared to other pupils
  - the attendance of pupils, compared to other pupils
  - the level of fixed term and permanent exclusions, compared to other pupils
  - if all LAC have active PEP’s which are reviewed termly by designated teachers
  - additional intervention programmes and/or activities where relevant

## **3. The Role And Responsibility Of The Designated Teacher:**

3.1 The name of the Designated Teacher is Helen Owen (Headteacher).

3.2 The Designated Teacher will:

- act as an advocate for looked after children in order to allow them equal access to educational opportunities and support with important decisions affecting their future life chances;
- when new to the school, ensure a smooth and welcome induction for the child and their parent(s) and/or carer(s), note any specific requirements;
- ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed (within 20 school days of entering care or joining a new school). This should be prepared with the child and the carer(s) (and parent(s) if possible), in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies. Where appropriate, the PEP will take account of Individual Education Plan (IEP), Pastoral Support Plan (PSP), Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP), career plan or any other relevant plans. The PEP will inform and be jointly reviewed.

- ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantages faced by looked after children and understand the need for positive systems to support them, whilst maintaining appropriately high expectations for their educational achievements;
- maintain and respect the confidentiality of all looked after children, ensuring that personal information is shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis;
- ensure that each looked after child has an identified member of staff (the class teacher) that they can talk to, who can provide advice and/or practical help on academic or pastoral issues;
- co-ordinate support for looked after children (with the SENCo) and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary;
- monitor the educational progress of all looked after children and intervene, in co-operation with other services/agencies if required, if there is evidence of underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy, or other similar concern;
- ensure staff and governors receive relevant information and training;
- encourage looked after children to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning;
- attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or contribute in other ways to care planning meetings and statutory reviews;
- establish a system for contacting and forwarding educational records to new schools to facilitate a smooth and speedy transfer.

#### **4. The Roles And Responsibilities Of All Staff:**

- as with all children, have high aspirations and celebrate the educational and personal achievement of looked after children;
- ensure that looked after children are supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained;
- be familiar with the guidance on looked after children and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings;
- respond positively to a looked after child's request to be the named person that they can talk to when they feel it is necessary;
- provide a supportive climate to enable looked after children to achieve stability within the school setting;
- liaise with the Designated Teacher where a looked after child is experiencing difficulty;
- contribute to the Designated Teacher's requests for information on educational attainment and needs as appropriate;
- ensure entry to assessments for looked after children;
- positively promote the self esteem of looked after children.

#### **5. The Role And Responsibility Of The Governing Body:**

##### **5.1 The governing body will:**

- ensure that admission criteria prioritise LAC, according to the Code of Practice on Admissions
- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for looked after children;
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for looked after children
- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body
- for child protection and confidentiality reasons, ensure that information will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity, and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.
- review the effective implementation of this policy every two years.
- ensure that the school's other policies and procedures give looked after children equal access in respect of:
  - admission to school
  - the National Curriculum and public assessments

- additional educational support where this is needed and access to extra curricular activities.

5.2 The Governing Body will provide a named link governor to liaise with the Designated Teacher to enable the Governing Body to fulfil its corporate parenting role. The name of this governor is the Claire Moore (Chair of Governors).

5.3 The named governor should be satisfied that:

- the school has a coherent policy for Looked after Children which is appropriately reviewed
- the Designated Teacher has received appropriate training
- Looked After Children have equal access to all areas of the curriculum
- the Governing Body receives an annual report
- LAC are noted as a termly agenda item

5.4 Training:

The Designated Teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in the guidance from the DfE and DoH (as above).