



Designated Teacher policy (Looked After and Previously Looked After children)

About this document:

Purpose

This document outlines how the Designated Teacher will take steps to improve the educational progress and attainment of Looked After children within the school. It also outlines the expectations linked to different roles within the school and how the school ensures arrangements are joined up to minimise any disruption to a child's learning.

Complied by: Lynn Johnston	Date: May 2025
Committee: LGB	Date agreed by Trustees: May 2025
Review Cycle: Every 2 years	Review Date: May 2027

Wellbeing in our Trust

We can all be affected by poor physical and mental health at times during our lives and it is important the appropriate support is available in a timely manner.

Health and wellbeing is everyone's responsibility and we encourage an open and honest culture whereby anyone can discuss any issues they may have.

The Trustees of Creating Tomorrow take the health and wellbeing of all employees seriously and are committed to supporting our staff. The Trustees ensure that support for staff is available through:

- Effective line management
- Commitment to ensuring an appropriate and balanced workload
- Supportive and professional working environments
- Employee support programs
 - Education Support: telephone number 08000 562561 or website www.educationsupport.org.uk

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1. Intent and 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

2. Legislation and 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 2E](#) of the Academies Act 2010. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. 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)

This is part of a Looked After student's care plan that is developed with the school. It forms a record of what needs to happen and who will make it happen to ensure the student reaches their full potential.

Virtual school head (VSH) is a local authority officer responsible for promoting 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.

Identity of our Designated Teacher

Our designated teacher is Lynn Johnston

You can contact them by phoning [01536 500030](tel:01536500030) or emailing: ljohnston@isebrookschoo.co.uk

Our designated teacher takes the 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.

Our Designated Teacher is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Looked After Children and will take the lead on Safeguarding concerns regarding Looked After Children in conjunction with the Lead DSL.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

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
- Promote the educational achievement of every Looked After and previously Looked After child on roll by:
 - Working with Virtual School Headteachers, Social Workers and wider professionals.
 - Promoting a whole school culture where the needs of these students ' matter and are prioritized.
- Take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand:
 - The things which can affect how Looked After and previously looked after children learn and achieve.
 - How the whole school supports the educational achievement of Looked After Students.
- 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 in their education and other school activities
- Act as a source of advice for teachers about working with Looked After and previously looked- after children
- Work 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
- Is the Designated Safeguarding Lead for Looked After Children and works closely with the school's Lead DSL) to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding Looked After and previously looked after children are quickly and effectively responded to.
- Involve parents of previously Looked After children in decisions affecting their student's education
- Advocate for the best interests of all Looked After Children on Isebrook School's roll.

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 student's specific educational needs
- Have overall responsibility for leading the process of target-setting in PEPs
- Monitor and track how Looked After children's attainment progresses under their PEPs
- If a child is not on track to meet their targets, be instrumental in agreeing on the best way forward with them in order to make progress, and ensure that this is reflected in their PEP
- Ensure the identified actions of PEPs are put in place
- 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 student'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 the 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
- The updated PEP is passed to the student's social worker and VSH ahead of the statutory review of their care plan
- Transfer a Looked After student's PEP to their next school or college, making sure it is up to date.
- Ensure that the local authority responsible for the child have the most recent version of the PEP

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 plus funding.
- Keep up to date with good practice around the support of Looked after Children, the support of Early Childhood Trauma (ECT's) and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's).
- Promote a Trauma Informed Approach across the school through the advocacy and leading of staff training.
- Advocate the Thrive approach across the school and ensure that the developmental needs and effect of being Looked After on development.
- Work with VSHs to agree how pupil premium funding for Looked After children can most effectively be used to improve their attainment and development.
- Help raise the awareness of parents and guardians of previously Looked After children about pupil premium funding and other support for these children
- Play a key part in decisions on how pupil premium funding is used to support previously looked-after children.
- Ensure that Isebrook School's Pupil Premium Statement is accurately compiled and published annually on the school website.
- 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
- 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
- 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
- Ensure the SEND code of practice, as it relates to Looked After children, is followed
- Make sure PEPs work in harmony with any education, health and care (EHC) plans that a looked-after child may have
- 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
- 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
- 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
- Put in place mechanisms for understanding the emotional and behavioural needs of previously Looked After children

Relationships beyond the school

The designated teacher 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 student's social worker and/or other relevant parties in the local authority regarding any decisions about changes in care placements that will disrupt the student's education, providing advice about the likely impact and what the local authority should do to minimise disruption
 - Make sure that, if a Looked After child moves to another school or education provision, their new designated teacher receives any information needed to help the transition process
- Seek advice from Professionals supporting the student around meeting the needs of individual previously Looked After children, with the agreement of their parents, guardians or those holding Parental Responsibility.

Make sure that for each Looked After child:

- There's an agreed process for partnership with the student's carer and other professionals, such as their social worker, to review and develop educational progress

- School policies are communicated to their carer and social worker and, where appropriate, birth parents
- Teachers and staff 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 Virtual School 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 Social Workers, Virtual School and student's carers, consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to address concerns.
- Talk to the student's Social Worker and Carers to seek advice prior to an exclusion.

5. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Designated Teacher and Headteacher. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

6. Links with other Policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Relationships Policy
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Exclusions
- SEND Policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Alternative Provisions Policy