

Bratton Primary School



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

September 2022

Nationally, Looked After Children significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that Looked After Children are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being.

We believe that, in partnership with the responsible Local Authority, we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of Looked After Children. Our school champions the needs of Looked After Children in order to ensure that they are safe, happy and achieve of their best.

Who are Looked After Children?

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if they are in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They fall into four main groups:

- children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
- children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21)

The term 'in care' refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989. They may live with foster carers, in a Children's home, in a residential school, with relatives or with parents under supervision. Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are 'accommodated' by the local authority under section 20 of the Children Act. These children may live in foster care, in a Children's home or in a residential school. All these groups are said to be 'Looked After Children' or LAC. They may be looked after by our local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours. LAC reviews, involving the school, will take place up until an adoption order has been granted. However, Pupil Premium Plus funding will continue for LAC until they are 16 years old.

Aims

1. Provide a safe and secure environment where education is valued and aspiration fostered
2. Support our looked after children and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential, enjoy learning and take as full a part as possible in all school activities
3. Ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for LAC as for all children
4. Work in partnership with the Virtual School and ensure that carers and social workers of LAC pupils are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment
5. Fulfil our school's role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our Looked After Children.

Our school's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education
- Promoting attendance
- Targeting support
- Having high expectations and raising aspiration
- Promoting inclusion
- Achieving stability and continuity
- Early intervention and priority action
- Listening to children
- Promoting health and well-being
- Minimising exclusions and promoting stability
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals

To realise our aims we:

- Nominate a Designated teacher for Looked After Children who acts as their advocate and co-ordinates their support
- Nominate a school governor to ensure that the needs of Looked After Children in the school are taken into account at a Senior Leadership level and to support the Designated Teacher
- Support the Designated teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend training on Looked After Children.

The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children

The Designated Teacher (DT) role became statutory in September 2009 under the Children and Young Persons' Act 2008. The DT must be a qualified teacher and ideally, they should be a senior member of staff who has enough status and experience to advise and provide training to school staff on issues relating to LAC. They need to be able to influence decisions about the teaching and learning of these children.

Designated Teacher's Responsibilities

- Championing Looked After Children (LAC)
- Maintaining contemporary records for all LAC
- Attending relevant training about LAC and acting as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to LAC
- Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations for LAC
- Helping school staff understand the issues that affect the learning of LAC
- Making sure that LAC are prioritised in one-to-one tuition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home
- Removing the barriers to learning for LAC
- Ensuring any LAC new to the school are welcomed positively and assessed when they join Bratton Primary School
- Developing personalised learning packages for LAC in conjunction with the relevant teaching staff
- Ensuring that the LAC in their school have a voice in setting learning targets for themselves

- Leading on developing and implementing the PEP within the school
- Monitoring the child's progress against the targets on the PEP and extending these targets if they have been achieved.
- Ensuring each child makes a smooth transition to new schools (as necessary) and that records are transferred safely and effectively
- Liaising with the Virtual School in all aspects of the LAC progress and support.
- Convening multi-agency meetings if a LAC is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion
- Coordinating holistic support
- Producing at least one anonymised, annual report to the governing body which should include: current progress; attendance and exclusions; any concerns regarding behaviour; how the PEPs have been implemented and whether the actions put in place are effective; how the DT works in partnership with corporate parents; and training undertaken.

The role and responsibility of the governing body

- Support the local authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of LAC
- Ensure that the DT is given the appropriate level of support and training in order to fulfil their role.
- Ensure DT role contributes to the deeper understanding of challenges faced by LAC
- Monitoring provision for LAC: the annual report supports evaluation of school provision