

Leek High School



Looked After Children (LAC) Policy

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Introduction

Educational achievement and subsequent life chances for looked after children (LAC) and previously-LAC are of real concern. Leek High School aims to provide positive experiences and offer stability, safety, and individual care and attention, for all our LAC or previously-LAC students. These students require special treatment and additional attention in order to improve their life chances. With this in mind, Leek High School aims to:

- Encourage LAC or previously-LAC students to reach their potential and to make good progress in relation to their professional, social and emotional development.
- Ensure that LAC or previously-LAC students enjoy high quality teaching and a curriculum which meets their needs.
- Provide pastoral support for LAC and previously-LAC students that meets their needs.
- Promote a positive culture for LAC and previously-LAC students in all aspects of school life.
- Help for LAC and previously-LAC students develop their cultural, moral and social understanding.



1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children Act 1989
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE (2018) 'Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2017) 'Exclusions from maintained schools, academies and student referral units in England'

1.2. This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies and documents:

- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Home School Agreement
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

2. Definitions

2.1. **Looked After Children (LAC)** are defined as:

- Children or young people who are the subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989.
- Children who are placed in foster care, children's residential homes, with relatives or friends, in semi-independent or supported independent accommodation.
- Children subject to a Care or Interim Care Order whilst placed with a parent, as the LA has parental responsibility.
- Children who are not subject to an order, but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents.

2.2. **Previously-LAC** are defined as:

- Children no longer looked after by an LA in England and Wales because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order.
- Children who were adopted outside England and Wales from 'state care' (care that is provided by a public authority, religious organisation, or other organisation whose main purpose is to benefit society).



3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1. The **Local Governing Body (LGB)** is responsible for:

- Ensuring the school has a coherent policy for LAC and previously-LAC.
- Reviewing the school's policies and procedures in conjunction with legislation and statutory guidance.
- Ensuring the designated teacher for LAC and previously-LAC has received the appropriate training.
- Ensuring LAC and previously-LAC have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and that reasonable adjustments are made, if necessary.
- Reviewing the annual report produced by the designated teacher to evaluate the progress of LAC in the school.
- Ensuring they receive feedback from the Headteacher regarding the effectiveness of the policy on an annual basis.

3.2. The **Virtual School Headteacher (VSH)** is responsible for:

- Monitoring the attendance and educational progress of the children their local authority (LA) looks after.
- Ensuring that arrangements are in place to improve the education and outcomes of the authority's LAC, including those placed out-of-authority.
- Building relationships with health, education and social care partners, as well as other partners, so they and the designated teachers understand the support available to LAC and previously-LAC children.
- Working with the school to ensure all LAC in attendance are fully supported in reaching their full potential.
- Acting as the educational advocate for LAC.
- Acting as a source of advice and information to help parents of previously-LAC as effectively as possible.
- Ensuring there are effective systems in place to:
 - Maintain an up-to-date roll of the LAC who are in school settings, and gather information about their educational placement, attendance and progress.
 - Inform the Headteacher and designated teacher if they have a student on roll who is looked after by the LA.
 - Ensure social workers, schools, designated teachers, careers and IROs understand their role and responsibilities regarding a student's PEP.
 - Ensure that up-to-date and effective PEPs that focus on educational outcomes are maintained for all LAC.
 - Avoid delays in providing suitable educational provision.
 - Ensure the education achievement of LAC is seen as a priority by everyone who has responsibilities for promoting their welfare.



- Report regularly on the attainment, progress and school attendance of LAC through the authority's corporate parenting structures.

3.3. The **Headteacher** is responsible for:

- Appointing a **designated teacher** and **deputy designated teacher** for LAC and previously-LAC.
- Giving designated teachers the time and resources needed to carry out their duties.
- Overseeing this policy and monitoring its implementation, feeding back to the **Local Governing Body (LGB)** annually on the following:
 - The number of LAC and previously-LAC in the school
 - An analysis of assessment scores as a cohort, compared to other student groups
 - The attendance of LAC and previously-LAC, compared to other student groups
 - The level of fixed term and permanent exclusions, compared to other student groups
- Ensuring all members of staff are aware that supporting LAC is a key priority.
- Promoting actively challenging negative stereotypes of LAC.

3.4. The **designated teacher** and **deputy designated teacher** for LAC and previously-LAC are responsible for:

- Building relationships with health, education and social care partners and other partners so that they and the VSH understand the support available to LAC and previously-LAC.
- Promoting the educational achievement of LAC and previously-LAC at the school.
- Acting as the main contact for social services and local authorities.
- Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations.
- Ensuring LAC are involved in setting their own targets.
- Advising staff on teaching strategies for LAC.
- Ensuring that LAC are prioritised for one-to-one tuition and support.
- Leading on how LAC personal education plans (PEPs) are developed and used in school to ensure progress towards targets is monitored.
- Liaising with the SENCO and Assistant SENCO to ensure all student needs are met.
- Working with the LAC social worker and VSH to develop and implement their PEP.
- Working with the Headteacher to submit an annual report to the Local Governing Body (LGB), which details the progress of all LAC and previously-LAC.



3.5. The **SENCO** and **Assistant SENCO** are responsible for:

- Ensuring they are involved in reviewing PEP and care plans for LAC and previously-LAC.
- Liaising with the class teacher, designated teacher, specialists and parents when considering interventions to support the progress of previously-LAC.

3.6. **Teaching staff** and **teaching assistants** are responsible for:

- Being aware of LAC and previously-LAC in their classes and providing them with support and encouragement.
- Preserving confidentiality, where appropriate, and showing sensitivity and understanding.
- Being vigilant for any signs of bullying towards LAC and previously-LAC.
- Promoting the self-esteem of LAC and previously-LAC.

4. Personal education plans (PEPs)

4.1. All LAC must have a care plan; PEPs are an integral part of this care plan.

4.2. The PEP is an evolving record of what needs to happen for a student to enable them to make expected progress and fulfil their potential.

4.3. The PEP will reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning which meets the identified educational needs of the child.

4.4. The school will work with other professionals and the student's carers to use the PEP to support their educational needs, raise their aspirations and improve their life chances.

4.5. All relevant bodies, such as the LA, the designated teachers and carers, will involve the child in the PEP process at all stages.

4.6. The PEP will address the student's full range of education and development needs, including:

- On-going catch-up support, which will be made available for students who have fallen behind with work.
- Suitable education provided by the LA, where the child is not in school because of suspension or exclusion.
- Transitional support where needed, such as if a child is moving to a new school.
- School attendance and behaviour support, where appropriate.
- Support to help the child meet their aspirations, which includes:
 - Support to achieve expected levels of progress for the relevant national key stage and to complete an appropriate range of approved qualifications.
 - Careers advice, guidance and financial information about FE, training and employment, that focusses on the child's strengths, capabilities and the outcomes they want to achieve.



- Out-of-school hours learning activities, study support and leisure interests.

5. Working with agencies and the VSH

- 5.1. The school will ensure that copies of all relevant reports are forwarded to the LAC social workers, in addition to carers or residential social workers.
- 5.2. The school will coordinate LAC review meetings; for example, their annual review.
- 5.3. The school will work with other agencies to exchange information such as changes in circumstances, exclusions or attendance issues.
- 5.4. Behaviour management strategies will be agreed between the VSH and the school, to ensure challenging behaviour is managed in the most effective way for that individual child.
- 5.5. The designated teachers for LAC and previously-LAC will communicate with the VSH and student's social worker to facilitate the completion of the PEP.
- 5.6. Through the designated teachers the school will work with the VSH, social worker and other relevant agencies to monitor any arrangements in place so that actions and activities recorded in the student's PEP are implemented without delay.
- 5.7. The designated teachers will communicate with the VSH and agree on how pupil premium plus (PP+) can be used effectively to accommodate the student's educational attainment and progress.
- 5.8. PP+ for previously-LAC will be allocated directly to, and managed by, the school.
- 5.9. The school will work with the VSH to manage allocation of PP+ for the benefit of our cohort of LAC, or previously-LAC, and according to their needs.
- 5.10. If deemed necessary, the school will allocate an amount of funding to an individual to support their needs.
- 5.11. The designated teachers will ensure consistent and strong communication with the VSH regarding LAC who are absent without authorisation.

6. Training

The designated teachers and other school staff involved in the education of LAC and previously-LAC will be allowed to access training appropriate to their role.

7. Student mental health

- 7.1. LAC and previously-LAC are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues which can impact their behaviour and education. Designated teachers will have awareness, training and skills regarding a child's needs and how to support them in relation to behaviour management and mental health.



- 7.2. The designated teachers will work with the VSH to ensure the school is able to identify signs of potential mental health issues, understand the impact issues can have on LAC and previously-LAC, and knows how to access further assessment and support, where necessary.

8. Exclusions

- 8.1. Where the school has concerns about a LAC or previously-LAC student's behaviour, carers, the Social Worker and VSH will be informed at the earliest opportunity.
- 8.2. Past experiences of LAC and previously-LAC will be considered when implementing the school's Behavioural Policy in relation to them following a behaviour incident.
- 8.3. Where fixed term exclusion is used as a sanction for poor behaviour, the school will work with carers, the Social Worker and VSH to consider what additional support can be provided to prevent further fixed term exclusions, and any additional arrangements that can be made to support the student's education during the exclusion.
- 8.4. The school will have regard to the DfE's statutory guidance 'Exclusions from maintained schools, academies and student referral units in England' and, as far as is reasonably possible, not permanently exclude a LAC or previously-LAC student.
- 8.5. The school will inform carers that they can seek the advice of the VSH on strategies to support their child to avoid fixed term exclusions or permanent exclusion.

9. Students with SEND

- 9.1. Support for LAC or previously-LAC with SEND, who do not need an EHC plan, will be covered as part of their PEP and care plan reviews.
- 9.2. The SENCO, Assistant SENCO, subject teachers, designated teachers and specialists will involve carers when considering interventions to support a child's progress.
- 9.3. If appropriate, the VSH will be invited to comment on proposed SEND provision for LAC or previously-LAC.

10. Information sharing

Appropriate and specific arrangements for sharing reliable data are in place to ensure that the education needs of LAC and previously-LAC are understood and met. The arrangements set out:

- Who has access to what information and how the security of data will be ensured.
- How students and carers are informed of, and allowed to challenge, information that is kept about them.
- How carers contribute to and receive information.

- Mechanisms for sharing information between the school and relevant LA departments.
- How relevant information about individual students is passed between authorities, departments and the school when students move.

11. Monitoring and review

11.1. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the designated teachers and the Headteacher.

11.2. The next scheduled review date for this policy is **October 2021**.

Signed by:

_____	Headteacher	Date: _____
_____	Chair of governors	Date: _____