

Lathom High School Policy

Education of Children Looked After and Previously Looked-After Children

INTRODUCTION

The policy is informed by the following Department for Education (DfE) document:

- The Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children. Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683561/The_designated_teacher_for_looked-after_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf (DfE February 2018)

The governing body of Lathom High School is committed to providing high quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. The governing body recognises the need to champion performance, for children looked after (CLA) and previously looked after children (PLAC) and is committed to improving outcomes for them.

The governing body is committed to ensuring that CLA and PLAC are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following are in place, and are working effectively:

1. A Designated Governor for CLA and PLAC
2. A Designated Teacher for CLA and PLAC (Alison Wilcock)
3. Personal Education Plans (PEPs) for all CLA
4. The Designated Teacher will be allowed to have training on specific factors that impact on the attainment of CLA and PLAC. These will need to be across authorities.
5. All staff in school will have a clear understanding of the issues that affect CLA and PLAC; their learning needs; how to support them in school and issues relating to confidentiality.
6. Policies, procedures and strategies to promote the achievement and well-being of this vulnerable group.

For the purposes of the statutory guidance, previously looked after children are those who have:

- Ceased to be looked after through Adoption
- Ceased to be looked after through a Special Guardianship Order
- Ceased to be looked after through a Child Arrangement Order (previously, Residency Order)

It **does not** include children who return to their birth families following a period of being looked after where none of the above categories apply.

It **does not** include children who belong to one of these categories but have never been looked after.

Consent to hold information about previously looked after status or to discuss a child's previously looked after status, including with the VS, must be granted by parents or guardians and this needs to be obtained by the DT for CLA and PCLA Alison Wilcock.

THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR LOOKED-AFTER AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED-AFTER CHILDREN

1. The designated teacher, Alison Wilcock, is the central point of initial contact within Lathom High School. They ensure that the school plays its role to the full in making sure arrangements are joined up and minimise any disruption to a child's learning.
2. The designated teacher has a leadership role in promoting the educational achievement of every CLA and PLAC on the school's roll. This involves, working with the Virtual School Head's to promote the education of CLA and PLAC and promoting a whole school culture where the personalised learning needs of these children matter and their personal, emotional and academic needs are prioritised.
3. The designated teacher takes lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand the things which can affect how CLA and PLAC learn and achieve and how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils.
4. The designated teacher promotes the educational achievement of CLA and PLAC by contributing to the development and review of whole school policies.
5. The designated teacher promotes a culture in which CLA and PLAC:
 - Are able to discuss their progress and be involved in setting their own targets, have their views taken seriously, and are supported to take responsibility for their own learning.
 - Are prioritised in any selection of pupils who would benefit from one-to-one tuition, and that they have access to academic focused study support.
 - Are encouraged to participate in school activities and in decision making within the school and the care system.
 - Believe they can succeed and aspire to further and higher education or highly skilled jobs; and can discuss difficult issues (such as SEN, bullying, attendance) in a frank manner with a sympathetic and empathetic adult.
 - Provide access to a learning mentor and Careers advisor as a priority.
6. The designated teacher and the SENCO are sources of advice for teachers about: differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual pupils who are CLA or PLAC; and the use of Assessment for Learning (AfL) approaches to improve the short and medium term progress of CLA and PLAC, and help them and their teachers understand where they are in their learning (including any knowledge gaps), where they need to go, and how to get there.
7. The designated teacher, SENCO and Learning Mentor for CLA works directly with CLA and PLAC and their carers, parents or guardians to: promote good home-school links; support progress by paying particular attention to effective communication; ensure they understand the potential value of one-to-one tuition and are equipped to engage with it at home; ensure they are aware of how the school teaches key skills such as reading and numeracy; and encourages high aspirations and working with the child to plan for their future success and fulfilment.

8. The designated teacher has lead responsibility for the development and implementation of PEPs for CLA within school in partnership with others such as the virtual school and CSC CLA allocated workers;
9. The designated teacher is responsible for ensuring that the PEPs are completed within statutory timescales and a copy is returned to the Virtual School Head as outlined in the PEP guidance. A copy is also to be sent to the CLA CSC worker and shared with parents and carers as appropriate.
10. The designated teacher is aware that the Virtual School Head provides information and advice to parents and designated teachers on meeting the needs of PLAC. The designated teacher should fully involve parents and guardians in decisions affecting their child's education, including any requests to the Virtual School Head for advice on meeting their individual needs.
11. The designated teacher has the responsibility of applying for High Needs Funding to support the CLA student and needs to provide impact statements to the Virtual School.
12. The designated teacher needs to support the allocated CSC worker for the application of PEPSA funding to support the educational needs of the CLA student outside of school.
13. To inform members of staff of the general educational needs of Looked After Children, and to promote the involvement of these children in school homework clubs, extra-curricular activities, home reading schemes, school councils and in all areas of school life
14. To act as an advocate for Looked After Children;
15. To maintain and monitor systems for liaising with carers, young people, Childrens' Services and the Virtual Schools.
16. Monitor the educational progress of Looked After Children and those previously Looked After, in order to provide Intervention promptly. For Child Looked at this will inform their PEP (Personal Education Plan).
17. To intervene, promptly, if there is evidence of individual underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy. For both Child Looked after and those Previously Looked after.
18. Ensure Careers and additional guidance for Looked After Children, and those previously Looked After, is embedded from year 7.
19. Liaise with SCAYT (Supporting Carers and Young People Together) and request their support if needed. Around Mental and Wellbeing and supporting Carers.
20. To help co-ordinate PEP and Looked After Children review meetings, so that the Personal Education Plan can inform the child's Care Plan.
21. To attend Child Looked After Reviews.
22. To be the named contact for colleagues in CSC, Virtual School and other agencies.
23. To implement an individual curriculum with the Child at the Centre if needed for example Alternative Provision arrangements.
24. Liaise with the allocated social worker, Independent Reviewing Officer and other agencies if needed within appropriate timescales to best support the Child who is Looked After.
25. Ensure groups are installed in SIMS for Children Looked After and those Previously to enable effective tracking.
26. Report to staff and Governors the Numbers of Children Looked After and Previously Looked After and the Interventions being used to support them.
27. Report to Governors termly on Interventions, funding applications, Exclusions and Destination data for Children Looked After and those Previously Looked After.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF

All staff at Lathom High School will:

1. have high expectations of CLA and PLAC's learning and set targets to accelerate educational progress;
2. be aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation (attachment awareness) from birth families and that some children may find it difficult to build relationships of trust with adults because of their experiences, and how this might affect the child's behaviour;
3. understand how important it is to see CLA and PLAC as individuals rather than as a homogeneous group, not publicly treat them differently from their peers, and show sensitivity about who else knows about their looked-after or previously looked-after status;
4. appreciate the central importance of the PEP in helping to create a shared understanding between teachers, carers, social workers and, most importantly, the child's own understanding of how they are being supported;
5. have the level of understanding they need of the role of social workers, Virtual School Heads and carers, and how the function of the PEP fits into the wider care planning duties of the authority which looks after the child;
6. for PLAC, understand the importance of involving the child's parents or guardians in decisions affecting their child's education, and be a contact for parents or guardians who want advice or have concerns about their child's progress at school.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNING BODY

The Governing body of Lathom High School will:

1. ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for CLA and PLAC;
2. ensure that there is a named designated teacher for CLA and PLAC;
3. through the designated teacher, hold the school to account on how it supports its CLA and PLAC (including how the Pupil Premium Plus is used) and their level of progress;
4. be aware of whether the school has CLA and PLAC and how many;
5. liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure that the designated teacher is enabled to carry out her/his responsibilities in relation to CLA and PLAC;
6. ensure the designated teacher is able to access training needed to fulfil the role of designated teacher. Most Virtual School Heads agree that, as minimum, designated teachers should have two days a year for training opportunities specific to factors that impact on the attainment of CLA and PLAC;
7. support the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of CLA and PLAC are met;
8. review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years.

Admission Arrangements

On admission, records (including the P.E.P.) will be requested from the pupil's previous school and a meeting will be held with carer/parent/social worker. A date will be agreed upon for a new Personal Education Plan. An appropriate school induction will take place.

Admission of looked after children should be acknowledged by the Lancashire Pupil Access Team prior to starting at Lathom High School.

If this has not happened then the Mrs Galbraith or Mrs Wilcock must inform Pupil Access before admission.

Involving the Young Person

It is important that a young person is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. How this is shared with them clearly depends on their age and understanding. The explanation should emphasise that the school, the Social Worker, and their carer(s) are working together to promote their education.

Communication with Other Agencies

Schools should ensure that a copy of all reports (e.g. end of year reports) should be forwarded to the young person's Social Worker in addition to the foster carer or Residential Social Worker.

School, the Virtual School, and Children's Social Care should endeavour to co-ordinate their review meetings, e.g. to have an Annual Review of a Statement or EHCP combined with a Statutory Care Review.

Children's Social Care, The Virtual School and school will need to exchange information between formal reviews if there are significant changes in the young person's circumstances, e.g. if school is considering an exclusion, there is a change of care placement or there are significant attendance issues.

It is the responsibility of Mrs Wilcock to ensure good communication with all agencies.

Assessment, Monitoring and Review Procedures

Each looked-after pupil will have a Care Plan that will include a Personal Education Plan (PEP) that the Social Worker takes a lead in developing the initial PEP. This will identify specific areas of concern and include achievable targets. Areas for consideration will include:

- Attendance;
- Achievement Record (academic or otherwise);
- Behaviour;
- Homework;
- Involvement in Extra Curricular Activities;
- Special needs (if any);
- Development needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge or subject areas and experiences); and
- Long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations).

The PEP will be updated every term, as part of the Statutory Reviewing process carried out by Children's Social Care.

The Designated Teacher will report annually to the Governing Body on the progress of all Looked After Children against the key indicators outlined above. Also those who have previously been Looked After.

This policy was established, and approved for implementation by the full Governing Body

Signed by the Chair of Governors:
Dated:
The name of our appointed Designated Governor is: Diane Murray
The name of our school's Designated Teacher is: Alison Wilcock
This policy is to be next reviewed on: November 2020