



## Policy

# Designated Teacher for Children Looked-After and Previously Children Looked-After (CLA and PCLA)

This policy has been written with regard to the guidance 'Working together to safeguard children', 'Keeping children safe in education' and the 'Special Education Needs Code of Practice', which places Special Education Needs and Disabilities together and abbreviated to SEND. A copy can be seen in the Headteacher's Office.

The overall objective of the school's Equality Policy, in line with the Equality Act 2010, is to provide a framework for the school to pursue its equality duties to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, promote equality of opportunity, and promote good relations and positive attitudes between people of diverse backgrounds in all its activities.

<b>Title</b>	Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children
<b>Date of Issue</b>	April 2024
<b>Review Date</b>	April 2025
<b>Prepared by</b>	Headteacher / Designated Teacher for CLA and PCLA
<b>To be reviewed by</b>	Headteacher and Governors
<b>Appendices</b>	None
<b>Supply / distribution</b>	Available as a hardcopy in the school office.
<b>Other relevant approved documents</b>	Exclusion Policy Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy SEND Policy Behaviour Policy Supporting pupils with medical needs
<b>Authorised by</b>	Headteacher and Governors

## 1. Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

A suitable member of senior staff is appointed as the designated teacher for children looked after (CLA) and previously children looked after (PCLA)

The designated teacher promotes the educational achievement of children looked-after (CLA) and previously children looked-after (PCLA), and supports other staff members to do this too.

Staff, parents and carers are aware of the identity of the designated teacher, how to contact them and what they are responsible for.

## 2. Legislation and statutory 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 20 and section 20A of the Child and Young Persons Act 2008.

## 3. Definitions

**Children Looked After** 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 Children Looked After** 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)** is part of a child's looked after 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 child reaches their full potential.

**The Virtual School Head (VSH)** is a local authority officer responsible for promoting the educational achievement of their authority's children looked after, 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 and parents and carers in respect of previously children looked after.

## 4. Identity of our designated teacher

Our designated teacher is Kate Hurst.

You can contact them by emailing [khurst@fynamore.org.uk](mailto:khurst@fynamore.org.uk).

Our designated teacher takes lead responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children looked after and previously children looked after at our school. They are your initial point of contact for any of the matters set out in the section below.

## 5.1 Leadership responsibilities

The designated teacher will:

Act as a central point of initial contact within the school for any matters involving children looked-after and previously children looked after.

Promote the educational achievement of every child looked-after and previously child looked-after on roll by:

- Working with the Virtual School Headteacher (VSH)
- Promoting a whole school culture where the needs of these pupils matter and are prioritised

Take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand:

- The things which can affect how a child looked after and a previously child looked after learn and achieve
- How the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils

Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies to ensure they consider the needs of a child looked after and a previously child looked after.

Promote a culture in which a child looked-after and a previously child looked after are encouraged and supported to engage with their education and other school activities

Act as a source of advice for teachers about working with a child lookedafter and a previously child looked after.

Work directly with a child looked-after and a previously child looked after, their carers, parents and other professionals such as Social Workers to promote good home-school links, support progress and encourage high aspirations.

Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of a Personal Education Plan (PEP) for a child looked after.

Work closely with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding a child looked-after and a previously child looked-after are quickly and effectively responded to.

Involve parents and carers of a previously child looked-after in decisions affecting their child's education.

## 5.2 Supporting a child looked after

The designated teacher will:

Make sure the PEP of a child looked-after meets their needs by working closely with other teachers to assess each child'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 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 Wiltshire Local Authority decide what arrangements work best for pupils

Ensure that:

- A child looked-after 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 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 child's Social Worker and Virtual School Headteacher (VSH) ahead of the statutory review of their care plan

Transfer a child looked-after PEP to their next school, making sure it is up to date and Wiltshire local authority has the most recent version.

### 5.3 Supporting both a child looked-after and previously child looked after

The designated teacher will:

Ensure the specific needs of a child looked after and a previously child looked after are understood by staff and reflected in how the school uses pupil premium funding

Work with the Virtual School Headteacher (VSH) to agree how pupil premium funding for a child looked after can most effectively be used to improve their attainment

Help raise the awareness of parents and carers of a previously child looked-after about pupil premium funding and other support available for these children

Play a key part in decisions on how pupil premium funding is used to support a previously child looked-after.

Encourage parents' and carers' 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 a child looked-after and a previously child looked-after in areas such as attendance, homework and behaviour.

Be aware of the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) of a child looked-after and a previously child looked-after, and make sure teachers also have awareness and understanding of this

Ensure the SEND code of practice, as it relates to a child looked-after is followed.

Make sure PEPs work in harmony with any education, health and care (EHC) plans that a child looked-after may have

Ensure that, with the help of VSHs, staff have the skills to identify signs of potential SEND concerns in a child looked-after and a previously child looked-after, and know how to access further assessment and support where necessary.

Ensure that staff can identify signs of potential mental health issues in a child looked-after and a previously child looked after and understand where the school can draw on specialist services

Put in place robust arrangements to have strengths and difficulties questionnaires (SDQs) completed for a child looked-after, and use the results of these SDQs to inform the child's PEP.

Put in place mechanisms for understanding the emotional and behavioural needs of a previously child looked-after.

### 5.4 Relationships beyond the school

The designated teacher for CLA and PCLA will:

Proactively engage with social workers and other professionals to enable the school to respond effectively to the needs of a child looked-after and a previously child looked after.

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 carers of a previously child looked after and encourage them to be actively involved in their children's education

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Proactively build relationships with local authority professionals, such as VSHs and SEND departments.

Consider how the school works with others outside of the school to maximise the stability of education for a child looked-after, 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 a child looked-after is absent without authorisation and take appropriate safeguarding action
- Talking to the child's social worker and/or other relevant parties in Wiltshire local authority regarding any decisions about changes in care placements which will disrupt the child's education, providing advice about the likely impact and what Wiltshire local authority should do to minimise disruption
- Making sure that, if a child looked-after moves school, their new designated teacher receives any information needed to help the transition process

Seek advice from VSHs about meeting the needs of individual a previously child looked-after, but only with the agreement of their parents or carers.

Make sure that for each child looked after:

- There's an agreed process for how the school works in partnership with the child's carers and other professionals, such as their social worker, in order to review and develop educational progress
- School policies are communicated to their carers and social worker and, where appropriate, birth parents
- Teachers know the most appropriate person to contact where necessary, such as who has the authority to sign permission slips

Where a child looked-after is at risk of exclusion:

- Contact the VSH 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 the VSH and child's carers, consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to address the causes of the child's behaviour

Where a previously child looked-after is at risk of exclusion, talk to the child's parents or guardians before seeking advice from the VSH on avoiding exclusion.

## **6. Monitoring and review arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually by Kate Hurst (Designated Teacher for CLA and PCLA) and the Headteacher. At every review, it will be approved by the Governing Board.

## **7. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Exclusions
- SEN
- Supporting pupils with medical needs