

Education of Children Looked After (CLA) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) Policy

Setting: Castle Newnham

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DATE APPROVED:	March 2026
APPROVED BY:	Local Governing Board
NEXT REVIEW DATE:	March 2027

A. RATIONALE

This policy outlines the aims, principles and processes at Castle Newnham for the education of 'Children Looked-After' (CLA) and 'Previously Looked-After Children' (PLAC).

The policy reflects the commitment of the school to support all children in engaging with their learning and to contribute to ensuring that pupils leave the school prepared to be good future adult citizens.

B. AIM

Castle Newnham aims to ensure that children looked after (CLA) and previously looked after (PLAC) have access to excellent educational provision and are prioritised for additional support through school-based interventions to achieve as well as possible, in accordance with the DFE guidance documents 'Promoting the Education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children' (2018) and 'The Designated Teacher for looked-after children and previously looked-after children.' (2018)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a9015d4e5274a5e67567fbe/Promoting_the_education_of_look-ed-after_children_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a901d6ce5274a5e67567fc1/The_designated_teacher_for_looke-d-after_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf

C. DEFINITIONS

Looked-after child/children (CLA) - A child/children who are looked after by a local authority (referred to as a looked-after child) as defined in section 22 of the Children Act 1989 means a child (0-18 years of age) who is subject to a care order (or an interim care order) or who is accommodated by the local authority.

Previously looked-after child/children (PLAC) - Those who are:

- no longer looked after by a local authority in England and Wales (as defined by the Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014) because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order;
- were adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales. 'State care' is care provided by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other organisation whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

Virtual School Headteacher (VSH) - The officer in charge of promoting the education of children and young people in care and previously in care, and to ensure that the local authority's statutory duties in this area are discharged effectively.

Designated teacher - An appropriately qualified and experienced member of staff who undertakes the responsibilities within the school to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children on the school's roll.

Personal Education Plan (PEP) - This is part of a looked-after child's care plan and needs to be developed with the school. It forms a record of what needs to happen and who will make it happen to ensure a looked-after child reaches their full potential.

D. LEGISLATION

This policy has due regard to all relevant 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 (2018) 'The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2023) 'Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement'
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education 2023'
- DfE (2023) 'Working together to safeguard children 2023'

E. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The governing board is responsible for:

- Ensuring the school has a coherent policy for CLA and PLAC.
- Ratifying the school's policies and procedures in conjunction with legislation and statutory guidance.
- Ensuring the designated teacher for CLA and PLAC has appropriate experience/training.
- Ensuring that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to each looked after child's:
 - Legal status (i.e. whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.
- Care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the LA.

The virtual school head (VSH) is responsible for:

- Monitoring the attendance and educational progress of the children their authority looks after; this includes children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders, or who were adopted from state care outside of England and Wales.
- Ensuring that arrangements are in place to improve the education and outcomes of the authority's CLA, 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 CLA and PLAC.
- Working with the school to ensure all CLA in attendance are fully supported in reaching their full potential.
- Acting as the educational advocate for CLA.
- Acting as a source of advice and information to help parents of PLAC as effectively as possible.
- Managing the school's allocation of pupil premium plus (PP+) for CLA.
- Ensuring there are effective systems in place to:
 - Maintain an up-to-date roll of the CLA who are in school settings, and gather information about their educational Permanent, attendance and progress.
 - Inform the headteacher and designated teacher if they have a pupil on roll who is looked after by the LA.
 - Ensure social workers, schools, designated teachers, careers and independent reviewing officers understand their role and responsibilities regarding a pupil's personal education plan (PEP).
 - Ensure that up-to-date and effective PEPs that focus on educational outcomes are maintained for all CLA.
 - Avoid delays in providing suitable educational provision.
 - Ensure the education achievement of CLA is seen as a priority by everyone who has responsibilities for promoting their welfare.
 - Report regularly on the attainment, progress and school attendance of CLA through the authority's corporate parenting structures.

The Headteachers/ Pastoral Leads are responsible for:

- Appointing the designated teacher for CLA and PLAC.
- Allowing the designated teacher, the time and facilities to succeed in carrying out their duties.
- Overseeing this policy and monitoring its implementation
- Feeding back to the governing board regarding data involving CLA and PLAC including: Attendance, Attainment and Behaviour.
- Ensuring all members of staff are aware that supporting CLA is a key priority.
- Promoting the advantages of actively challenging negative stereotypes of CLA.

The designated teacher for CLA and PLAC is 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 CLA and PLAC.
- Promoting the educational achievement of CLA and PLAC at the school; this includes those that left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.

- Acting as the main contact for social services and the DfE.
- Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations.
- Ensuring that CLA are prioritised for one-to-one tuition and support.
- Leading on how the child's PEP is developed and used in school to ensure the child's progress towards targets is monitored.
- Liaising with the SENCO to ensure all pupil needs are met.
- Being vigilant in observing any potential safeguarding concerns that could arise surrounding CLA and PLAC due to their increased vulnerability to harm, and reporting these to the DSL as soon as they arise.
- Working with the child's VSH and social worker to develop and implement their PEP.
- Working with the VSH to discuss how funding can be used to support the child's progress and meet the needs identified in their PEP.

The DSL is responsible for:

- Keeping up-to-date records of CLA's respective social worker and VSH.
- Promoting amongst staff the importance of recognising and reporting safeguarding concerns surrounding CLA and PLAC as soon as possible due to their increased vulnerability to harm.
- Where a child ceases to be looked after and becomes a care leaver, keeping up-to-date contact details of their LA personal advisor and liaising with the advisor as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

The SENDCO is responsible for:

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

Staff are responsible for:

- Being aware of CLA and PLAC and providing them with support and encouragement.
- Preserving confidentiality, where appropriate, and showing sensitivity and understanding.
- Being vigilant for any signs of bullying towards CLA and PLAC.
- Being vigilant for any signs of safeguarding concerns surrounding CLA and PLAC due to their increased vulnerability to harm, and reporting any concerns to the DSL as soon as possible.
- Promoting the self-esteem of CLA and PLAC.

F. ADMISSIONS

'Looked after children and children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order and including children who appear [to the admission authority of the school] to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted' have been given the highest priority within school admission arrangements (Admissions Policy).

Due to care Placement changes, looked-after children may enter the academy mid-term. If necessary, they may need to be offered additional support and pre-entry visits to help the new pupil settle at Castle Newnham.

G. MONITORING, ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed by the designated teachers for looked-after children every year in-line with KCSIE. At every review, the policy will be shared with and approved by the local committee of the board.

K. LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

This policy is linked to our:

- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality Policy
- SEND Policy