

Gossops Green Primary School



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

Approved by: Local Governing Body (LGB)

Last Reviewed on: December 2023

Next review due by: December 2024

Staff Member Responsible: CLA and PLAC Leader

Link Governor: Paul Marshman



Contents

1. [Introduction](#)
2. [Definitions](#)
3. [Responsibilities](#)
4. [Admission Arrangements](#)

1. Introduction

Gossops Green Primary is committed to providing high quality education for all our pupils and takes our responsibilities towards *Children Looked After* and *Previously Looked After Children* very seriously. We recognise that *Children Looked After and Previously Looked After Children* may have very specific needs, may be coping with trauma, abuse or rejection, and may experience personal distress and uncertainty. National data shows that, despite having as broad a range of abilities as their peers, *Children Looked After and Previously Looked After Children* significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers.

We want all our *Children Looked After* and *Previously Looked After Children* to feel supported, both academically and emotionally, so that they can be successful and achieve their potential, both in school and in later life. We provide support through a broad and balanced curriculum, bespoke nurture support and collaboration with outside agencies, including the Virtual School, to provide a better future for all our *Children Looked After* and *Previously Looked After Children*.

This policy has been written with regards to guidance set out in the following documentation:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 – paragraphs 187-191](#)
- [Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children](#)
- [Section 52 of the Children Act 2004](#)

2. Definitions

A child who has been in the care of their local authority for more than 24 hours is known as a '*looked after child*'. *Looked after children* are also often referred to as *children in care* or *Children Looked After (CLA)*. *Looked after children* are:

- living with foster parents
- living in a residential children's home or
- living in residential settings like schools or secure units.

Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) are those who are no longer looked after by a local authority in England (as defined by the Children Act 1989) because they are the subject of:

- an adoption
- special guardianship or
- child arrangements order; or
- were adopted from 'state care' outside England.

Gossops Green also includes children in Kinship Care as part of this group.

Each Local Authority in England has a Virtual School who support the education of their *Children Looked After* and *Previously Looked After Children*, offering advice and guidance on all aspects of the education of children in care, *previously looked after children*, and those with, or have ever had a social worker.

A Personal Education Plan (PEP) will be initiated by the social worker within the first term of the *Looked After Child* starting at the school or being taken into care and will be reviewed regularly and as necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the *Looked After Child*. The PEP will provide a regular opportunity to review progress, note any concerns and ensure that all relevant parties are informed accordingly.

3 Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the Principal

- Ensure an appropriately trained Designated Teacher is appointed, who will be responsible for all *Children Looked After and Previously Looked After Children* and that another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take sick leave.
- Ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to keep *Children Looked After and Previously Looked After Children* safe and that they have the awareness of, and sensitivity to, the difficulties and educational disadvantages of *Children Looked After and Previously Looked After Children*.

Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher:

- Maintain an up-to-date record of the *Children Looked After and Previously Looked After Children* in school, including those in the care of other authorities, ensuring that relevant information is made known to appropriate staff.
- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer (see admission arrangements).
- Gather up-to-date information regarding academic achievement, attendance and the health and wellbeing of each child, including tracking their academic progress.
- Ensure that termly Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are completed, in association with the child, the social worker, the primary carer and any other relevant people, which will further identify the child's individual needs and the support they require.
- Initiate and co-ordinate academic and emotional support for the *Children Looked After and Previously Looked After Children* in school, using information shared in the PEP.
- Work with the Virtual School to promote the educational achievement of the child.
- Work with the Virtual School to discuss how best to use funding to support the progress of *Children Looked After* and meet the needs identified in the child's PEP.
- Set up meetings with relevant parties where the *Looked After Child* or *Previously Looked After Child* is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion.
- Ensure that each *Looked After Child* and *Previously Looked After Child* has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher but should be based on the child's own wishes.
- Establish and maintain regular contact with home, statutory and voluntary agencies.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need-to-know basis.
- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life and actively encourage *Children Looked After and Previously Looked After Children* to join in extracurricular activities and out of school learning.
- Be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education, including ensuring the transfer of information to their new school.
- Attend training as required to keep fully informed of latest developments and policies regarding *Children Looked After and Previously Looked After Children*.
- Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of *Children Looked After and Previously Looked After Children*. Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

Designated LAC and PLAC Teacher: Mrs Debbie Bullen (Assistant Principal)

Responsibilities of all staff

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of *Children Looked After* and *Previously Looked After Children*, as for all pupils.
- Maintain confidentiality and ensure that *Children Looked After* and *Previously Looked After Children* are supported sensitively.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- Work to enable *Children Looked After* and *Previously Looked After Children* to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all *Children Looked After* and *Previously Looked After Children*.

Responsibilities of the Local Governing Body

- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of *Children Looked After* and *Previously Looked After Children*.
- Ensure that the school has an overview of the needs and progress of *Children Looked After* and *Previously Looked After Children*.
- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out their responsibilities.
- Support the Principal, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of *Children Looked After* and *Previously Looked After Children* are recognised and met.
- Receive a termly report (as part of the 'Principal's Update'), setting out:
 - The number of looked-after pupils on the school's roll (if any).
 - Their attendance, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
 - Their teacher assessment, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
 - The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any).
 - The destinations of pupils who leave the school.

(The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.)

Governor Responsible: Mr Paul Marshman

4. Admission arrangements

The school and the governing body welcome all children who may be looked after by our local authority or those who may be in the care of another authority. We recognise that, due to care arrangements, a *Looked After Child* may enter school mid-term and that it is important that they are given a positive welcome.

The Designated Teacher will contact the named Social Worker, previous school's Designated Teacher / class teacher and current carers, prior to a *Looked After Child* or *Previously Looked After Child* starting with the school, to gather pertinent information to inform any additional support which may benefit the child, such as pre-entry visits. The school recognises that *Children Looked After* are an 'excepted group' and will be prioritised in the school's oversubscription criteria following the DfE Admissions Code (Admissions of *Looked After Children* (England) Regulations 2006).