Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children Policy

Meole Brace School

Approved by:	Local Governing Body
Last reviewed on:	September 2026
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Policy Owner:	Simon Iddon

LOOKED AFTER AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

Meole Brace School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people

1. As Governors and teachers of Meole Brace School, we aim to:

   - make a real difference in helping to provide the best possible education for care experienced – referred throughout this policy as looked after (LAC) and previously looked after (PLAC) - children
   - seek to give our young people in care professional help, encouragement and support, so they find our school a welcoming and friendly place;
   - be fully inclusive and to challenge negative views and stereotypes;
   - work with, and offer support to, foster carers and relevant local authorities in order to assist the young person's learning and enhance educational opportunities.

2. We will support the Government's agenda for giving all looked after children the same life chances as any other child, in that we want them to: be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution to society, and achieve economic well-being.

3. The Children Act 2004 and the statutory guidance Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children 2014, (updated 2018) place a duty on us to work together to promote the educational achievement of looked after children. We recognise that schools and teachers are at the very heart of this process so that we can provide a good education in order to unlock a bright future and so increase life chances of this vulnerable group. We are highly ambitious for these young people, knowing that securing the best possible progress for them will greatly enhance their life chances.

4. We recognise our responsibilities as governors and teachers and we actively want to support the local authority in undertaking its statutory responsibility, under section 52 of the Children Act 2004. This is to help this vulnerable group to succeed in education, champion their needs, raise awareness and challenge negative assumptions at all levels.

5. As school governors and staff we are aware we can make a significant difference. We recognise that we have a key role and major influence to ensure that the needs of looked after children are considered at the improvement planning and policy level through to monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes.

6. As a governing body we will introduce a monitoring procedure where we will look closely at the progress that looked after children are making in our school and identify if there are barriers to their next steps of learning and progress. This will include the regular capture of student voice from the LAC/PLAC group.

7. We will introduce an annual reporting cycle on the progress and performance of looked after children, to be presented to the full governing body during the autumn term of each academic year.

8. As a governing body we will require our designated teacher to carry out the specific duties below in relation to the looked after children attending this school.

9. We will require our appointed designated teacher to undertake the recommendations concerning their role and responsibilities set down in the statutory guidance entitled *Designated teacher for looked after and previously looked-after children 2009 (updated Feb 2018).*

In this context the designated teacher will**:**

- become the central point of contact at this school for all professionals and agencies working with and supporting the individual looked after children we have on roll;
- take the lead role in the professional assessment and preparation of the educational targets and subsequent reviews to be recorded into the relevant sections of the child's Personal Education Plan (PEP). The PEP should be established within twenty school working days for any looked after child starting on roll. This to include the gradual addition and updating of further information over time e.g. attendance, attainment and progress results;
- attend relevant update training and cascade information for staff development and updating regarding looked after children;
- ensure that personal information is handled carefully and sensitively and that the child's wishes and preferences are taken into account;
- establish good working relationships and communications with foster carers, ensuring information is received and early notification is provided for them to attend meetings and reviews;
- provide support and sanctuary to help settle a looked after child into the school, and at other times; ensure that the looked after child feels safe, knows who to trust and who to go to if they feel the need for support;
- ensure the transfer of records if a looked after child moves school;
- provide written information to assist planning, reviews and reporting as required;
- seek and prioritise meetings with, and referrals to, appropriate external agencies in situations that require external support.

10. In addition, we will require our school teaching and support staff to assist in the implementation and support of this policy for looked after and previously looked after children by requiring all staff to:

- ensure the appropriate sensitivities and confidentialities are maintained;
- be familiar with, and respond appropriately to, requests for progress and/or attainment information in order to compile the PEP and other documentation necessary for reviews;
- respond positively to any request by a child to be the person they want to talk with;
- ensure that no child in care becomes the victim of stigmatisation at any time and that any such attitudes are swiftly reported and addressed;
- positively promote the self-esteem of looked after children;
- convey high aspirations for their educational and personal achievement.

11. As a governing body we will endeavour to raise expectations for achievement of looked after and previously looked after children and encourage them to do well by combining high expectation and standards with inclusion.

12. We will consider and set appropriately challenging targets and in so doing facilitate the appropriate resources in order to support the child to reach those targets.

13. We will monitor and evaluate the impact of our school provision, teaching and learning and support for looked after and previously looked after children. The annual reporting cycle informs on the following key aspects of provision:

- the number of looked after children and previously looked after children on roll;
- attendance statistics for any authorised and unauthorised absence;
- the frequency, circumstance and reasons for any recorded suspension;
- how they are performing in core subjects, their progress when compared against initial baseline assessment;
- the frequency of them taking part in extra-curricular activities;
- the attainment relative to the targets set in core and foundation subjects;
- the provision arrangements for additional support identified to include 1:1 tuition at school and any externally added booster work provided in the care home;
- the quality and updating of the educational targets recorded in the PEP.

14. We are aware that the OFSTED inspection framework will consider the provisions that we, as a whole school, have put in place to support looked after and previously looked after children. We understand that a judgement will be made within the OFSTED framework in terms of how far this school is able to support looked after young people. The formal report will include comments about the progress and support provided to these vulnerable young people.

15. The looked-after children group is extremely vulnerable, the most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect and the school is aware of the need to monitor the welfare and ensure the support of children in this category. The designated teacher will work closely with the DSL and other key staff to ensure the continued safety of all LAC students.

16. The designated safeguarding lead has details of the of the legal status of each individual looked after child's care arrangements and what the contact arrangements are with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They will also know the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her.

17. The designated teacher will work with the virtual school head and the child's social worker to discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan and to ensure their safety and security.

18. The designated teacher and SENCo will work closely for students who are both LAC and SEN, to ensure their needs are met and to help them reach their potential in school

Reviewed: September 2026
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Simon Iddon