


Looked After Children

THE
C  **MPASS**
PARTNERSHIP OF SCHOOLS

The Compass Trust recognises the vulnerability of our Looked After Children (LAC), also referred to as Children in Our Care (CIOC). Nationally, Looked After Children significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. We believe that The Compass Partnership of Schools has a major part to play in ensuring that Looked After Children are exceptionally well prepared for the next steps in their lives. We aim to provide them with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful, enthusiastic learners and responsible individuals by providing a positive, safe and stimulating environment where all are included and achievements are celebrated.

Looked After Children (LAC) are defined as:

- Children or young people who are the subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989.
- Children who are placed in foster care, children's residential homes, with relatives or friends, in semi-independent or supported independent accommodation.
- Children subject to a Care or Interim Care Order whilst placed with a parent, where the LA has parental responsibility.
- Children who are not subject to an order, but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents or respite care.

Previously - Looked After Children (PLAC) are defined as:

- Children who are no longer looked after by an LA in England and Wales because they have either been adopted or are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order.
- Children who were adopted outside England and Wales from 'state care' (care that is provided by a public authority, religious organisation, or other organisation whose main purpose is to benefit society).

LAC reviews, involving the school, will take place up until an adoption order has been granted. However, Pupil Premium Plus funding will continue for LAC until they are 16 years old.

Helping Looked After Children succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority for our trust This policy takes account of:

- the Council's duty under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children (LAC)
 - the Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006
 - relevant DfE guidance to Governing Bodies (*Supporting Looked After Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors*)

Our approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children is based on the following principles:

- prioritising education
- promoting attendance
- targeting support
- having high expectations
- promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes

- achieving stability and continuity
- early intervention and priority action
- listening to children
- promoting health and wellbeing
- reducing exclusions and promoting stability
- working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals
- ensuring information pathways for carers are clear
- supporting the resourcing of appropriate equipment and providing necessary training

We aim to do this by:

1. providing a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children
2. supporting our looked after children and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential, enjoy learning and take as full a part as possible in all school activities
3. ensuring that school policies and procedures are followed for LAC as for all children
4. working with the Virtual School and ensure that carers and social workers of LAC pupils are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment
5. fulfilling our schools' role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our Looked After Children, by asking the question, 'Would this be good enough for my child?'

Implications

As for all our pupils, we are committed to helping every Looked After Child to achieve the highest standards they can. This can in part be measured by improvement in their achievements and attendance.

The Trustees are committed to providing quality education for all pupils and will:

- ensure a Teacher is designated for each individual Looked After Child and is enabled to carry out the responsibilities set out below in conjunction with the Headteacher
- ensure a Personal Education Plan is put in place, implemented and regularly reviewed for every Looked After Child, in line with Local authority's guidance on Personal Education Plans
- identify a member of the local governing body as Designated Governor for Looked After Children
- ensure funding directed to support the achievement of looked after children is carefully targeted and evaluated

This policy links with a number of other school policies detailed below and it is important that Trustees have regard to the needs of Looked After Children when reviewing them:

Our schools will champion the needs of Looked After Children, raise awareness and challenge

negative stereotypes about them, in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible.

Responsibilities

The Headteacher/ Head of School Responsibility:

- identify a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children, whose role is set out below. It is essential that another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take sick leave
- ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusions of Looked After Children and take action where progress, conduct or attendance are below expectations
- report on the progress, attendance and conduct of Looked After Children. OFSTED now select a number of Looked After Children, tracking their results and the support they have received
- ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance
- ensure funding targeted to raise attainment of looked after children is used effectively

Trustees Responsibility:

- identify a nominated governor for Looked After Children in each school
- ensure that all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Looked After Children
- ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Looked After Children
- allocate resources to meet the needs of Looked After Children
- ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs

Procedures

Trustees will:

- monitor the progress of Looked After Children, through an annual report
- ensure that Looked After Children are given top priority when applying for places in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria
- work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school, by ensuring the school implements policies and procedures to ensure Looked After Children achieve and enjoy their time at the school. The governing body will recognise the additional problems caused by exclusion and will use permanent exclusion only as a last resort
- ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below, having accessed appropriate training to do so.
- support the Headteacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of Looked After Children are recognised and met
- receive a report once a year 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
 - progress, 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

The Designated Teacher

The role became statutory in September 2009 under the Children and Young Persons' Act 2008 (the 2008 Act). The Designated Teacher must be a qualified teacher or a member of staff. Ideally, s/he should be a senior member of staff who has enough status and experience to advise and provide training to school staff on issues relating to LAC. They need to be able to influence decisions about the teaching and learning of these children.

The Designated Teacher will:

- ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan to plan for that transition in consultation with the child's social worker
- Knowing who all the LAC are in school and ensuring that availability of all relevant details from school record-keeping systems as required.
- Attending relevant training about LAC and acting as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to LAC.
- Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how LAC should learn.
- Helping school staff understand the issues that affect the learning of LAC such as differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children and in making full use of AfL.
- Making sure that LAC are prioritised in one-to-one tuition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home.
- Removing the barriers to learning for LAC.
- Developing personalised learning packages for LAC in conjunction with the relevant teaching staff.
- Ensuring that the LAC in their school have a voice in setting learning targets for themselves.
- Championing for LAC.
- ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people, at least two weeks before the Care Plan reviews
- ensure that each 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. *Members of staff who take on this role may need to be supported by someone from the school's pastoral staff. They should also be alert to any child protection issues, any disclosures that pupils may make, and know what action to take. They should link closely therefore with the school's Designated Teacher for Child Protection*
- track progress and target support appropriately
- monitor attendance and involve other agencies if necessary
- co-ordinate any support for the Looked After Children that is necessary within school
- ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a 'need-to-know' basis
- ensure, as far as possible, attendance at planning and review meetings

- act as an advisor to staff and governors, raising their awareness of the needs of Looked After Children
- set up timely meetings with relevant parties where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion
- Liaise with the Virtual School in all aspects of the LAC progress and support.
- Communicate with the Virtual School to manage allocation of PP+ for the benefit of LAC.
- Manage PP+ for Previously Looked After Children to support educational attainment and personal development.
- ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and – if the pupil changes school – to a new school
- be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education
- promote inclusion in all areas of school life

All members of staff will:

- have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children, as for all pupils
- maintain Looked After Children's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively
- respond positively to a pupil's request to be the named member of staff whom they can talk to when they feel it is necessary
- respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information
- work to enable Looked After Children to achieve stability and success within school
- promote the self-esteem of all Looked After Children
- have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of Looked After Children
- Be aware of the appropriate permissions and who is able to agree to these for trips, etc
- Be aware of contact arrangements with birth parents or other family members – where appropriate

For more information please see:

[Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-and-previously-looked-after-children)
[Looked after children | NSPCC Learning](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/learning)

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The Board of Trustees will assess the implementation and effectiveness of this policy. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout all Trust schools.

This Policy will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees on a three-year cycle. Adherence to the policy will be monitored by the school's local committee.

Policy adopted:	Summer Term 2024
Name of Designated Teacher:	Karen Harrison
Other related policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversubscription criteria

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Behaviour and Relationships• Home-School Agreement• Anti-bullying Policy• Equalities Policy• Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy• Special Educational Needs Policy• Admissions Policy
Next Review:	Summer 2027