Policy for the Education of Children Looked After and Previously Looked-After Children 2026-2027
St. Michael in the Hamlet

1. Introduction and Purpose

At St Michael in the Hamlet Primary School, our commitment to children who are looked after and previously looked after is rooted in our SMITH values: **Safe, Motivational, Inclusive, Team and Happy**.

We are committed to providing high-quality education for all pupils and ensuring that children who are looked after and previously looked after receive the support, challenge and opportunities they need to achieve their full potential.

The school recognises that looked-after and previously looked-after children may experience barriers to educational achievement as a result of their individual circumstances. However, children must not be defined by their care status. The school will maintain high expectations for educational achievement, attendance, behaviour, personal development and future aspirations.

This policy sets out the school's arrangements for promoting the educational achievement, progress, wellbeing and inclusion of looked-after children (LAC) and previously looked-after children (PLAC).

The policy should be read alongside the school's safeguarding, SEND, attendance, behaviour, equality and pupil premium policies.

2. Definitions

Looked-After Child (LAC):

A looked-after child is a child who is in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by a local authority in acc3rdance with the Children Act 1989.

Previously Looked-After Child (PLAC):

A previously looked-after child is a child who was previously looked after by a local authority or was previously in state care outside England and Wales and subsequently became subject to an adoption order, special guardianship order or child arrangements order, in accordance with the relevant eligibility criteria.

The school recognises that the educational needs of LAC and PLAC are individual and that not every child will require the same support.

3. Our Aims

St Michael in the Hamlet Primary School will:

- have high expectations for the attainment, progress and wider achievement of LAC and PLAC;
- promote educational stability and minimise disruption to learning;
- ensure that pupils' individual strengths, interests, aspirations and needs are understood;
- ensure that the voice of the child is heard and informs educational planning;
- monitor attendance, attainment, progress, behaviour and wellbeing;
- identify and address barriers to learning at the earliest opportunity;
- provide appropriate academic, pastoral and enrichment opportunities;

- ensure that LAC and PLAC have access to appropriate SEND provision where required;
- use Pupil Premium Plus appropriately and in accordance with current DfE requirements;
- work effectively with parents, carers, social workers, Virtual School Heads, the local authority and other relevant professionals;
- support successful transitions and educational continuity;
- protect pupils' confidentiality and dignity;
- ensure that care status does not become a barrier to participation, achievement or aspiration.

4. The Designated Teacher

The school will have a named Designated Teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

The Designated Teacher will have lead responsibility for promoting the educational achievement and progress of LAC and PLAC and will act as a central point of contact within school.

The Designated Teacher will:

- promote a whole-school culture of high expectations for LAC and PLAC;
- ensure that the educational needs of individual children are understood;
- monitor attainment, progress and attendance;
- coordinate and monitor Personal Education Plans (PEPs) for LAC;
- ensure that the child's views and aspirations are reflected in educational planning;
- work closely with the Virtual School Head and relevant professionals;
- liaise with social workers, carers, parents and other professionals as appropriate;
- contribute to care planning and relevant meetings;
- work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead where safeguarding concerns arise;
- work closely with the SENDCo where a child has identified or suspected special educational needs;
- monitor the impact of interventions and support;
- ensure that Pupil Premium Plus is appropriately linked to identified educational need and PEP outcomes;
- support effective transitions and educational stability;
- provide advice and guidance to staff regarding the educational needs of LAC and PLAC;
- ensure that relevant staff understand their responsibilities towards LAC and PLAC;
- maintain appropriate records and confidentiality.

The school will ensure that the Designated Teacher has access to appropriate training, professional development, advice and support necessary to fulfil the role effectively.

5. Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

The PEP is an important part of the wider care planning process and provides a structured framework for identifying, monitoring and reviewing the child's educational needs and progress.

The Designated Teacher will have lead responsibility within school for the development, implementation and review of PEPs, working in partnership with the child, carer, social worker, Virtual School and other relevant professionals.

The PEP will:

- reflect the child's views, wishes and aspirations;
- identify the child's strengths and areas for development;
- record current attainment and progress;
- consider attendance and any barriers to regular attendance;
- identify educational, social, emotional or other barriers affecting learning;

- identify appropriate interventions and support;
- set clear and measurable educational targets;
- identify who is responsible for each action;
- establish timescales for review;
- identify the appropriate use of Pupil Premium Plus;
- consider enrichment, wider opportunities and aspirations;
- support successful transitions.

PEP targets should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound and should be reviewed regularly to establish their impact.

The child should be supported to contribute to their PEP in an age- and developmentally appropriate way. Their views should be taken seriously and reflected in decisions about their education.

The PEP should complement the child's wider care plan and should not unnecessarily duplicate information contained elsewhere in the child's care planning arrangements.

6. Understanding and Responding to Individual Need

The school recognises that looked-after and previously looked-after children are individuals whose educational experiences, strengths and needs will vary. Care experience should not be viewed in isolation, and staff should consider the range of factors that may interact to influence a child's educational experience, wellbeing and outcomes.

Where appropriate, the school will consider the interaction between a child's care status and factors including:

- special educational needs and/or disabilities;
- attendance and educational engagement;
- attainment, progress and gaps in learning;
- emotional wellbeing and mental health;
- social, emotional and behavioural needs;
- relationships and experiences of loss, separation or trauma;
- disadvantage and barriers to participation;
- safeguarding and vulnerability;
- communication and language needs;
- physical or medical needs;
- transitions and changes in circumstances;
- identity, relationships and the child's wider experiences.

The school will avoid making assumptions about a child based on their status as looked after or previously looked after. Instead, staff will seek to understand the individual child, identify any barriers affecting their education or wellbeing, and respond through appropriate support and intervention.

Where several factors are present, the school will consider how these may interact and whether a coordinated approach is required. The Designated Teacher will work with relevant colleagues, including the SENDCo, Designated Safeguarding Lead, pastoral staff and other professionals where appropriate, to ensure that the child's needs are understood holistically.

The child's views, wishes, strengths and aspirations should inform decisions about the support provided. Support will be proportionate to identified need and reviewed regularly to consider its effectiveness and impact.

The school will maintain high expectations for all looked-after and previously looked-after children while recognising that some children may require additional or different support to access learning, participate fully in school life and achieve their potential.

7. Roles and Responsibilities of All Staff

All staff will:

- have high expectations of LAC and PLAC;
- understand the importance of educational achievement and progress;
- recognise individual strengths and needs;
- understand that care experience does not define a child;
- maintain appropriate confidentiality;
- promote positive relationships and inclusion;
- monitor attendance and engagement;
- identify concerns and barriers to learning;
- provide appropriate support within their role;
- contribute to PEP targets and reviews where required;
- understand the role of the Designated Teacher;
- know how to raise concerns regarding a LAC or PLAC;
- understand the relationship between the PEP, wider care planning and educational provision;
- work collaboratively with carers, parents and relevant professionals.

8. Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- ensure that the school has a named Designated Teacher for LAC and PLAC;
- appoint an appropriate Designated Governor for LAC and PLAC;
- ensure governors understand their responsibilities towards LAC and PLAC;
- monitor the educational progress and outcomes of LAC and PLAC;
- ensure that the Designated Teacher is appropriately supported and trained;
- monitor the quality and effectiveness of PEP arrangements;
- monitor the appropriate use and impact of Pupil Premium Plus;
- ensure that the school promotes high expectations for LAC and PLAC;
- ensure that the school complies with relevant statutory duties and guidance;
- receive appropriate information about the number and educational outcomes of LAC and PLAC without unnecessarily identifying individual children;
- support the Headteacher and Designated Teacher in fulfilling their responsibilities.

The Governing Body will maintain appropriate confidentiality when receiving information relating to individual children.

9. Partnership Working

Effective support for LAC and PLAC requires partnership working.

The school will work collaboratively, as appropriate, with:

- children and young people;
- parents and carers;
- social workers;
- Virtual School Heads and Virtual School teams;
- Independent Reviewing Officers;

- SEND professionals;
- health professionals;
- educational psychologists;
- other relevant agencies and professionals.

The school will seek to ensure that information is shared appropriately and that educational planning contributes effectively to the child's wider care and development.

10. Monitoring and Review

The Designated Teacher will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy and will provide appropriate information to the Headteacher and Governing Body.

Monitoring will include, where appropriate:

- attainment and progress;
- attendance;
- PEP completion and quality;
- progress against PEP targets;
- impact of interventions;
- use and impact of PP+;
- participation and enrichment;
- suspensions and exclusions;
- transition arrangements;
- identified barriers to educational achievement.

The policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance or local authority arrangements.

Policy Lead: Designated Teacher for LAC and PLAC (Sam Bannon)
Governor Lead: Designated Governor for LAC and PLAC
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