

The Federation of the Church Schools of Shalfleet and Yarmouth

Achieving Together for a Brighter Future



LOOKED AFTER and PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN A STATEMENT OF POLICY

Approved by	CW
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Signed _____ Date _____

LOOKED AFTER AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

Designated Teacher: Mrs Georgina Westhorpe

The role of schools and of designated teachers is central to significantly improving the quality of life and the educational achievements of looked after children and previously looked after children.

To understand about care and the impact upon education is critical if multi-agency working and corporate parenting are to be effective.

The role requires training and it is essential that the designated teacher should be given the appropriate level of support in order to fulfil their role. The designated teacher must have or will, through their training and development, have the opportunity to acquire and keep up-to-date the necessary skills, knowledge and training to understand and respond to the specific teaching and learning needs of looked after children. This means in particular that the designated teacher understands and helps others to understand:

- the emotional, psychological and social implications of separation from birth families and the reasons for that separation
- that looked after children are not a homogenous group, but are individuals with many of the same needs as any other child
- the broad framework of the care system and the way it impacts on the child's education
- the reasons why many looked after children and previously looked after children under-achieve such as the possible impact of loss and attachment and how the role of the designated teacher, in promoting high expectations of educational progress, can make a difference to a looked after child's achievement; and
- their own role in contributing to the statutory review of the looked after child's personal education plan which forms an integral part of the child's overall care plan.

The role in practice

The designated teacher will:

- know who all the LAC and previous LAC are in their school, keep an up to date list and act as an advocate for them
- will be responsible for ensuring a comprehensive and welcoming induction for the child and carer, and note any specific requirements, including care status.

The role is manifold and has responsibilities which can be broadly set out under the following categories:

The personal education plan (PEP)

In partnership with the lead person in the local authority (in some cases the social worker, in others it will be another appropriate professional) the designated teacher will be responsible for the development and implementation of the PEP and its review. They should make sure that the document addresses:

- short and long term goals agreed in partnership with the child and carers about helping him or her achieve his potential;
- planned actions, e.g. on homework, extra tuition, study support, including by when, that the school and others will take to promote the educational achievement of the child based on an assessment of his or her educational needs;
- how the progress of the child is to be monitored.
- what other discussions are needed if planning reveals further support is required – e.g. possible action to support special educational needs involving the Inclusion Team, educational psychologist or CAMHS or local authority education services;
- what action may be needed to support the child's long term targets and aspirations, for example, in relation to goals for the next Key Stage, success in public examinations consideration of further and higher education, work experience and career plans;

- the achievements of the child both academically and in taking part in the wider activities of the school and in other out of school learning activities (e.g. sporting, personal development, community).

The designated teacher will:

Ensure the school's contribution to the development of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) as soon as possible (within 20 days of entering care or joining a new school). It is the school's responsibility to deliver support, and an appropriate curriculum in order that the child can work towards achieving their educational targets.

- ensure that educational targets in the PEP are SMART and linked to identified needs
- send a copy of the needs and targets (plus other information where appropriate) from the PEP to relevant colleagues in school
- keep PEPs and other records up to date, particularly in time to inform review meetings
- ensure school support systems are in place where they have been agreed in the PEP and that referrals are made to any education agencies that can provide agreed additional support

Relationship with carers

The designated teacher will:

- ensure that the child and carer(s) receive early notification of school meetings, parents' evenings and other events and that communication remains regular and positive. The Home-School Agreement may be adapted to take into account any specific points around communication, transport arrangements and consent signatures
- liaise over the educational progress of the child and advise how school work can be supported at home
- understand that some carers do not always feel confident to approach schools and so enable the home/school relationship to be effective by making themselves and their role known to the carer.

Multi-agency working

The designated teacher will:

- provide written information to assist planning / review meetings / statutory reviews and ensure representation as far as possible
- ensure carers/social workers are aware of out of hours learning so that travel arrangements can be made
- liaise with the social worker over arrangements for the PEP and who will explain to the LAC what the purpose of a PEP is.

In school liaison

The designated teacher will:

- ensure staff receive relevant information and training
- act as an adviser to staff and governors
- ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis
- ensure that each child in public care has an identified member of staff that they can talk to (this should be based on the child's wishes and may not necessarily be the designated teacher)
- co-ordinate support for the child in the school and liaise with other professionals e.g. if designated teacher feels it is more appropriate for another member of staff to attend the PEP meeting e.g. class teacher, they will need to ensure they are properly briefed about their part in the meeting.
- ensure speedy transfer of information between individuals and other relevant agencies and to a new school if and when the child transfer
- ensure there is a school policy on LAC and that LAC issues are incorporated in to wider school policies (e.g. bullying)

Pupil awareness of the designated teacher

The designated teacher will:

- encourage LAC to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning by making them aware of all that is available
- ensure LAC know what the role of the DT is and know who to go to with any concerns, issues or celebratory news

Class teacher – role and responsibilities

- Must know which children are looked after and previously looked after.
- Must liaise with the foster carer/social worker as appropriate; for example, to alert carers to possible causes of concern.
- Must liaise with the designated teacher.
- Must have appropriate input to looked after children reviews.
- Must monitor the appropriateness of teaching materials.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Federation's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education (September update 2020) and Working Together to Safeguard Children