



**SPECIALIST SCHOOLS TRUST (SST)
“THE TRUST”**

Title: Children Looked After Policy

**Lead Reviewer: Designated Teachers and
Safeguarding Committee**

Who this is aimed at: All Schools in the Trust

Version	Reason for Change
V1	New Trust Policy adopted from individual school policies

Date Initially Implemented	May 2023
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Policy Statement

Rationale

In all aspects of educating Children Looked After (CLA), the SSET schools follow statutory guidance of the Children Act 1989, amended by the Children and Families Act 2014; and the Children and Social Work Act 2017, DFE - DLA 2018 (see appendix for other relevant legislation.)

Looked After is a term that refers to children for whom the Local Authority is sharing parental responsibility. The child may be living with foster carers, in a residential unit or with family members. The Trust recognises that Children Looked After may have very specific needs and may need differentiated support at different times in terms of emotional, behavioural and educational need. The Trust schools work closely with pupils, families, carers, social services and other outside agencies to ensure that every Looked After child has the appropriate support and the opportunity to achieve their personal best.

Objectives

- To have designated members of staff who are responsible for the co-ordination and liaison of Children Looked After (CLA).
- To have a governor responsible for CLA.

These are as follows:

	Great Oaks School	Rosewood School
Staff	Ilda Ourique (designated teacher), supported by Geraldine Lindsay (Head of School) and Grace Kent (Assistant headteacher for Safeguarding)	Sarah Clarke (designated teacher)
Governor	Sue Williams	Corrina Burner

- Report to governors annually on attendance, attainment and exclusions of each Looked After Child.

- Report to the Virtual School on attendance (weekly) and attainment through PEPs (SCC/HCC) termly to the LA data team (HCC) for each looked after pupil.
- Ensure staff awareness of, and sensitivity to, the difficulties and disadvantages of Children looked after.
- Maintain and respect the child's confidentiality wherever possible.
- Ensure equal access to a balanced and broadly based education.
- Provide support in order to maximise attendance and minimise exclusion.
- Promote good communication between all those involved in the child's life.
- Liaise closely with the relevant Virtual School for Children Looked After, social services and other outside agencies as appropriate for each child.

Implementation

All children looked after will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) drawn up between the school, the child and the child's social worker which will identify the child's individual needs and the support they require. This is written and reviewed three times a year.

A report on attendance, achievement and exclusions will be included in the school's annual assessment and attainment package.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The policy will be evaluated yearly and in line with local or national changes in looked after policies/guidelines.

Appendix 1

'CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER' - POLICY RESPONSIBILITIES

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HEADTEACHER

- Identify a Designated Teacher for Children Looked After, 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 Children Looked After and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of Children Looked After. OFSTED now select a number of Children Looked After, 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.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNING BODY

- Identify a nominated Governor for Children Looked After.
- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Children Looked After.
- Ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Children Looked After.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of Children Looked After.
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.
- Monitor the academic progress of Children Looked After, through an annual report (see below).
- Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school, by ensuring the school implements policies and procedures to ensure Children Looked After achieve and enjoy their time at the school, by recognising the extra problems caused by excluding them and by not excluding them except 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.

- Support the Headteacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of Children Looked After are recognised and met.
- Receive a report once a year setting out:
 1. The number of looked-after pupils on the school's roll (if any).
 2. Their attendance, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
 3. Their KS3 and KS4 accreditation/examination results, and other qualifications achieved, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
 4. The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any).
 5. The destinations of pupils who leave the school.
 6. 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 ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

Government Guidance says that the Designated Teacher should be “someone with sufficient authority to make things happen...[who] should be an advocate for Children Looked After, assessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them.”

Governors should be aware that all schools are already required to have a designated teacher for CLA. It is strongly recommended that this person should be a member of the Senior Management Team. Governors should also be aware that OFSTED will focus on Children Looked After, monitoring how the School has promoted their inclusion and attainment and the effectiveness of joint working with other services involved with them.

Our Designated Teachers 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
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed with the child, the social worker, parents/carers and any other relevant people, at least two weeks before the Care Plan reviews. PEPs are reviewed 3 times per year.

- 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.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately.
- Co-ordinate any support for the Children Looked After that is necessary within school.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
- Encourage Children Looked After to join in extra-curricular activities and out of school learning.
- 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 Children Looked After.
- Set up timely meetings with relevant parties where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion.
- 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.
- Be aware that 60% of Children Looked After say they are bullied, so will actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF

All our staff will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Children Looked After, as for all pupils.
- Maintain confidentiality and ensure that 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 Children Looked After to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all Children Looked After.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of Children Looked After.
- Be aware that 60% of Children Looked After say they are bullied so work to prevent bullying in line with the School's policy.

DFE ADVICE –

- The Children Act 1989;
- Quality Protects Department of Health 1998;
- Care Standards Act 2002; Social Exclusion Unit:
- A Better Education for Children in care 2003;
- Green Paper; Every Child Matters 2003;
- The Children Act 2004 section 52;
- The Children and Young Persons Act 2008:
- The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009;
- The Care Planning, Placements and Case Review (2010);
- Children and Social Work Act 2017; DFE- DLA 2018;
- DFE Promoting the Education of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children 2018.