

Child Looked After (CLA) Policy



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1. Our Aims for CLA:

- to provide a safe and secure environment where education is always central to the planning and all adults understand the specific needs of CLA and Post CLA
- to narrow the gap between the attainment of CLA and Post-CLA and their peers, ensuring accelerated and rapid progress
- that they benefit from school-based interventions, including 'Making Good Progress 121 Tuition', even if they do not meet the criteria for that and to use the allocated Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) to ensure effective impact
- for all CLA to have a minimum of three Personal Education Planning (ePEP) meetings in an academic year and for the joint planning to actively impact on each child's learning on a daily basis, to ensure accelerated and rapid progress
- for all adults to provide discreet, sensitive, child-led support, with one key adult identified who will form a strong relationship and take a special interest in daily life at school
 - that school systems facilitate discrete support, as appropriate
- CLA will be advantaged within school policies and procedures, with their needs explicitly considered and provided for
 - CLA and their foster families will feel part of the school community; they will be actively welcomed into the community in recognition of the particular needs of this group

2 Rationale

The Duston School is a 4-19 mixed, all-through School.

The Duston School aims to help raise the educational standards and improve the life chances of looked after children. The school tackles the causes of social exclusion through careful planning, monitoring and evaluation. School can also provide a source of continuity and "normality" for children who may have been subject to emotional distress, abuse, and disruption. School can be the place where children maintain friendships and a place where they feel safe and can be themselves.

3 Who are Looked After Children?

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They fall into four main groups:

- children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
- children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21).

The term 'in care' refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 - they may live with foster carers, in a Children's home, in a residential school, with relatives or with parents under supervision. Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are 'accommodated' by the local authority under section 20 of the Children Act – they may live in foster care, in a Children's home or in a residential school. All these groups are said to be 'Looked After Children' -LAC. They may be looked after by our local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

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.

A Previously Looked-After Child (PLAC) is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales.

4. Legislation and statutory guidance

[Working Together to Safeguard children July 2018](#)

[The designated teacher for looked- after and previously looked-after children February 2018](#)

[Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children February 2018](#)

5. Definitions

LAC Looked after Children

PLAC Previously Looked after children

6. Roles and responsibilities

The Designated Teacher appointed to promote the educational achievement of looked-after children and previously looked after children is Mr T Wise. (Key stage pastoral teams will act on his behalf where necessary).

The Principal and Governing Body are committed to promoting improved educational life chances for CLA and Post-CLA. They will ensure that the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After has qualified teacher status, appropriate seniority in the leadership team and time and experience to fulfil this statutory role. They will monitor the role of the Designated Teacher to ensure that all CLA and Post-CLA make accelerated and rapid progress and that the whole school staff receives appropriate training.

5.2 The designated teacher will:

- ensure information is shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis
- ensure that all staff, through appropriate training, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantages faced by children looked after and understand the need for positive systems to support them, whilst maintaining appropriately high expectations for their educational achievements
- act as an advocate for children looked after in order to allow them equal access to educational opportunities and support with important decisions affecting future life chances
- have an overview of Post Looked After Children

The **designated teacher** will set up systems to monitor and record the progress of all children looked after. S/he will:

- have an overview and co-ordinating role for gathering and holding all information regarding children who are looked after
- maintain records regarding all children looked after, including legal status and information regarding who should be contacted regarding matters concerning the child
- establish a system for contacting and forwarding educational records to new schools to facilitate a smooth and speedy transfer
- monitor the educational progress of all children looked after and intervene, in co-operation with other agencies if required. If there is evidence of underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy, or other similar concern

The **designated teacher** will facilitate effective communication by:

- building positive home-school relationships between parents / carers with regular opportunities for dialogue
- being proactive and participating in setting goals for the child's PEP
- playing an active role in care planning by ensuring that the attendance of the most appropriate member of staff and/or written reports are provided to all statutory reviews of children looked after
- helping co-ordinate education and PEP meetings
- serving as the named contact for colleagues in social services and education
- ensuring effective communication between all relevant parties

inviting the responsible social worker to all meetings, and liaising with this social worker regarding the development of Personal Education Plans (PEP).

The **designated teacher** will monitor each child's achievement and ensure that they have the support they require within school:

- by meeting with the child looked after to discuss who needs to know they are looked after and to ensure that the young person is informed of their role
- by ensuring each child has a named member of staff who can provide advice and/or practical help on academic or pastoral issues (this maybe the class teacher in the primary phase)
- by ensuring each child has a Personal Education Plan
- by requesting support from the SENDCO and/or outside agencies, including the Education of Children Looked After Service, if a looked after child requires additional academic or behavioural support
- by working closely with the SENDCO to ensure all children looked after with special educational needs are being assessed and are getting appropriate resources to support their learning
- by having a strategy for key stage or new school transitions
- by encouraging all children to continue on to further or higher education
- by ensuring all children looked after are made to feel a part of the school environment

All staff will promote improved educational life chances for CLA and Post-CLA by:

- reading the school policy for CLA
- attending training, as appropriate
- providing accurate information and data when asked by the Designated Teacher
- referring to the Designated Teacher for advice
- playing their part in creating a 'CLA-friendly' culture and securing rapid progress for CLA by ensuring that they benefit from any additional school-based support available

Personal Education Plans

Each looked after child will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP), which their social worker will take the lead in developing. However, the school's role in this plan is crucial and at least one member of staff who knows the child well will attend the meeting to establish and subsequently review this. Other staff will contribute in writing as appropriate.

The PEP is a record of the child's education and training and will consider:

- the child's strengths and weaknesses
- interests, both in and out of school
- developmental and educational and pastoral needs
- future plans, and how these can be supported
- issues arising for the child

It will also identify targets that will be reviewed during the next PEP meeting.

Admission/Induction Arrangements

Children looked after are a priority for admission and, as such, we will follow the LA's published admission criteria. A copy of the Admission's policy can be found at the following page for Primary Phase <https://www.thedustonschool.org/page/?title=Admissions&pid=61> and the following page for secondary phase <https://www.thedustonschool.org/page/?title=Admissions&pid=140>.

On admission, a secondary phase child will meet with the designated teacher and their named member of staff, a primary phase child may also require their parent/guardian present. They will discuss any relevant issues, academic or pastoral, and ensure the child is made to feel comfortable in our school. Records will be requested from the child's previous school and as soon as practicable after they are received a meeting will be held with the carer / parent, social worker, and other relevant professionals, and child as appropriate. This

will provide information to inform the child's new Personal Education Plan, and ensure that communication systems are established early.

In the first PEP meeting, we will seek clarification from the social worker as to who requires school reports and who may give permission for school trips or other such activities. At this meeting any means of communication to aid the exchange of information between statutory meetings will be discussed and agreed (such as a home/school book to detail any sudden significant changes in a child's circumstances.)

School Trips and Special Activities

Given the delays that children looked after experience in getting parental consent for school trips and activities, we will aim to ensure that looked after children enjoy the same extra-curricular opportunities as other children by reserving placements for them on trips or on activities.

Complaints

If a young person, parent or social worker wishes to complain about the provision or policy, they should in the first instance raise it with the designated teacher, who will try to resolve the situation.

If the issue cannot be resolved within 10 days, the young person, carer or social worker can submit a formal complaint in writing to the Principal. The Principal will investigate the complaint and respond within 10 working days.

Any issue that remains unresolved at this stage should be addressed through a meeting in order to assess the impact of any such complaint upon the young person's education. This meeting may include the named Governor and any other outside agency that both parties deem necessary to attend. This meeting should normally be held within 10 working days of the Principal's response

7. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Admissions / Oversubscription criteria
- The school code of conduct
 - Behaviour Policy
 - Anti-bullying Policy
- Home-school agreement
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Racial Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy