L.E.A.D. Academy Trust
Lead • Empower • Achieve • Drive

L.E.A.D. ACADEMY TRUST

LAC/PLAC Policy

Policy/Procedure management log

Document name	LAC/PLAC Policy
Date approved	Trust approval June 2025
Date issued	**June 2025**
Date of review	**June 2028**

The Objective
To promote the educational achievement and welfare of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.

Designated teacher
Deborah Eccles

Governor with responsibility for Looked After / Previously Looked After Children
Louise Baxendale

Definition
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.

'Previously looked-after' children are those who are no longer looked after / previously looked after by a local authority in England and Wales (as defined by the Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014) because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order; or were adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales. 'State care' is care provided by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other organisation whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

Sir Edmund Hillary recognises that all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broad-based curriculum and aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in public care. The school and the governing body endorses Notts LA policy and welcomes looked after / previously looked after children who may be looked after or previously looked after by our local authority or those who may be in the care of another authority but living in Nottinghamshire.

This policy includes requirements set out in:

- The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children – Statutory guidance for school governing bodies.
  http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/01046-2009BKT-EN.PDF
- Improving the Educational Attainment of Children in Care (Looked after Children)
  http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-00523-2009.pdf

- Improving the attainment of looked after children in primary schools – Guidance for Schools http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/01047-2009.pdf
- Improving the attainment of looked after young people in secondary schools – Guidance for Schools http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/01048-2009.pdf

Sir Edmund Hillary's Academy's approach to encouraging and supporting the educational achievement of looked after / previously looked after children is based on the following principles:

- prioritising education set within an inclusive context which makes reasonable adjustments to ensure a personalised curriculum
- having high expectations for the child and ensuring equal access to a balanced and broadly based education.
- listening to the child
- working closely with home, voluntary and statutory agencies
- promoting attendance, through a programme of early intervention, priority action, reducing exclusions and promoting stability and continuity within a positive learning environment
- identifying need, including social and emotional as well as learning needs or gifted and talented skills and abilities
- targeting support, including accessing resources from other agencies as well as provision from school resources
- maintaining and respecting the child's confidentiality wherever possible.
- ensuring staff awareness of, and sensitivity to, the difficulties and educational disadvantages of Looked after / previously looked after children.
- ensuring an appropriately trained Designated Teacher is appointed, who will be responsible for all looked after / previously looked after children
- All looked after children 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

Rationale

Many children and young people who are in care have suffered abuse or neglect. Despite having as broad a range of abilities as their peers, looked after / previously looked after children are particularly vulnerable to underachievement. Barriers to their progress include a high level of disruption and change in school placements, lack of motivation or involvement in extra-curricular activities.

Sir Edmund Hillary Academy believes that the educational experience of all children should be positive and powerful and aims to provide a learning environment in which every looked after / previously looked after child can be successful. We believe that this school has a major part to play in ensuring that looked after / previously looked after children are able to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being.

Admission arrangements

We recognise that due to care arrangements looked after children may enter school mid-term and that it is important that they are given a positive welcome and where appropriate additional support and pre-entry visits to help them settle.

The school recognises that looked after children are an 'excepted group' and will prioritise looked after children in the school's oversubscription criteria following the DFE Admissions Code (Admissions of Looked after Children (England) Regulations 2006)

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body will ensure that the school allocates resources, including professional time and expertise, to support appropriate provision for looked after / previously looked after children, meeting the objectives set out in this policy.

- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of looked after / previously looked after children.
- Ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of looked after/previously looked after children.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of looked after/previously looked after children.
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.
- 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 looked after/previously looked after children are recognised and met.
- Receive a report once a year setting out:
    - The number of 'looked after / previously looked after children' on the school's roll (if any).
    - Their attendance, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils.
    - Their teacher assessment, as a discreet group, 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.

Role and Responsibilities of 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 who is likely to gain QTS by September 2014. 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 duties of the Designated Teacher will include

- ensuring that looked after/previously looked after children are welcomed into the school, necessary meetings are held and arrangements are put in place to ensure their needs identified and met. This may include providing basic equipment and resources if necessary and providing appropriate support in meeting uniform requirements if needed
- maintaining an up-to-date record of the looked after/previously looked after children in school, including those in the care of other authorities and ensuring all necessary information is passed to other staff as required
- monitoring and tracking progress of looked after/previously looked after children in school and intervening if there is evidence of individual underachievement

- holding a supervisory brief for all children being looked after/previously looked after and acting as advocate for the looked after/previously looked after children in school
- liaising with teaching and non-teaching staff in school, including the person responsible for safeguarding as well as pastoral and subject staff to ensure they are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage looked after and previously looked after children may face
- establishing and maintaining regular contact with home, statutory and voluntary agencies
- ensuring PEP review meetings are held regularly and information passed to all those concerned, including the local authority
- attending training as required to keep fully informed of latest developments and policies regarding looked after / previously looked after children

Roles and Responsibilities of Staff
All school staff will:

- Positively promote the raising of a looked after/previously looked after child's self-esteem.
- Have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of looked after/previously looked after children.
- Keep the Designated Teacher informed about looked after/previously looked after child's progress.
- Ensure any looked after/previously looked after children are supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained.
- Follow school procedures.
- Be familiar with the school's policy and guidance on looked after/previously looked after children and respond appropriately to requests for information to support PEPs and review meetings.
- Liaise with the Designated Teachers where a looked after or previously looked after child is experiencing difficulties
- Contribute to regular liaison with social care colleagues and other appropriate professionals and keep carers fully informed at all times
- Keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to the Designated Teacher, and professionals/ parents/carers/pupil as appropriate.
- Make extra copies of reports available when required.

Record keeping and information sharing
The Designated Teacher will keep an up-to-date record of looked after/previously looked after children in school and will ensure that relevant information is made known to appropriate staff.

A Personal Education Plan (PEP) will be initiated by Social Care within 20 school days of the child starting at the school or being taken into care.

The school's Designated Teacher is responsible for organising regular reviews of the PEP to meet the needs of the looked after / previously looked after children. The PEP will provide a regular opportunity to review progress, note any concerns and ensure all relevant parties are informed accordingly.

Copies of reports and appropriate documentation will be sent to authorised carers and agencies involved with the child as well as any receiving school at point of transition.

It is vital that the child in care is aware of information being recorded, in what circumstances and who will have access to it. How this is shared with them will depend on their age and level of understanding.

Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions
Sir Edmund Hillary Academy recognises that looked after/previously looked after children are particularly vulnerable to suspension and permanent exclusion.
Where a looked after child, in particular, is at risk of suspension; the school will try every practicable means to maintain the child in school. A multi-professional meeting will be arranged, bringing together all those involved with the young person to discuss strategies to minimise the risk of suspension and or permanent exclusion.
The child or young person's Personal Education Plan will reflect strategies to support the child and where relevant those employed in the Pastoral Support Plan.
All relevant measures and resources will be considered to provide support and perhaps alternative educational packages to prevent an exclusion from happening.

Staff development and training
Arrangements will be made to ensure that the Designated Teacher is kept up to date with developments relating to the education and attainment of looked after/previously looked after children.

Other staff will receive relevant training and support to enable them to work sympathetically and productively with looked after/previously looked after children, including those who are underachieving or at risk of underachieving or who have additional needs. These may include EAL, being 'gifted and talented' or having learning or physical needs.

Teachers with responsibility for Special Educational Needs provision will be informed of those looked after/ previously looked after children who have particular gifts, talents or learning needs and will work with them appropriately.

Home-school liaison
The school recognises the value of a close working relationship between home and school and will work towards developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable looked after/previously looked after children to achieve their potential.

Consultation evenings as well as PEP and Care Plan review meetings provide opportunities to continue to develop this partnership working.

Links with other agencies
The school recognises the value of working together with other agencies and organisations and will work closely with colleagues from services involved with the looked after/previously looked after children including Social Care teams; Community Educational Psychologist; Health services, CAMHS; Youth Offending Teams.

This policy links with a number of other school policies and it is important that Governors have regard to the needs of Looked After Children when reviewing them:
- Oversubscription criteria
- Code of conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Home-school agreement

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy

The school 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.

Date to be reviewed: every three years