



Timbercroft Primary School

Looked-after Children and Previously LAC Policy

**Our policy is based on the DfE statutory guidance:
The Designated Teacher for Looked-after and Previously Looked-after Children and
Previously LAC
Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities
DfE February 2018**

At Timbercroft we recognise the vulnerability of our pupil population, particularly our Looked-after Children and Previously LAC. Nationally, Looked-after Children (LAC) and Previously Looked-after Children (PLAC) significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that Looked-after Children and Previously LAC are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being.

Previously Looked-after Children and Previously LAC

Following amendments made by the 2017 Act, section 20A of the 2008 Act and Section 2E of the Academies Act 2010 place duties on the governing body of a maintained school in England and the proprietor of an academy in England to:

- designate a member of staff to have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of previously looked-after pupils who are no longer Looked-after in England and Wales because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order, or were adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales;
- ensure the designated person undertakes appropriate training; and
- the governing body and the designated teacher must have regard to this guidance and any other relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State..

The Designated Teacher (Looked-After Pupils etc) (England) Regulations 2009 require that the designated person is:

- a qualified teacher who has completed the appropriate induction period (if required) and is working as a teacher at the school (regulation 3(2)); or
- a head teacher or acting head teacher of the school (regulation 3(3)).

Helping Looked-after Children and Previously LAC succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority for Greenwich Council and Timbercroft. This policy takes account of:

- the Council's duty under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 to promote the educational achievement of Looked-after Children and Previously LAC (LAC); and the Children and Families bill including statutory guidance to LA's to support the education of Looked-after Children and Previously LAC 2014
- the Education (Admission of Looked-after Children and Previously LAC) (England) Regulations 2006 ;
- relevant DfES guidance to Governing Bodies (*Supporting Looked-after Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors*).

The Timbercroft approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked-after Children and Previously LAC is based on the following principles:

- prioritising education;
- promoting attendance;
- targeting support;

- having high expectations;
- promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes;
- achieving stability and continuity;
- early intervention and priority action;
- listening to children;
- promoting health and wellbeing;
- reducing exclusions and promoting stability;
- working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals;
- ensuring information pathways for carers are clear;
- supporting the resourcing of appropriate equipment and providing necessary training

Implications

As for all our pupils, Timbercroft is committed to helping every Looked-after Child and Previously LAC to achieve the highest standards they can. This can in part be measured by improvement in their achievements and attendance.

The Governing Body of Timbercroft is committed to providing quality education for all pupils and will:

- ensure a Teacher is designated for each individual Looked-after Child and is enabled to carry out the responsibilities set out below in conjunction with the Headteacher;
- ensure a Personal Education Plan is put in place, implemented and regularly reviewed for every Looked-after Child, in line with Local authority's guidance on Personal Education Plans;
- identify a governor as Designated Governor for Looked-after Children and Previously LAC (included within Child Protection responsibility)
- ensure they monitor the following, which could be included in a report from the designated teacher:
 - The use of the Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) funding
 - The level of progress of LAC and previously LAC

It is not a requirement for the designated teacher for Looked-after and previously LAC children to prepare an annual report for governors.

However, governors should still hold the school to account for how the school promotes the educational attainment of LAC and previously LAC, through the designated teacher. It is good practice for the designated teacher to produce a regular report to enable governors to fulfil their monitoring role.

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 and Previously LAC when reviewing them:

- oversubscription criteria;
- the school Code of Conduct;
- behaviour and relationships policy;
- Home-School agreement;
- anti-bullying policy;
- Equal Opportunities policy;

- policy on racial harassment;
- child protection policy;
- Special Educational Needs policy.
- Staff induction policy

The school will champion the needs of Looked-after Children and Previously LAC and Previously LAC, raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them, in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible.

Responsibilities

The Headteacher's Responsibility:

- identify a Designated Teacher for Looked-after and Previously LAC, 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 Looked-after Children and Previously LAC and take action where progress, conduct or attendance are below expectations;
- report on the progress, attendance and conduct of Looked-after Children and Previously LAC and Previously LAC. OFSTED now select a number of LAC & PLAC, 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.

The Governing Body's Responsibility:

- identify a nominated governor for Looked-after Children and Previously LAC and Previously LAC;
- ensure that all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Looked-after Children and Previously LAC and Previously LAC;
- ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Looked-after Children and Previously LAC and Previously LAC;
- allocate resources to meet the needs of Looked-after Children and Previously LAC;
- ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.

Procedures

The Governing Body will:

- monitor the progress of Looked-after Children and Previously LAC, through an annual report;
- ensure that Looked-after Children and Previously LAC are given top priority when applying for places in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria;
- work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school, by ensuring the school implements policies and procedures to ensure Looked-after Children and Previously LAC achieve and enjoy their time at the school. The governing body will recognise the additional problems caused by exclusion and will use permanent exclusion only 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 Looked-after Children and Previously LAC 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. progress, 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.
 7. The pupil premium plus budget spend and the impact of the spend on supporting pupils to meet their individual targets

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 Looked-after Children and Previously LAC, 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 LAC and PLAC. It is strongly recommended that this person should be a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Governors should also be aware that OFSTED will focus on Looked-after Children and Previously LAC, monitoring how the School has promoted their inclusion and attainment and the effectiveness of joint working with other services involved with them.

The Designated Teacher 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, the foster carer and any other relevant people, at least two weeks before the Care Plan reviews;
- 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. *Members of staff who take on this role may need to be supported by someone from the school's pastoral staff. They should also be alert to any child protection issues, any disclosures that pupils may make, and know what action to take. They should link closely therefore with the school's Designated Teacher for Child Protection;*
- track progress and target support appropriately;
- monitor attendance and involve other agencies if necessary;
- co-ordinate any support for the Looked-after Children and Previously LAC that is necessary within school – including specialist Mental Health services
- ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a 'need-to-know' basis;
- ensure that staff receive the training, including attachment training that they need to be able to support Looked-after Children and Previously LAC and ensure they make progress in line with other pupils.
- 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 Looked-after Children and Previously LAC;

- 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;
- track academic progress and target support appropriately;
- promote inclusion in all areas of school life;
- be aware that 60% of Looked-after Children and Previously LAC say they are bullied, so will actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy.

All members of staff will:

- have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked-after Children and Previously LAC, as for all pupils;
- maintain Looked-after Children and Previously LAC's confidentiality and ensure 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 Looked-after Children and Previously LAC to achieve stability and success within school;
- promote the self-esteem of all Looked-after Children and Previously LAC;
- have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of Looked-after Children and Previously LAC;
- be aware that 60% of Looked-after Children and Previously LAC say they are bullied so work to prevent bullying in line with school policy.
- Ensure they identify signs of potential mental health issues and understand how specialist services (CAMHS , Ed Psych etc) can support the school in this area.