

Abingdon Primary School



Policy for the Education of Children Looked
After (CLA) and Children Previously Looked
After (Post-CLA).

Date: September 2024
Renewal: September 2025

Policy for the Education of Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After

Policy Objective:

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of Children Looked After (CLA) and Children Previously Looked After (Post-CLA) on the roll of this school.

Name of the Designated Teacher for CLA and Post CLA: Amanda Lamb (SENDCO)

Name of the Designated School Governor for CLA and Post CLA: Katie Warwick.

At Abingdon Primary School we will create an environment where children looked after (CLA) and children previously looked after (Post-CLA) have access to excellent educational provision and are prioritised for additional support through school-based interventions, in accordance with the 'DCSF Guidance for Children in Care, 09'*.

We recognise that our school plays a vital role in providing a stable base for CLA and in promoting their academic, social and emotional development. We promote staff training in their specific needs, so that all adults are sensitive to the barriers to learning that CLA experience and feel able to support the children discretely and confidentially, as needs arise.

Our school community aims to champion the needs of CLA to ensure they make rapid progress during their period in care.

Who is a 'Child Looked After'?

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

- (i) children who are accommodated by the local authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- (ii) children who are subject to a care order (section 32(1)) or interim care order (section 38)
- (iii) children who are the subject of emergency orders for the protection of the child (section 44)

The difference between being "accommodated" or on a care order?

Children are accommodated when:

- (i) there is no person who has parental responsibility for them
- (ii) the child is lost or abandoned
- (iii) the person who has been caring for them is prevented from providing them with suitable accommodation or care.

Children subject to a care order:

If the local authority believes that the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer "significant harm" if they remain with their birth family, the local authority can apply to the courts for a

care order to assume parental responsibility (Ref: The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children – statutory guidance for school governing bodies, Nov '09) *unaccompanied minors can also be accommodated under Section 20 or 17. Section 17 means they are not a CLA. It is important to note that children who are receiving respite care only, are not looked after. A child is allowed up to 120 nights of respite in any rolling 12-month period. If they exceed this limit they must become a full 'Child in Care'. This would usually apply to children with a disability.

The Statutory Document when planning for the Education of Children Looked After is the Personal Education Plan (ePEP). The school must ensure that every CLA on roll has a minimum of 3 Personal Education Planning meetings every year, as part of the statutory care planning framework, and in collaboration with the social worker, carer and other relevant professionals. The school Designated Teacher will be allocated a personal log-in to the Welfare Call system to carry out this task.

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 (DCSF Guidance for Children in Care, '09)
- that they benefit from school-based interventions, including 'Making Good Progress 121 Tuition', even if they do not meet the criteria for that intervention (DCSF Guidance for Children in Care, '09) 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 (DCSF Guidance for Children in Care, '09)
- 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 (DCSF Guidance for Children in Care, '09)
- 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 (DCSF Guidance for Children in Care, '09)

Educational Planning for Children Looked After

Personal Education Plans (PEP):

The school will ensure that every CLA on roll has a Personal Education Planning (ePEP) meeting that is reviewed termly, within the statutory care planning framework, and in collaboration with the social worker, carer and other relevant professionals. The school will

inform the appropriate Virtual School of the school's policy and practice, to account for the efficient and effective spend of the PP+ funding and to inform the school Governing Body as the annual report.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Headteacher 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.

The Designated Teacher for Children Looked After is Amanda Lamb. She is a qualified teacher, and will promote improved educational life chances for CLA and Post-CLA by:

- ensuring that the CLA or Post-CLA has access to quality first teaching
- tracking the progress of CLA and Post-CLA across the curriculum using data, teacher reports and book looks
- ensuring that the PP+ is used effectively and efficiently
- performing a coordinating role with school staff and outside agencies
- ensuring effective communication with the school's assigned Education Adviser from the Virtual School
- developing expertise in the field of CLA
- providing and attending training and offering advice to the whole school staff
- promoting a school culture which is supportive and has high expectations for CLA and Post-CLA
- regularly reporting to the Head and Governing Body on the attainment of CLA and Post-CLA and school resource and staff training needs for working with this group
- prioritising CLA for school-based additional support, even when the young person does not meet the criteria (DCSF Guidance for Children in Care, Nov '09)
- ensuring that CLA and Post CLA are not overlooked for positions of student responsibility within the school because of their care status
- completing the annual Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) of each CLA as requested, to inform the annual health review.

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

- reading the 'school policy' and 'school policy guidance document' 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

Attendance:

School attendance procedures reflect the specific needs of CLA and Post-CLA to ensure good school attendance. Where there is a concern about attendance or punctuality the school contacts the carer, social worker and other professionals including the Virtual School, as an early intervention, as outlined in the attendance policy.

Admissions/ Transitions:

School procedures to support CLA during admission and transition include:

- prioritising CLA and Post-CLA at the point of admission
- the swift transfer of information between schools that may include school visits and at times of transition, teaching at the previous school
- early identification of staff mentor and peer buddy
- additional support and planning for CLA and Post-CLA at times of transition
- structured activities to 'say goodbye', in recognition of the impact of broken attachments and loss.

Additional Educational Needs:

All Staff endeavour to secure accelerated and rapid progress for CLA and Post-CLA with additional educational needs by:

- having high expectations
- ensuring that they are prioritised for additional school-based support, even if they do not meet the criteria (in line with the DCSF Guidance for Children in Care, Nov '09)
- ensuring that planning is coordinated, appropriate interventions identified and teaching to the plan is systematic; ensuring that any work undertaken by nonteaching staff has teacher over-sight (in line with the Lamb Report, Dec '09)
- ensuring that progress is regularly monitored and reviewed, against the expectation of progress each academic year, as agreed in the termly Virtual School visit, ePEP

Special Educational Needs:

All Staff endeavour to secure accelerated and rapid progress for CLA who have special educational needs by:

- having high expectation of minimum levels of progress each academic year (in line with the expectation set out in the ePEP)
- ensuring that they are accessing school-based targeted support which is 'additional to and different from' the universal and additional needs provision (in line with the SEN Code of Practice)
- ensuring that all plans are coordinated, appropriate interventions identified, and teaching to the plan is systematic
- ensuring that progress is regularly monitored and reviewed, in line with the SEN Code of Practice
- ensuring that any work undertaken by non-teaching staff has teacher over-sight

Safeguarding:

School staff will be vigilant for any safeguarding issues which can impact particularly on CLA by:

- familiarising themselves with the 'School Policy Guidance for Children in Care'
- following the school's child protection policy and the 'DfE: Keeping Children Safe in Education' (All staff) September 2016, if there are any safeguarding concerns.

Alternative Provision:

We will make every effort to ensure that any arrangements for provision alternative to daily attendance at school will be:

- a plan that will retain the CLA on the roll of the school or clarify in writing which educational establishment will be responsible for essential reporting and accountable for the PP+
- an agreed part of the overall ePEP for the student
- full time (25 hours) or contribute to full time attendance and be of high quality
- meet the educational needs of the CLA or Post-CLA
- will provide the opportunity to make rapid progress in the course of study provided by the setting
- will be monitored regularly and that ePEPs will include the school and the alternative Provider

Exclusion:

We will make every effort to avoid excluding a CLA, in recognition of the increased risk this poses in terms of them quickly disengaging from the school, due to their early experience of broken attachments and loss. Before acting, we will discuss the rationale for exclusion with the assigned Education Adviser from the Virtual School. If there is no option other than exclusion, then we will make every attempt to reduce the number of days of the exclusion. School procedures are in place to reduce the risk of exclusion of CLA and Post CLA.

Multi-Agency Working:

School staff will make every effort to engage with colleagues from other agencies and facilitate their work. This will enable colleagues to successfully perform their roles and positively impact on the education and wider needs of CLA and Post-CLA.

The Headteacher, Designated Teacher and Governing Body will ensure that all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

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