

Looked After Children Policy

The person responsible for this policy is: Clair Howe

This Policy was reviewed in Spring 2024

Next review date: Spring 2026

Introduction

Who are our Looked After Children?

Children and young people become 'Looked After' either if they have been taken into care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most LAC will be living in foster homes but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even be placed back at home with their natural parent(s).

The governing body of Willow Nursery School is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. This governing body recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of Looked After Children, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the guidance 'DfE, The designated teacher for looked after and previously looked-after children, statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities' (Feb 2018). The Children Act places a duty to safeguard looked after children, to promote their educational achievements and to ensure that they are able to "achieve to and reach their full potential".

The guidance suggests that schools must:

- Have Designated teachers nominated in every school
- To ensure Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are in place for all Looked After Children.

This governing body is committed to ensuring that Designated Teachers and staff are enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

The current designated teacher is **Clair Howe**.

The Designated Teacher should:

- be an advocate for Looked After Children;
- ensure a smooth and welcoming induction for the child and carer/s (and parent/s where possible). Note any specific requirements, including care status;
- ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed (within 20 days of entering care or joining a new school). This should be prepared with the carer/s (and parent/s if possible), in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies. Where appropriate, the PEP should take account of any Individual Educational Plan (IEP), Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP), or any other relevant plans. The PEP should inform, and be reviewed termly.
- ensure that each Looked After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to
- co-ordinate support for the child in the school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary;
- ensure staff and governors receive relevant information and training
- ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis;
- provide written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible;
- seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF

- as with all children, have high aspirations and celebrate the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children;
- Respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings;
- liaise with the Designated Teacher where a Looked After Child is experiencing difficulty;

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNING BODY

The governing body of this school will:

- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher to receive regular progress reports. The designated governor should provide feedback to the governing body.
- ensure that admission criteria prioritise LAC.
- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Looked After Children;
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Looked After Children;
- for safeguarding and confidentiality reasons, ensure that information will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity, and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.
- review the effective implementation of this policy bi-annually.

TRAINING

The Head Teacher and Designated Teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on current regulations and practice.