



ST. MARY'S CE
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Early Years LAC Policy

Last updated: 13 July 2020

Contents:

Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Definitions
3. Roles and responsibilities
4. Personal education plan (PEP)
5. Working with agencies and the VSH
6. Transition
7. Training
8. Supporting mental health
9. Exclusions
10. Children with SEND
11. Information sharing
12. Monitoring and review

Statement of intent

Educational achievement and subsequent life chances for LAC and previously-LAC are of real concern. Children who are looked after require special treatment and additional attention in order to improve their situation.

In light of this, the setting has implemented this policy to ensure all children are properly supported and given the best chance to progress, both in their education and in their life outside of the setting.

St Mary's CE Primary endeavours to provide positive experiences and offer stability, safety, and individual care and attention for all our children. With this in mind, we aim to:

- Encourage children to reach their potential and to make good progress in relation to their social and emotional development.
- Ensure that children enjoy high-quality teaching which meets their needs and the requirements of legislation.
- Plan support for LAC and previously-LAC realistically and use the setting's resources efficiently to ensure the setting meets their needs.
- Promote a positive culture in all aspects of the setting.
- Help children develop their cultural, moral and social understanding, and achieve the early learning goals as set out in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children Act 1989
- DfE (2018) 'Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2018) 'The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2019) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2017) 'Statutory for the early years foundation stage'

1.2. This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies and documents:

- Admissions Policy
- One-to-One Tuition Policy
- Behavioural Policy
- Home School Agreement
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Records Management Policy

2. Definitions

2.1. "Looked after children (LAC)" are defined as:

- Children or young people who are the subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989.
- Children who are placed in foster care, children's residential homes, with relatives or friends, in semi-independent or supported independent accommodation.
- Children subject to a Care or Interim Care Order whilst placed with a parent or carer, where the LA has parental responsibility.

- Children who are not subject to an order, but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents or carers.

2.2. “Previously-LAC” are defined as:

- Children who are no longer looked after by an LA in England and Wales because they have either been adopted or are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order.
- Children who were adopted outside England and Wales from ‘state care’ (care that is provided by a public authority, religious organisation, or other organisation whose main purpose is to benefit society).

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1. The Academy councillor is responsible for:

- Reviewing the annual report produced by the designated teacher to evaluate the progress of LAC in the setting.
- Ensuring they receive feedback from the early years teachers regarding the effectiveness of the policy on an annual basis.

3.2. The virtual school head (VSH) is responsible for:

- Monitoring the attendance and educational progress of the children their authority looks after; this includes children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders, or who were adopted from state care outside of England and Wales.
- Ensuring that arrangements are in place to improve the education and outcomes of the authority’s LAC, including those placed out-of-authority.
- Building relationships with health, education and social care partners, as well as other partners, so they and the designated teachers understand the support available to LAC and previously-LAC.
- Working with the setting to ensure all LAC in attendance are fully supported in reaching their full potential.
- Acting as the educational advocate for LAC.
- Acting as a source of advice and information to help parents and carers of previously-LAC as effectively as possible.
- Managing the setting’s allocation of the early years pupil premium (EYPP) for LAC.
- Ensuring there are effective systems in place to:

- Maintain an up-to-date roll of the LAC who attend the setting, and gather information about their educational placement, attendance and progress.
- Inform the early years teachers and designated teacher if they have a child on roll who is looked after by the LA.
- Ensure social workers, schools, designated teachers, careers and independent reviewing officers understand their role and responsibilities regarding a child's PEP.
- Ensure that up-to-date and effective PEPs that focus on educational outcomes are maintained for all LAC.
- Avoid delays in providing suitable educational provision.
- Ensure the education achievement of LAC is seen as a priority by everyone who has responsibilities for promoting their welfare.
- Report regularly on the attainment, progress and setting attendance of LAC through the authority's corporate parenting structures.

3.3. The early years teachers is responsible for:

- Ensuring the setting has a coherent policy for LAC and previously-LAC.
- Reviewing the setting's policies and procedures in conjunction with legislation and statutory guidance.
- Ensuring the designated teacher for LAC and previously-LAC has received the appropriate training.
- Ensuring that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to each looked after child's:
 - Legal status (i.e. whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.
 - Care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the LA.
- Ensuring that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep LAC and previously-LAC safe.
- Ensuring LAC and previously-LAC have equal access to all areas of learning and that reasonable adjustments are made if necessary.
- Appointing the designated teacher for LAC and previously-LAC.

- Allowing the designated teacher the time and facilities to succeed in carrying out their duties.
- Overseeing this policy and monitoring its implementation, feeding back to the Academy councillor annually on the following:
 - The number of LAC and previously-LAC in the setting
 - The attendance of LAC and previously-LAC, compared to other groups
 - The level of fixed term and permanent exclusions, compared to other groups
- Ensuring all members of staff are aware that supporting LAC is a key priority.
- Ensuring EYPP for previously-LAC is managed effectively.
- Promoting the advantages of actively challenging negative stereotypes of LAC.

3.4. The designated teacher for LAC and previously-LAC is responsible for:

- Building relationships with health, education and social care partners and other partners so that they and the VSH understand the support available to LAC and previously-LAC.
- Promoting the educational achievement of LAC and previously-LAC at the setting; this includes those that left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.
- Acting as the main contact for social services and the DfE.
- Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations.
- Ensuring LAC are involved in setting their own targets, where possible.
- Advising staff on teaching strategies for LAC.
- Ensuring that LAC are prioritised for one-to-one tuition and support.
- Leading on how the child's PEP is developed and used in the setting to ensure the child's progress towards targets is monitored.
- Liaising with the SENCO to ensure all children's needs are met.
- Working with the child's VSH and social worker to develop and implement their PEP.

- Working with the VSH to discuss how funding can be used to support the child's progress and meet the needs identified in their PEP.
- Working with the early years teachers to submit an annual report to the Academy councillor, which details the progress of all LAC and previously-LAC.

3.5. The DSL is responsible for:

- Keeping up-to-date records of LAC's respective social worker and VSH.
- Where a child ceases to be looked after and becomes a care leaver, keeping up-to-date contact details of their LA personal advisor and liaising with the advisor as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

3.6. The SENCO is responsible for:

- Ensuring they are involved in reviewing PEP and care plans for LAC and previously-LAC.
- Liaising with the relevant practitioners, designated teacher, specialists and parents/carers when considering interventions to support the progress of previously-LAC.

3.7. Staff are responsible for:

- Being aware of LAC and previously-LAC and providing them with support and encouragement.
- Preserving confidentiality, where appropriate, and showing sensitivity and understanding.
- Being vigilant for any signs of bullying towards LAC and previously-LAC.
- Promoting the self-esteem of LAC and previously-LAC.

4. Personal education plan (PEP)

- 4.1. All LAC must have a care plan; PEPs are an integral part of this care plan.
- 4.2. The PEP is an evolving record of what needs to happen for a child to enable them to make the expected progress and fulfil their potential.
- 4.3. The PEP will reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning which meets the identified educational needs of the child.
- 4.4. The setting with other professionals and the child's carers will use the PEP to support the child's educational needs, raise the child's aspirations and improve their life chances.

- 4.5. All relevant bodies, such as the LA, the designated teacher and carers, will involve the child in the PEP process at all stages.
- 4.6. The PEP will address the child's full range of education and development needs, including:
 - Access to early years provision that is appropriate to the child's age and meets their identified developmental needs.
 - On-going catch-up support, which will be made available for children who have fallen behind with work.
 - Suitable education provided by the LA, where the child is not attending the setting because of suspension or exclusion.
 - Transitional support where needed, such as if a child is moving to a new setting.
 - Attendance and behaviour support, where appropriate.
 - Support to help the child meet their aspirations.

5. Working with agencies and the VSH

- 5.1. The setting will ensure that copies of all relevant reports are forwarded to the LAC social workers, in addition to carers or residential social workers.
- 5.2. The setting will coordinate their review meetings; for example, hold their annual review of LAC with their statutory care review.
- 5.3. The setting will work with other agencies to exchange information, such as changes in circumstances, exclusions or attendance issues, taking prompt action, where necessary, to safeguard LAC and previously-LAC.
- 5.4. Behaviour management strategies will be agreed between the VSH and the setting, to ensure challenging behaviour is managed in the most effective way for that individual child.
- 5.5. The designated teacher for LAC and previously-LAC will communicate with the VSH and child's social worker to facilitate the completion of the PEP.
- 5.6. Through the designated teacher, the setting will work with the VSH, social worker and other relevant agencies to monitor any arrangements in place so that actions and activities recorded in the child's PEP are implemented without delay.
- 5.7. The designated teacher will communicate with the VSH and agree on how the EYPP can be used effectively to accommodate the child's educational attainment and progress.

- 5.8. The EYPP for previously-LAC will be allocated directly to, and managed by, the setting.
- 5.9. The setting will work with the VSH to manage allocation of the EYPP for the benefit of our cohort of LAC, or previously-LAC, and according to their needs.
- 5.10. If deemed necessary, the setting will allocate an amount of funding to an individual to support their needs.
- 5.11. The designated teacher will ensure consistent and strong communication with the VSH regarding LAC who are absent without authorisation.
- 5.12. The setting will share their expertise on what works in supporting the education of LAC and previously-LAC.

6. Transition

- 6.1. Transitions are arranged and carried out in accordance with the children's needs.
- 6.2. The early years teachers will work the teachers of the relevant classes and schools to organise events and help children integrate and transition into their new school or year group.
- 6.3. The early years teachers and designated teacher will work closely with parents and carers, the VSH and other relevant staff members (e.g. the DSL) to ensure a smooth transition can be arranged for children.
- 6.4. Where required, the early years teachers shares necessary information, including children's care plans with the school children are transitioning to.
Information sharing

Parental involvement

- 6.5. Parents and carers of LAC and previously-LAC, who are at the age of transitioning within their education, are given the opportunity to attend an individual meeting with their child's classroom teacher to discuss their progress, any concerns and transition arrangements.
- 6.6. Parents and carers of LAC and previously-LAC will be continuously involved in tailoring transition activities to their child's needs.
- 6.7. Consultation meetings are held during the Autumn term in order to discuss transfer arrangements, the child's wellbeing and the possible effects of the change in learning environment.
- 6.8. Parents and carers will be informed of transition activities and will have the opportunity to withdraw their child from taking part if it is deemed necessary.

7. Training

7.1. The designated teacher and other staff involved in the education of LAC and previously-LAC have received the appropriate training, this includes information about the following:

- Admissions arrangements
- SEND
- Attendance
- Exclusions
- Managing and challenging behaviour
- Promoting positive educational and recreational activities
- Supporting children to be aspirational for their future education
- Safeguarding
- Supporting mental health

8. Supporting mental health

8.1. LAC and previously-LAC are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues which can impact their behaviour and education. The designated teacher will have awareness, training and skills regarding a child's needs and how to support them in relation to behaviour management and mental health.

8.2. The designated teacher will work with the VSH to ensure the setting is able to identify signs of potential mental health issues, understand the impact issues can have on LAC and previously-LAC, and knows how to access further assessment and support, where necessary.

8.3. A strengths and difficulties questionnaire will be used on a termly basis to help social workers and other relevant professionals to form a view about LAC and previously-LAC's current emotional wellbeing. Practitioners will complete their element of the questionnaire to assist social workers in their assessment.

8.4. To support the mental health of LAC and previously-LAC, all child care plans will include information about supporting mental health. The care plan will address the following:

- The child's emotional needs and how they will be met
- How the child's mental health may affect their behaviour
- The child's sense of self, culture, language and identity, and how these can be supported and used to benefit their learning
- The child's need for social interaction and friendship

- The child's interests and abilities, and possible learning pathway
 - Whether the child requires any reasonable adjustments and details of these
- 8.5. The part of the care plan that looks at supporting the child's mental health will be reviewed by the early years teachers, the designated teacher and the child's parents/carers after two weeks, six weeks and three months – once this review cycle is over, the care plan will be reviewed once every six months.
- 8.6. Changes made to the care plan will be communicated to all relevant staff members and agencies.

9. Exclusions

- 9.1. Past experiences of LAC and previously-LAC will be considered when designing and implementing the setting's Behavioural Policy and Exclusion Policy.
- 9.2. The setting will have regard to statutory guidance and, as far as possible, avoid excluding any LAC.
- 9.3. Where the setting has concerns about a child's behaviour, the VSH will be informed at the earliest opportunity.
- 9.4. Exclusion will only be used as a last resort, after the setting and VSH have considered what additional support can be provided to prevent exclusion, and any additional arrangements to support the child's education in the event of exclusion.
- 9.5. The setting will inform parents and carers that they can seek the advice of the VSH on strategies to support their child to avoid exclusion.

10. Children with SEND

- 10.1. Support for LAC and previously-LAC with SEND, who do not need an EHC plan, will be covered as part of the child's PEP and care plan reviews.
- 10.2. The SENCO, relevant practitioners, designated teacher and specialists will involve parents and carers when considering interventions to support their child's progress.
- 10.3. If appropriate, the VSH will be invited to comment on proposed SEND provision for previously-LAC.

11. Information sharing

- 11.1. Appropriate and specific arrangements for sharing reliable data are in place to ensure that the education needs of LAC and previously-LAC are understood and met.
- 11.2. The arrangements set out include:

- Who has access to information on LAC and previously LAC and how data will remain secure.
- How children and parents/carers are informed of, and allowed to challenge, information that is kept about them.
- How parents and carers contribute to and receive information.
- Mechanisms for sharing information between the setting and relevant LA departments.
- How relevant information about individual children is passed between authorities, departments and the setting when children move.

11.3. Information will only be shared when completely necessary and will be managed in accordance with the Data Protection Policy.

12. Monitoring and review

12.1. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Academy councillor, designated teacher and the early years teachers.