



**Unsworth**  
Primary School

Together we build understanding

# Promoting the Education of LAC Pupils Policy

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Part of the

**Oak**   
Learning Partnership

## Is this good enough for my child?

*Though some do well, the educational achievement of looked after children as a group remains unacceptably low. That is why the Children Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievements of looked after children”.*

*(S52, Children Act, 2004)*

Children and young people in care have a right to expect the outcomes we want for every child. As a school we play a vital role in supporting the local authority to achieve the highest possible educational standards and outcomes for all children in care (Looked After Children) on our school roll.

Our school understands and supports the premise that as Corporate Parents we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of children and young people in care. We take that duty seriously and our school ensures that there is a common understanding amongst all staff (including non-teaching staff) of the needs of children and young people in care.

This policy complies with the following statutory guidance issued to all local authorities:

- Promoting the education of looked after children and previous looked after children DfE 2018
- The Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children: Statutory Guidance for School Governing Bodies DCSF 2009
- Improving the attainment of looked after young people in secondary schools: Guidance for Schools DCSF 2009
- Improving the attainment of looked after children in primary schools: Guidance for Schools DCSF 2009

And

- Bury Council’s Handbook for Designated Teachers (issued 2009 to accompany the new legislation) which details the expectation of compliance with the Children and Young Persons Act 2008.

The statutory guidance issued by the Department of Education comes under section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970. This means that it must be followed unless there are exceptional circumstances that justify departing from it.

## **1. The role of the Governing Body**

The Governing Body has a legal duty to appoint the school's Designated Teacher (DT) ensuring that all statutory requirements are met and that the post holder has Qualified Teacher Status.

Our Designated Teacher is a member of our Senior Leadership team and is able to carry out the statutory duties effectively. The designated teacher is Mrs T Ali.

The local authority is kept updated with the name and designation of our Designated Teacher and is promptly informed of any changes (statutory expectation).

The school has a named Governor with responsibility for Children and Young People in Care and the Local Authority's CYPiC Education team is kept informed of any change to that nomination. The Nominated Governor undertakes to attend CYPiC Governor Training as required. The Nominated Governor is Mrs. S. Channon.

The Governing Body is kept fully informed of the number of CYPiC on the school roll (and their placing authority if the child/young person is not in care to Bury).

The Nominated Governor meets regularly with the Designated Teacher, as appropriate.

The Designated Teacher provides termly/annual reports on the progress of CYPiC in school and any other issues pertaining to their status. This is in line with statutory requirements.

The Governing Body ensures that the needs of Children and Young People in Care are recognised in all school policies. This policy (promoting the education of CYPiC/looked after children) will ensure that all of the school's whole school policies will be reviewed in terms of impact on looked after children, ensuring they don't unintentionally put looked after children, on our roll, at a disadvantage.

The Governing Body has ensured that our school has a clear policy in relation to admissions, exclusions and access to school based services and opportunities for all children /young people in care on our roll.

The Governing Body ensures that the Designated Teacher's workload is monitored and that he/she has sufficient capacity so that their statutory duties can be carried out effectively.

The Governing Body ensures that the Designated Teacher is able to attend training as required and as appropriate, but, as a minimum, annual training will be undertaken, in line with legislation. The Designated Teacher will be supported to ensure that learning from the training is effectively disseminated to all staff ensuring that all staff understand

and support the ethos of Corporate Parenting and the school's role in promoting and underpinning the looked after child's education journey.

## **2. The role of the Head Teacher and the Leadership team**

"Doing the things they do for all young people but more so"

(Ref: Improving the attainment of looked after young people in secondary schools 2009)

This school has a named Designated Teacher (DT) for CYPiC who has full Qualified Teacher Status, is the Head Teacher, and, is able to influence and challenge school policy and practice. The Designated Teacher operates in accordance with the statutory duties as set out in the Children and Young Persons Act 2008.

Our school's Designated Teacher meets the statutory criteria for appointment and has been duly appointed by the Governing body. The CYPiC Education Team (Virtual School) is kept informed of any changes. The annual request for updated information is complied with in order to support the local authority in fulfilling its legal obligations.

Head Teachers expect every adult to prioritise the personal, emotional and academic needs of vulnerable children and young people.

The Head Teacher of this school, in partnership with the senior management team, will ensure that specific needs and barriers to learning are identified and that all school policies are effective in reflecting the needs of looked after children.

Our Designated Teacher, as a member of the leadership team, will act as advocate for the children in care on our roll, and, will be included in all discussions concerning issues involving these children e.g. attendance, exclusions, sanctions etc.

The Head teacher has the capacity to respond very quickly to urgent situations.

We have high aspirations for the children and young people in care on our roll and we will ensure that our Designated Teacher is able to rigorously track the progress of each child and report that data to the local authority each term.

We will monitor the impact and appropriateness of any interventions we put in place and scrutinise an evaluation of those actions. We will ensure that the Designated Teacher Reviews Personal Education Plans each term and that Pupil Premium Plus requests are promptly submitted for authorisation by the Virtual Head. We will use best practice to inform resource decisions and ensure that each child/young person is able to contribute to those discussions and influence the outcome.

Looked after children are expected to make good progress –their circumstances are not seen as a reason for not doing so, but rather an imperative to make a difference. Our staff are aware that our children and young people in care may sometimes exhibit inappropriate behaviour to gain attention but awareness is not confused with acceptance and expectations remain high as our teachers must not be diverted from the focus on teaching and learning.

We expect our teachers to set challenging targets when reviewing progress and we ensure that there are opportunities for enrichment activities to consolidate learning.

### **Special Educational needs:**

The majority of looked after children have special educational needs. Of those, a significant proportion will, subject to transition arrangements resulting from changes introduced by the Children and Families Act 2014, have a Statement of special educational needs. Some children may have undiagnosed special needs when they start to be looked after. Our Designated Teacher, working in partnership with our SENCO, will ensure that any undiagnosed special educational needs are addressed through the SEND framework as soon as possible.

### **Admissions:**

Looked after children have been given the highest priority within school admission arrangements. The admission requirements for looked after children are set out in the School Admissions Code.

Admission authorities understand that Fair Access Protocols do not apply to looked after children and that they are 'excepted pupils' in relation to infant class size regulations.

We understand and comply with the local authority's duty, as Corporate Parent, to avoid drift and delay where there are children in care without an education placement that is appropriate to their assessed needs. We acknowledge that the local authority has powers of direction in those cases where delay occurs as a result of protracted negotiation. This school supports the School Admissions Code.

### **Exclusions:**

As a school we understand that these young people require particular understanding and flexibility when their response or behaviour falls below acceptable levels. We will ensure that everything possible is done to ensure that looked after children are never permanently excluded and that fixed term exclusions are avoided. We will work together with the young person, their carer and social worker and the local authority's Virtual Head to develop and implement flexible and creative approaches to address difficulties

and avoid exclusion. We understand that any disruption to the young person's learning will compound their feelings of rejection and loss of self-esteem.

It is the responsibility of all Corporate Parents to work together collaboratively to avoid the use of exclusions. However, where it is unavoidable due to a serious breach of this school's behaviour policy or if there is a risk to the welfare of the pupil or others within the school then we will ensure that we adhere to statutory expectation:

whenever we have concerns about a looked after child's behaviour, the Virtual School Head (from the child's originating home local authority) will be informed and, where necessary, involved at the earliest opportunity.

### **3. The role of the Designated Teacher**

*The Designated Teacher has a leadership role in promoting the educational achievement of every looked after child on the school's roll. The role should make a positive difference by promoting a whole school culture where the personalised learning needs of every looked after child matters and their personal, emotional, and academic needs are prioritised (S3.1 The role and responsibilities of the Designated Teacher for looked after children 2009)*

Our School's Designated Teacher for children and young people in care undertakes and understands the statutory responsibilities of the role which includes the requirement to undertake annual training and to take responsibility for communicating all/any changes in legislation and government policy to the school's governing body.

The Designated Teacher acts as an advocate for the educational needs of all the children and young people in care on roll in our setting.

The Designated Teacher maintains and updates the lists of children and young people in care on the school roll. The list provides accurate contact information, legal status, type of care placement, social worker's details, placing authority details ( in the case of a COLA) etc including the name of the Virtual Head as appropriate. The Designated Teacher ensures that all staff are aware of individual cases and can ensure that individual needs are identified and responded to appropriately.

The Designated Teacher makes every effort to get to know the child/young person and will attend LAC Reviews and other essential meetings as required or will ensure appropriate, alternative, substitutes can be facilitated: as and when this is necessary, the Designated Teacher will ensure feedback and staff updates as appropriate. The Designated Teacher will ensure an education report is available for the Social Worker / Independent Reviewing Officer in those cases where attendance at such meetings is not possible (e.g. during school holiday periods).

The Designated Teacher, in partnership with the Social Worker, ensures that all LAC have a current, purposeful and meaningful PEP (Personal Education Plan) in place and that the child participates fully in the development of the PEP. A new or updated PEP must be in place within the first 20 school days of a child joining us for the first time or being admitted into care (in the case of a child/young person already on our roll). In the case of an emergency placement, the PEP must be initiated by the Social Worker within 10 working days of their becoming looked after.

The Designated Teacher works with the child's Social Worker to ensure timely review of the PEP and expects prompt distribution of the completed plan by the Social Worker to all relevant parties. The PEP must be reviewed each term: this may be done in tandem with an SEND review or other education planning meeting, as appropriate. The Designated Teacher will liaise with the authority's PEP Co-ordinator (in the case of a Bury child) and will work in partnership with carers, social workers and child to ensure that the PEP is completed in timely fashion and remains relevant and meaningful.

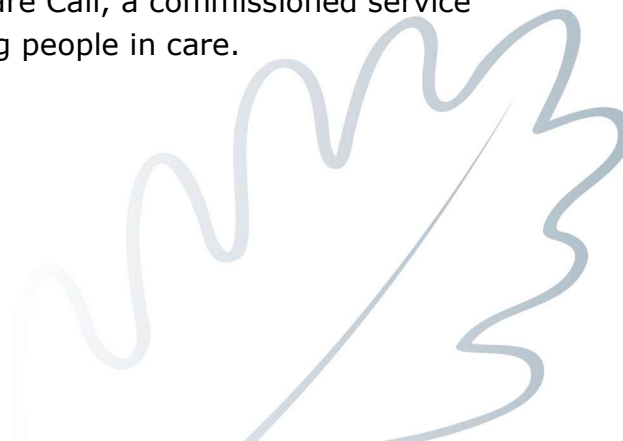
The Designated Teacher is responsible for ensuring that the Pupil Premium Grant (PP+) is fully discussed at the PEP meeting and any targets set which may need additional resources are fully costed out and a formal request for funding is submitted as soon as possible to the Virtual Head. PP+ must be used for the educational benefit of the individual child at that time. The local authority may request further information relating to evidence of the impact of the funding in order to inform further financial planning. This is in addition to the school's statutory duty to report annually to parents /carers re the nature of that year's Pupil Premium spend and its impact on attainment.

The Designated Teacher is responsible for ensuring that accurate information re CYPiC on roll is conveyed to the local authority, on request, and any changes which the school may be notified of are speedily communicated to the local authority's CYPiC Education Team.

The Designated Teacher is responsible for ensuring high quality information is formulated for use with SEPs, Ofsted, the SEF (or other self-evaluation mechanisms) etc.

The Designated Teacher is proactive in identifying ways in which the school can raise the attainment and achievement of all children and young people in care on roll.

The Designated Teacher maintains an overview of CYPiC attendance and, in the case of children in care to Bury, ensures compliance with Welfare Call, a commissioned service monitoring the attendance of Bury's children and young people in care.



The Designated Teacher ensures that the CYPiC School Attendance Officer (SAO) receives full co-operation when investigating cases of poor attendance involving Bury's children and young people in care.

The Designated Teacher will promote and support the recognised position re holidays in termtime for CYPiC and will ensure all the necessary information is available should an approach be made by carers requesting any such authorisation. In the case of a child in care to Bury, the local authority's position is clear and all Carers understand that no holiday in term time can be permitted. The Designated Teacher ensures that reference is made to the child's social worker and CYPiC Education team. In the case of children in care to other local authorities there may be differing views on this matter and it will be up to the Designated Teacher to ensure full consultation with the placing authority.

The Designated Teacher will consider exclusions or other disciplinary measures for CYPiC, supporting the authority's position that formal exclusions for children in care must only be used as a last resort and only after having consulted with the local authority's Virtual Head for LAC. In the rare case that this school issues a fixed term exclusion for a looked after child, the Designated Teacher will, as far as possible, ensure first day alternative cover in order to reduce the pressure on placement and in line with guidelines. All cases of exclusion will be referred to the child's social worker and carers and CYPiC Education team without delay. In the case of a potential Permanent Exclusion, the Head teacher will immediately consult with the Virtual Head from the child's home authority, thereby allowing the earliest opportunity to discuss possible alternatives.

The Designated Teacher is instrumental in collating termly attainment data for CYPiC and in providing that data to the CYPiC Education team. Our Designated Teacher will ensure the data is used to inform strategies and promote the highest levels of achievement and attainment.

The Designated Teacher ensures the understanding of all staff regarding matters to do with CYPiC.

The Designated Teacher inducts new staff in such matters and regularly reviews the training needs of all staff.

The Designated Teacher is released for appropriate training as required (Designated Teacher training, Safeguarding, CSE, Substance misuse etc) and has opportunities to feedback to staff.

The Designated Teacher and each child in care (irrespective of placing authority) will agree together which key members of staff should be aware of their circumstances.



The Designated Teacher ensures that information is managed in a confidential manner that accurate records are kept, and, that information is shared appropriately and in accordance with authority guidelines.

The Designated Teacher is mindful of potentially difficult periods in the child's life e.g. transition, change of care placement, SEND issues etc. and will ensure staff support and show understanding as appropriate.

The Designated Teacher may wish to delegate certain responsibilities to other members of staff: whilst this may be practicable, the Designated Teacher must be mindful of their statutory duties and will always ensure appropriate line management and support for staff when undertaking delegated duties.

The Designated Teacher ensures that any SEND issues are dealt with appropriately, that referrals are timely and outcomes achievable. The Designated Teacher will ensure that the PEP is updated and the child's social worker and carer and CYPiC Education team are kept informed.

The Designated Teacher ensures priority is given to CYPiC in accessing in-school opportunities and equipment (e.g. Laptops) to boost learning e.g. 1:1 Tuition, Homework Clubs etc. This will require PP+ funding in many instances and should be fully discussed at the PEP meeting and a timely application for funding made to the Virtual Head.

The Designated Teacher will address any potential barriers to accessing these resources and will make strenuous efforts to ensure the child engages in any beneficial activities as appropriate.

The Designated Teacher ensures fair representation of CYPiC in prestigious positions e.g. prefects, form reps., pupil desk receptionist etc. and works with partner agencies (e.g. Connexions) and others to ensure that appropriate support is given when choices need to be made e.g. options, College applications etc.

The Designated Teacher ensures that all school staff are knowledgeable about the additional obstacles to FE and HE faced by young people in care. They will support staff in raising the child's aspirations and ensure appropriate information, advice and guidance is provided.

#### **4. The role of the school and partner agencies**

##### **Communication with Carers**

All of our Carers know who the Designated Teacher is and feel welcomed by the school and able to ask questions etc.



The Designated Teacher ensures that our school gives information to the carers in a timely way and takes a proactive role in ensuring that both carer and pupil are aware of important deadlines e.g. Coursework, examination dates, Parents' Evenings etc

The Designated Teacher ensures that information re trips, study guides etc is conveyed effectively and will check that information has been received by the right people; this is particularly pertinent at the time of placement change which may leave the child/young person feeling lost and confused.

The Designated Teacher will also receive information from carers and others and ensures that it is recorded and processed appropriately.

The Designated Teacher understands the importance of the carer's role in partnership working and fosters a collaborative working relationship with both carers and parents (as appropriate).

The Designated Teacher understands the need for flexibility when timing contact with a carer and /or social worker.

The Designated Teacher acknowledges and fully understands the issue of Parental Responsibility: whilst Carers do not hold any (unless they have been granted specific Orders eg Special Guardianship Orders) there will be many cases where the birth parents retain full PR and the Designated Teacher must be guided by the social worker where there may be complex situations requiring sensitive handling.

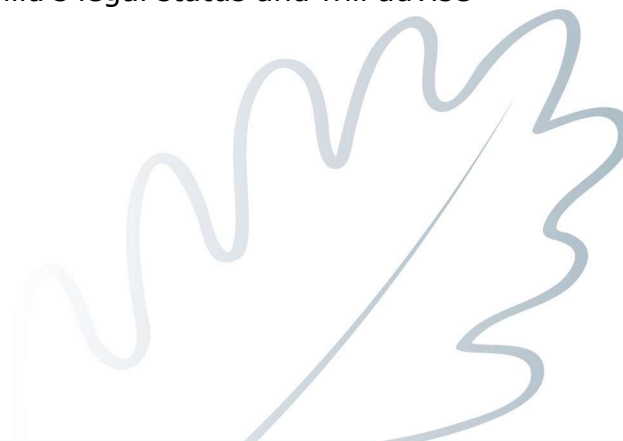
### **Communication with Social Care**

The Designated Teacher promotes strong, positive, working relationships between social workers, health professionals and others and all school staff involved with the child/young person in care.

The Designated Teacher recognises the importance of effective communication with all professionals involved and takes all reasonable steps to ensure that information is effectively passed between agencies.

The Designated Teacher provides information as requested by social care colleagues or other professionals involved with the child/young person in care.

The Designated Teacher will always be mindful of the child's legal status and will advise accordingly on the issue of Parental Responsibility.



## **Communication with the CYPiC Education Service**

The Designated Teacher understands that the CYPiC Education team is the primary source of information concerning educational issues and, equally, the team must be kept informed of any developments in the child's life which may impact on educational progress and attainment e.g. exclusions for behaviour , initial concerns etc.

The Designated Teacher will provide any information requested by CYPiC Education colleagues or other professionals involved with the child/young person in care.

The Designated Teacher ensures that the team is informed of any Designated Teacher name change.

The Designated Teacher undertakes regular training, as offered by the CYPiC Education Team, in line with statutory expectations. If this is not possible, then the Designated Teacher understands that 1:1 training, advice and support is always available from the CYPiC Education Team.

## **Giving the child/young person a voice**

Everyone in our school will ensure that at every stage the child/young person will be fully involved in meetings, discussions and decision making processes in relation to their education. We will fully support them to attend their PEP meetings and to ensure that their wishes and feelings about their education are taken into account in the development, implementation and review of PEPs, PSPs, personalised planning processes etc.

If the child is too young or feels unable to attend the meeting their views will be brought by the most appropriate person and the key discussion points will be shared in an appropriate way after the meeting.

Where their wishes, feelings or preferences cannot be fully met, for example, if a specific decision is felt not to be in their best interest, then it will be carefully explained why this is the case and these conversations will be logged/noted in the PEP and raised at the next review.

