



# Child Looked After Policy

**Approved by:** Governing Body

**Date:** January 2024

**Last reviewed on:** January 2025

**Next review due  
by:** January 2027

## INTRODUCTION

The designated teacher for children Looked after is Mr G Ball.  
The nominated governors for children looked after is Paula Armstead

The governing body of Beal Vale Primary School is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes.

This Academy Trust recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of children in residential and foster care, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in Promoting the Education of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children (Feb 2018) and Section 52 of the Children Act 2004.

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she falls into one of the following:

- is provided with accommodation, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours, [Children Act 1989, Section 20 and 21]
- is subject to a care order [Children Act 1989, Part IV]
- is subject to a placement order

Section 22 of the Children Act stipulates very clearly that for a child to be looked after by a local authority, he/she needs to be accommodated for a continuous period of more than 24 hours

Children who are “looked after” may be “Accommodated” “In Care” or “remanded/detained” as follows:

**Accommodated** - This is a voluntary arrangement, because parents are ill, missing, unable to cope, or as part of a child protection plan negotiated with the family. The parents retain parental responsibility. Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are ‘accommodated’ by the local authority under section 20 of the Children Act they may live in foster care, in a Children’s home or in a residential school.

**In Care** - the term ‘in care’ refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 - they may live with foster carers, in a Children’s home, in a residential school, with relatives or with parents under supervision.

**Remanded/Detained** - A child can be remanded or detained as in the following:

- an emergency protection order
- removed by police using their powers of protection
- remanded by a court following criminal charges
- a court directing a social services department to accommodate a child (already on a supervision order for criminal behaviour) for up to six months.

It is possible that a placement order is made without a care order or interim care order being made, or the child not being subject to section 20 of the 1989 Act. For example, the local authority working with a family and believing that the child should be removed and be placed for adoption.

### **Previously Looked after children**

Previously looked-after children are those who are no longer looked after by a local authority because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order. The school believes that in partnership with Oldham Borough Council as Corporate Parents we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of looked after and previously looked after children.

### **Barriers to Learning**

The Academy is committed to ensuring that all children receive access to a broad and balanced curriculum which motivates and inspire them to learn. The gaps in CLA, and previously CLA learning – and in many cases the emotional impact of their experiences – are likely to have become significant barriers to their progress, the school therefore carries out careful planning, monitoring and evaluation to ensure the best possible outcomes for our CLA pupils.

Children becoming looked After or previously looked after may (or may not) experience some/ all the following issues:

- low self esteem
- poor education standards due to time out of school
- delayed social/emotional/cognitive development
- be bullied or bully others.
- be prone to mental health issues
- be isolated with few friends
- have behaviour issues.
- poor attachments to others.
- have a need to be very private.

This may make them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life-chances. The governing body of Beal Vale Primary School, is committed to ensuring that these children are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following are in place, and are working effectively:

- a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children
- Personal Education Plans for all Looked After Children.
- All staff have a clear understanding of confidentiality and issues that affect looked after children.
- Effective strategies that supports the education of this vulnerable group.

### **ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER**

The role became statutory in September 2009 under the Children and Young Persons' Act 2008 (the 2008 Act). The Designated Teacher must be a qualified teacher or member of staff. Ideally, s/he should be a senior member of staff who has enough status and experience to

advise and provide training to school staff on issues relating CLA. They need to be able to influence decisions about the teaching and learning of these children.

The Designated Teacher should:

- be an advocate for Looked After Children;
- when new to the school, ensure a smooth and welcome induction for the child and carer, and note any specific requirements, including care status;
- ensure that a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is completed, as soon as possible. This should be prepared with the child and the carer, in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies, and be linked to the Care Plan meetings, within 28 days, 3 months and 6 months and, at least, every 6 months;
- keep PEPs and other records up to date, particularly in time to inform review meetings;
- ensure that each child in public care (if they wish) has an identified member of staff that they can talk to (this should be based on the child's request, and may not necessarily be the Designated Teacher);
- co-ordinate support for the child in the school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary;
- ensure staff receive relevant information and training and act as an advisor to staff and governors;
- 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;
- ensure that the child and carer(s) receive early notification of meetings, parents' evenings and other events and that communication remains regular and positive.
- encourage Looked After Children participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning, where feasible;
- ensure speedy transfer of information between individuals and other relevant agencies and to a new school if and when the child transfers;
- seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded.
- ensure that any returns on children are completed as requested by the LA

#### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF**

- ensure that any child in public care is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained;
- be familiar with the and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings;
- respond positively to a child in public care's request to be the named person that they can talk to when they feel it is necessary;
- contribute to the Designated Teacher's requests for information on educational attainment and needs, as appropriate;
- as with all children, ensure that no child in public care is stigmatised in any way;
- provide a supportive climate to enable a child in public care to achieve stability within the school setting;

- as with all children, have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children
- positively promote the self-esteem of Looked After Children

### **ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNING BODY**

Section 20 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 places a duty on the Governing Body to designate a member of staff (the designated teacher) as having responsibility to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children.

The governing body of this school will:

- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Looked After Children;
- be aware of whether the school has Looked After Children and how many (no names);
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Looked After Children;
- liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out her/his responsibilities in relation to Looked After Children;
- support the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of Looked After Children are met;
- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body (These reports should not include any names of individual children for child protection and confidentiality reasons)
- review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Information regarding looked after children will be shared with school staff on a “need to know basis” The Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with which school staff at the PEP meeting. The Head Teacher or the Designated Teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

### **RECORD KEEPING AND INFORMATION SHARING**

All CLA pupils must have a Personal Education Plan (PEP), which their social worker will take the lead in developing. The PEP is a record of the child’s education and forms part of the overall Care Plan. It provides a clear and shared understanding about the teaching and learning provision to ensure academic progress. The social worker, parents, carers and the child may be invited to the PEP meeting to ensure the views of all stakeholders are considered. The school’s role in this plan is crucial and at least one member of staff who knows the child well will attend the meeting to establish and subsequently review this.

The Designated Teacher will keep an up-to-date record of Children Looked After and Young People in school and will ensure that relevant information is made known to appropriate staff. Details of the meeting will be added to the school CPOMS system.

The Social worker informs school of a child becoming looked after (or a looked after children entering the school) A date is set for the completion of a Personal Education Plan (PEP). The child's PEP details should be transferred on the welfare call system (for children in the Oldham area or if the authority does not use the system) then a copy of the PEP should be sent to the school to enable completion of educational data. PEP meeting takes place within 20 days, involving the social worker designated teacher (or other appropriate staff), carer and young person if appropriate.

A date is set for the next pep meeting Personal Education Plan is taken to the child's statutory review and discussed within the wider context of the child's life. The school will then update the welfare call system with the educational information as required or follow the process for other local authorities as appropriate.

### **Funding**

CLA Pupils are entitled to additional funding to help improve their outcomes and narrow the gap between their outcomes and those of their peers.

The academy trust is committed to ensuring effective use of dedicated funding, where available, for all eligible Children Looked after on roll to provide additional, personalised support to ensure accelerated progress in order to improve outcomes. The appropriate use of allocated funding is to be assessed through the Personal Education Plan.

### **ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS**

The Trustees and Academy Trust believe that admissions criteria should not discriminate against Children Looked After or previously Children Looked After; we therefore ensure Children Looked After and previously Children Looked After are given priority.

The school recognises that looked after children are an 'excepted group' and will prioritise in the school's oversubscription criteria following the DfE Admissions Code (Admissions of Looked After Children (England) Regulations 2006)

[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201192/primary\\_school\\_admissions\\_guidance/2600/looked\\_after\\_children](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201192/primary_school_admissions_guidance/2600/looked_after_children)

For more information please see:

[The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children – Statutory guidance for school governing bodies.](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-the-attainment-of-looked-after-children-in-primary-schools-guidance-for-schools>

[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200226/schools\\_and\\_colleges/2857/oldham\\_virtual\\_school](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200226/schools_and_colleges/2857/oldham_virtual_school)