



MICKLEOVER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Name of Policy: Looked After and Previously Looked After Children (P/LAC) Policy

Date of Policy: February 2024

Member of Staff responsible: Mrs L Gerver

Review date: February 2025

Signature: _____ **Chair of Governors**

Date Approved: _____

At Mickleover Primary School

We are:

Motivated to learn

Proud of our achievements

Successful and skilled for life



Looked After (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) Policy

Mickleover Primary School aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in public care.

Designated Teacher for LAC & PLAC: Mrs Lynne Gerver (in conjunction with Mrs Helen Coyle – Inclusion Manager & Child Protection Manager)

Governor with responsibility for LAC & PLAC: Mrs Rachel Brailsford

The Governing Body is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes. This policy includes requirements set out in “Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004” (Nov 2005) and associated guidance on the education of LAC.

AIMS

Mickleover Primary School endeavours to provide positive experiences and offer stability, safety, and individual care and attention for all our pupils. With this in mind, we aim to:

- Encourage pupils to reach their potential and to make good progress in relation to their professional, social and emotional development.
- Ensure that pupils enjoy high quality teaching and a curriculum which meets their needs and the requirements of legislation.
- Ensure that pupils take as full a part as possible in all school activities
- Plan support for LAC realistically and use the school’s resources efficiently to ensure the school meets their needs.
- Promote a positive culture in all aspects of school life.
- Help pupils develop their cultural, moral and social understanding.
- Ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for pupils, as for all children
- Pupils are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision.

WHO ARE LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN?

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

- Children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- Children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38) whilst placed with a parent, where the LA has parental responsibility.
- Children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
- Children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21).

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. 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. All these groups are said to be ‘**Looked After Children**’ – LAC. They may be looked after by our local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

WHO ARE PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN?

A child is previously looked after when:

- The child is adopted.
- The child is made subject to a special guardianship order (SGO) or child arrangement 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)

MONITORING THE PROGRESS OF PLAC

The parental responsibility for a PLAC is with the adopted parent. There is no requirement to hold a PEP meeting for a PLAC but the school monitors and allocates PP+ funding for PLAC to meet the needs of the pupil.

The school encourages adopted parents to make themselves known so that PP+ funding can be gained by recording the pupil as PLAC on the January census return.

ADMISSIONS

The Governing Body endorses council policy. The Council, as the Admission Authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools, believes that admissions criteria should not discriminate against LAC pupils. This stance is also endorsed by the Derby City Admissions Forum. Due to care placement changes, LAC may enter school mid-term. It is vital that we give them a positive welcome. If necessary, we may offer additional support and pre-entry visits to help the new pupil settle.

INCLUSION

This policy recognises that all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broadly based curriculum. Our LAC/PLAC policy reinforces the need for teaching that is fully inclusive. The Governing Body will ensure the school makes appropriate provision for all LAC/PLAC pupils.

ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

The Governing Body will ensure that the school allocates resources to support appropriate provision for LAC/PLAC, meeting the objectives set out in this policy.

MONITORING THE PROGRESS OF LAC/PLAC

The social worker for the LAC should initiate a Personal Education Plan (E-PEP) within 20 days of joining the school, or of entering care, and ensure that the young person is actively involved. It is vital that the school assesses each pupil’s attainment on entry to ensure continuity of learning. The school will monitor and track the achievement and attainment of all pupils at regular intervals. LAC will require their E-PEP to be reviewed, according to their needs, as initiated by the reviewing office or social worker, and the young person’s views should be sought by the Designated Teacher and noted on the E-PEP.



See Appendix 3 - Derby City's guidance on E-PEP forms

PERSONAL EDUCATION PLAN (PEP)

All LAC must have a care plan; PEPs are an integral part of this care plan.

The PEP is an evolving record of what needs to happen for a pupil to enable them to make the expected progress and fulfil their potential. The PEP will reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning which meets the identified educational needs of the child. The PEP will be reviewed termly.

The school, 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. All relevant bodies, such as the LA, the designated teacher and carers, will involve the child in the PEP process at all stages (appropriate to age).

The PEP will address the pupil's full range of education and development needs, including:

- 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 in school because of suspension or exclusion.
- Transitional support where needed, such as if a child is moving to a new school.
- School attendance and behaviour support, where appropriate.
- Support to help the child meet their aspirations, which includes:
 - Support to achieve expected levels of progress for the relevant national key stage and to complete an appropriate range of approved qualifications.
 - Out-of-school hours learning activities, study support and leisure interests.

The Virtual School and the designated teacher will ensure that information is included within a LAC or PLAC's PEP surrounding how they are benefitting from any use of PP+ funding to improve their attainment. Any interventions supported by PP+ will be evidence-based and in the best interests of the pupil.

WORKING WITH AGENCIES AND THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEAD (VSH)

The school will ensure that copies of all relevant reports are forwarded to the social workers of LAC, in addition to carers or residential social workers.

The school 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 PLAC.

Behaviour management strategies will be agreed between the VSH and the school, to ensure challenging behaviour is managed in the most effective way for that individual child.

The designated teacher for LAC and PLAC will communicate with the VSH and child's social worker to facilitate the completion of the PEP.

Through the designated teacher, the school 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. The designated teacher will communicate with



the VSH and agree on how PP+ can be used effectively to accommodate the child's educational attainment and progress.

PP+ for PLAC will be allocated directly to, and managed by, the school. The school will work with the VSH to manage allocation of PP+ for the benefit of our cohort of LAC, or PLAC, and according to their needs. If deemed necessary, the school will allocate an amount of funding to an individual to support their needs.

The designated teacher will ensure consistent and strong communication with the VSH regarding LAC who are absent without authorisation.

The school will share their expertise on what works in supporting the education of LAC and PLAC.

SAFEGUARDING

The school recognises that many LAC and PLAC have experienced trauma, abuse or complex family circumstances that have led to them being placed in care, and will ensure that all staff are aware that experiences of adversity such as these can leave pupils vulnerable to further harm or exploitation.

All staff will be trained to recognise signs and indicators of safeguarding concerns and will ensure that extra vigilance is practised in observing and identifying these indicators amongst LAC and PLAC as soon as possible.

Where a looked-after child or previously looked-after child has a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding, e.g. responding to absence from education where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

The headteacher will implement appropriate pastoral support services in place throughout the school to ensure that the welfare of LAC and PLAC can be adequately protected to the extent that reflects their increased vulnerability.

Staff will be encouraged to report to the DSL any concerns they have over LAC or PLAC in line with the processes outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Staff will be regularly encouraged to look for signs of bullying and report to the designated teacher if they believe a looked-after child or previously looked-after child is being bullied, as this can have a particularly negative impact on pupils who have early experiences of rejection or abandonment.

PUPIL MENTAL HEALTH

Pupils 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.

The designated teacher will work with the Virtual School to ensure the school is able to identify signs of potential mental health issues, understand the impact issues can have on LAC/PLAC, and knows how to access further assessment and support, where necessary.



The school understands that the increased frequency of mental health problems amongst LAC and PLAC may present a barrier to adequately identifying when mental health problems are indicative of a safeguarding concern. For this reason, the designated teacher will ensure that they, and all staff who maintain regular contact with LAC or PLAC are vigilant surrounding any changes in the mental health, behaviour, social inclination or mood of these pupils.

The school's senior mental health lead will work alongside the designated teacher to promote the wellbeing and mental health of LAC and PLAC, and will always either be a member of, or be supported by the senior leadership team and could be the pastoral lead, SENCO, or DSL. The school's Mental Health Policy will be adhered to when dealing with all potential or explicit mental health issues that LAC or PLAC may face

SUSPENSION AND EXCLUSION

School will have regard to the DfE's statutory guidance '[Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement](#)' and recognises that suspending or excluding LAC can make them more vulnerable to harm due to not having the protection and opportunities school provides. The headteacher will balance this recognition alongside the need to ensure calm and safe environments for all staff and pupils, devising strategies that take both into consideration.

Where the school has concerns about a LAC's behaviour, the VSH will be informed at the earliest opportunity. As far as possible, the school will engage proactively with the social worker or carer of an LAC to provide appropriate support for underlying issues that may be causing poor behaviour and improving this behaviour.

As part of the termly review of a pupil's PEP, any concerns about their behaviour will be recorded, alongside information on how they are being supported to improve this and reduce the likelihood of suspension or exclusion.

Suspension or permanent exclusion will only be used as a last resort. Permanent exclusion will only occur where there has been serious and/or persistent breaches of the school's Behaviour Policy, or where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others.

Where a looked-after child is at risk of being suspended or permanently excluded, school will engage with the designated teacher and the pupil's parents, or other individuals involved in the pupil's care. The designated teacher will contact the VSH as soon as possible to work together, and with other relevant individuals, to consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to help the school address the factors affecting the pupil's behaviour and reduce the need for suspension or permanent exclusion.

School will inform parents that they can seek the advice of the VSH on strategies to support their child to avoid exclusion.

Where a looked-after child is excluded, the school will document the provision of immediate suitable education in the pupil's PEP.

PUPILS WITH SEND

Support for LAC/PLAC with SEND, who do not need an EHCP, will be covered as part of the child's PEP and care plan reviews.



The SENCO, class teacher, designated teacher and specialists will involve parents when considering interventions to support their child's progress where a child requires SEND support. If appropriate, the VSH will be invited to comment on proposed SEND provision for PLAC.

The designated teacher and the SENCO will ensure that LAC and PLAC with SEND are supported in line with the SEND Policy, with extra consideration given to the fact that some of the usual procedures for supporting pupils with SEND may lack applicability for LAC, e.g. where LAC are in residential care and, thus, will have their EHC plans taken care of by the LA rather than the general stipulation of the place where they are ordinarily resident.

RECORD KEEPING

The Designated Teacher will know who are all the LAC/PLAC in school and will have access to their relevant contact details including parents, carers and social worker. The Designated Teacher will also know about any LAC/PLAC from other authorities. It is important that the school flags LAC/PLAC status appropriately in the school's information systems so that information is readily available as required.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

We encourage staff to attend courses that help them to acquire the skills needed to support LAC/PLAC. Part of the Designated Teacher's role is to develop awareness of issues associated with LAC/PLAC.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS/CARERS AND CARE WORKERS

At school we firmly believe in developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable LAC/PLAC to achieve their potential. Review meetings are an opportunity to further this partnership working.

LINKS WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES/ORGANISATIONS

We also recognise the important contribution that external support services make in supporting LAC/PLAC. Colleagues from the following support services may be involved with individual LAC/PLAC:

- LAC/PLAC teams
- Educational psychologists and others from Local Authority Special Educational Needs services
- Derby City Virtual School for LAC/PLAC
- Medical officers
- School nurses
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Education Welfare Officers
- Social care worker/ Community care worker/ Residential child care worker
- Youth Offending Service
- School age parents' officer.

POLICY REVIEW AND EVALUATION

We consider the LAC/PLAC policy to be important and we undertake a review of both policy and practice each year.



THIS POLICY IS LINKED TO THE FOLLOWING POLICIES:

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Behaviour Policy
Anti-Bullying Policy
Inclusion Policy
Children Missing from Education Policy
Mental Health Policy
SEND Policy



APPENDIX 1

Looked After Children say...

- “I would like to have a say as to whether I move school or not.”
- “Money should not be the most important thing when deciding if I should move schools.”
- “I would really like to have a chance to visit the school before I start.”
- “I would like my school work and achievements to be passed on to my new school and not forgotten about.”
- “I would have liked a buddy or peer mentor when I moved to my new school to help me get settled.”
- “We want to be treated as normal. We don’t want to be pitied or treated differently.”
- “I’d like to be able to choose a particular teacher to talk to – not just the designated teacher.”
- “I want to keep my life private. I don’t want people knowing everything about me unless I say so.”
- “I don’t want my teachers hearing embarrassing/personal details about me and my family at review meetings.”
- “I want my own copy of school reports and I want my parents to have a copy.”
- “The head of year is extremely important in passing on ‘need to know’ information to individual subject teachers.”



APPENDIX 2

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Rationale for roles and responsibilities:

Looked After Children – LAC - are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational underachievement when compared to their peers. For example, they may experience:

- A high level of disruption and change in school placements
- Lack of involvement in extra curricular activities
- Inconsistent or no attention paid to homework.

This may result in:

- Poor exam success rates in comparison with the general population
- Underachievement in further and higher education.

These issues may also affect adopted young people. The majority of children who remain in care are there because they have suffered abuse or neglect. To date the outcomes achieved by LAC have been unacceptably poor and the Government is committed to addressing this disparity. As corporate parents we all have a part to play in this by vigorously applying the principles of good parenting by:

- Giving priority to education
- Listening to children
- Providing stability and continuity
- Taking corporate responsibility
- Promoting inclusion
- Raising standards
- Intervening early
- Promoting early years experiences
- Celebrating success.

The Designated Teacher will:

- Be an advocate for LAC within school
- Give regard to the impact of relevant decisions for LAC on both the LAC and the rest of the school community
- Know who are all the LAC in school, including those in the care of other authorities, and
- Ensure the availability of all relevant details from school record-keeping systems as required
- Attend relevant training about LAC
- Act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to LAC,
- Seeking advice from the LAC team when appropriate.
- Ensure that LAC receive a positive welcome on entering school, especially mid year and, if necessary, offer additional support and a pre-entry visit to help the new pupil settle.
- In liaison with the SENCO, ensure that all LAC have an appropriate Personal Education Plan (E-PEP) that is completed within 20 days of joining the school or of entering care and ensure that the young person contributes to the plan
- In liaison with the SENCO, Keep E-PEPs and other records up to date and review E-PEPs at transfer and at six monthly intervals
- Convene an urgent multi-agency meeting if a LAC is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion



- Ensure confidentiality on individual children, sharing confidential and personal information on a need to know basis, bearing in mind the wishes of the individual pupil
- Act as the key adviser for staff and governors on issues relevant to LAC
- Ensure that care and school liaison is effective including invitations to meetings and other school events
- Actively encourage and promote out of hours learning and extra curricular activities for LAC
- Ensure a speedy transfer of information, records and coursework, where appropriate, when a LAC transfers to another educational placement
- Contribute information to LAC reviews when required
- Report to the Governing body on LAC in the school and inform of relevant policy and practice development
- Agree with the social worker the appropriate people to invite to parents' evenings etc
- Prepare reports for Governors' meetings to include:
 - the number of LAC on roll and the confirmation that they have a Personal Education Plan – E-PEP.
 - their attendance compared to other pupils.
 - their attainment (SATs/GCSEs) compared to other pupils.
 - the number, if any, of fixed term and permanent exclusions.
 - the destinations of pupils who leave the school.
- Attend governor meetings as appropriate – such as the admission, disciplinary and exclusion of LAC.
- Arrange a mentor or befriender (adult and /or pupil) to whom the young person can talk, possibly through the learning mentor scheme or through Connexions, particularly when the pupil is new to school
- Ensure that any Special Educational Needs are addressed in conjunction with the SENCO and in accordance with the Code of Practice for SEN. LAC are six to eight times more likely to have a statement of Special Educational Needs than the general school population.

Good practice suggests that all school staff will:

- follow school procedures.
- keep the Designated Teacher informed about a LAC's progress.
- have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of LAC.
- positively promote the raising of a LAC's self esteem.
- ensure any LAC is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained.
- be familiar with the school's policy and guidance on LAC and respond appropriately to requests for information to support E-PEPs and review meetings.
- liaise with the Designated Teachers where a LAC is experiencing difficulties
- give only official exclusions and only use exclusions in line with the school's exclusion policy, and relevant national guidance, being mindful to the difficulties this may create in the care placement
- contribute to regular liaison with social care colleagues and other appropriate professionals and keep carers fully informed at all times
- keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to other professionals/ parents/carers/pupil as appropriate
- make extra copies of reports available when required.

Good practice suggests that the Governing Body will:

- ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritises LAC according to the DfES Admissions Code of Practice



- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for LAC
- ensure there is a Designated Teacher for LAC
- liaise with the Headteacher, Designated Teacher and all other staff to ensure the needs of LAC are met
- nominate a governor with responsibility for LAC who links with the Designated Teacher
- receive regular reports from the Designated Teacher.
- ensure that the school's policies and procedures give LAC equal access in respect of:
 - admission to school
 - National Curriculum and examinations, both academic and vocational
 - out of school learning and extra curricular activities
 - work experience and careers guidance.
- annually review the effective implementation of the school policy for LAC.
- ensure that the Designated Teacher is invited to the exclusion meetings of LAC.

The Local Authority will:

- lead the drive to improve educational and social care standards for LAC
- ensure that the education for this group is as good as that provided for every other Derby City pupil
- ensure that LAC receive a full time education in a mainstream setting wherever possible
- ensure that every LAC has a school to go to within 20 days of coming into care or of coming to Derby from another authority
- make sure that each LAC has a E-PEP according to national guidance
- ensure that every school has a Designated Teacher for LAC and that these teachers receive appropriate information, support and training
- provide alternative educational provision where appropriate
- ensure that appropriate support is provided whenever possible
- work with others to provide smooth transitions at the end of the Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1, 2 and 4 and at any mid-phase transfer
- identify a designated officer who has responsibility for championing the education of LAC
- be vigilant and proactive in identifying the special educational needs of LAC and work collaboratively with other services and agencies to meet those needs.



APPENDIX 3 – E-PEP GUIDANCE

(A) Initiating E-PEPs on Child's entry to care

- You will receive an E-PEP via secure email from the E-PEP Administrator with the first four pages completed.
- Complete, update and amend the education sections of the E-PEP electronically prior to the E-PEP meeting.
- Discuss the plan with child/young person. Encourage and record their comments on the young Person's Views sheet.
- Inform the school nurse that the young person has entered public care or that a young person in care has joined the school.
- **Keep original completed E-PEP in child's school file and use as a working document.**
- Take a photocopy of completed E-PEP and discuss at the E-PEP meeting. Following the meeting amend as appropriate.
- Return the E-PEP electronically via secure email to E-PEP@derby.gov.uk within two days of the E-PEP meeting
- The E-PEP Administrator will then distribute the E-PEP to all relevant people.

(B) For Statutory Care Plan Review meetings

- It is a statutory requirement that E-PEPs are reviewed every six months.
- Before the Statutory Care Plan Review, update the E-PEP by
 - Recording any amendments
 - Reviewing targets and actions from last E-PEP meeting
 - Be sure to record any changes here as well as setting new targets and record any comments from child/young person
- Take a copy of the E-PEP (and any attached information) to the meeting or, if not attending, send it to the Reviewing Team.
- Put a copy of the **E-PEP- Plan/Review** form (and any updated information) with the original E-PEP in the child/young person's school file.

Also consider

- If the child/young person has Special Educational Needs, you may wish to hold the E-PEP and Provision Plan reviews together to minimise paperwork and time.
- If child/young person moves school forward the completed E-PEP, including the Review documents, along with the child's school file in the normal way to the receiving school.
- For fuller explanations please refer to the DfES "Guidance on the Education of Children and Young People in Public Care".



APPENDIX 4

Key National Documents

- Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children - Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities February 2018
- The Children Act 1989, as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- The designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children- Statutory Guidance February 2018
- Governance handbook for trustees of academies and multi-academy trusts and governors of maintained schools DfE January 2017 (6.4.12 Looked After Children)
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010, as amended.
- Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England - A guide for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion, 2012
- Department for Education, School Admissions Code, Feb 2012
- Supporting Looked After Learners - A Practical Guide for School Governors 2005
- Advice on the Education of Summer Born Children, July 2013
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and Pupil Referral Units DFEe Sept 2022
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2022)



APPENDIX 5

Derby City Virtual School for Children in Care contact details are:

Graeme Ferguson	Virtual School Head Teacher Email graeme.ferguson@derby.gov.uk Telephone: 01332 640362
Kate Harm	Specialist Education Officer for Children in Care Email kate.harm@derby.gov.uk Telephone: 01332 641439
Catherine Ward	Specialist Education Officer for Children in Care Email catherine.ward@derby.gov.uk Telephone: 01332 640346
Nina McNelis	Specialist Education officer for Children in Care Email nina.mcnelis@derby.gov.uk Telephone 01332 956459
Sarah Parkman	Specialist Education Officer for Children in Care Email sarah.parkman@derby.gov.uk Telephone: 01332 640637
Susannah Beadle	Specialist Education Officer for Children in Care Email susannah.beadle@derby.gov.uk Telephone: 01332 642385
Genevieve McGaskill	Specialist Education Officer for Children in Care Email Genevieve.mccaskill@derby.gov.uk Telephone 07741091375
Carla Dewberry	Specialist Education Officer for Children in Care Email carla.dewberry@derby.gov.uk Telephone 07469368281
Liz Williams	Project Support Administrator Email elizabeth.wiliams@derby.gov.uk Telephone 01332 640342
Ruby Turkington	Project Support Administrator Email ruby.turkington@derby.gov.uk Telephone 01332 647840

With the new additional duties in 2018 the Virtual School has a role in supporting and giving information for PLAC to parents, schools, social workers and other relevant persons.