



Looked After Children Policy

Date:	May 2023
Review Date:	May 2025
Designated Teacher:	Mrs Chapman
Designated Governor:	Sophie Lewis

Stoughton Infants has a major part to play in ensuring that Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked after Children (PLAC) are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being.

It is our duty to safeguard and promote the education of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children. We will achieve this in partnership with Surrey County Council and County Councils across the country.

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)
- 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.

LAC reviews, involving the school, will take place up until an adoption order has been granted. However Pupil Premium Plus funding will continue for LAC until they are 16 years old. These children become known as PLAC. This is due to the following amendments made by the 2017 Act, section 20A of the 2008 Act and Section 2E of the Academies Act 2010 place duties on the governing body of schools in England to continue to support previous LAC children.

Who are Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)

- Are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order
- Adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales. Once a child becomes PLAC the Virtual School and designated local authority are no longer their corporate parent. The persons who have parental responsibility for that child will then oversee their child's educational progress. Their educational setting is still eligible for PLAC funding and parents and educational settings can receive educational advice and support from the VS where evidence has been supplied to prove the children in question was a LAC

AIMS

1. To provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children at Stoughton Infants

2. To support our LAC & PLAC and give them access to every opportunity to achieve their potential, enjoy learning and take as full a part as possible in all school activities
3. Champion the needs of LAC & PLAC, raise awareness and challenge potential negative stereotypes about them, in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible
4. To work with the Virtual School and ensure that the carers and social workers of LAC pupils are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment
5. Communicate regularly with carers, social workers and the Virtual School through statutory meetings and as necessary to ensure a joined up approach is achieved to support children's education and wellbeing. These meetings are statutory while a child is a LAC. Once a child becomes a PLAC child all meetings with reference to the child's educational progress will be held with those with parental responsibility and no longer with their corporate parent

Our school's approach to supporting the educational achievement of LAC & PLAC is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education
- Prioritising their health and well being
- Giving children a voice
- Promoting attendance
- Providing early interventions with targeted support where necessary
- Promoting high expectations and aspirations
- Promoting stability and continuity
- Working in partnership with all relevant bodies, carers, social workers and other professionals

To achieve these Aims we will:

1. Nominate a Designated Teacher for LAC & PLAC who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them.
2. Support the Designated teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend training on LAC & PLAC.
3. Nominate a school governor to ensure that the needs of LAC & PLAC in the school are taken into account at a school management level and to support the Designated Teacher.

The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for LAC & PLAC:

Designated teacher (DT)

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. Ideally, they should be a senior member of staff who has the experience to advise, support and provide training to school staff on issues relating to LAC & PLAC.

DT Role & Responsibilities:

- Identify LAC & PLAC and ensure that the relevant staff are also aware
- Champion LAC & PLAC by promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations for all children
- Support school staff to understand the potential issues that affect the learning of LAC & PLAC and advise on differentiated teaching strategies, approaches and the removal of potential barriers to learning
- Attend relevant training about LAC & PLAC to ensure CPD is up to date
- Act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to LAC & PLAC
- Ensure LAC & PLAC new to the school are welcomed positively and assessed when they start at the school to identify strengths and weaknesses in their learning. This will be used to inform planning and teaching
- Ensure the child makes a smooth transition to the new school and that the child's records are transferred without delay
- Ensure that LAC & PLAC have a voice and that their needs and opinions are listened to
- Attend and contribute to the PEP once this has been organised by the social worker. The social worker is responsible for initiating the PEP process and completing the front page of the PEP form. PEP meetings are held for LAC only
- Monitor the child's progress against the targets on the PEP and extend these targets if they have been achieved. This is done alongside the CT and other relevant members of staff i.e. SENCO (LAC Only)
- Liaise with the Virtual School in all aspects of LAC progress and support
- Convene urgent multi-agency meetings if a LAC is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion
- Promoting good home-school links and the importance of education as a way of improving life chances for LAC & PLAC

The role and responsibility of the governing body:

- Support the local authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of looked after children
- Ensure that the designated teacher is given the appropriate level of support in order to fulfil their role
- In partnership with the head teacher, ensure that, through their training and development, the designated teacher has the opportunity to acquire and keep up-to-date the necessary skills, knowledge and training to understand and respond to the specific teaching and learning needs of LAC & PLAC
- The Local Governing Body and the SLT should make sure that the designated teacher role contributes to the deeper understanding of everyone in the school who is likely to be involved in supporting LAC & PLAC to achieve.
- The governing body, in partnership with the Headteacher, is responsible for monitoring how well the role is working.

Stoughton Infants will champion the needs of Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible.

For more information on the statutory guidance please see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-children>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-health-and-wellbeing-of-looked-after-children--2>