



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

Policy

Policy Date: July 2026

Review Date: July 2027

Responsible Person: Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children

Approved by: Governing Body

Mission

We are proud of our school as a place of learning, prayer and happiness.
Hand in hand with God, Our Lady and St. Joseph, we promise to work hard and be kind to one another so that we can grow stronger together in our faith.
Hand in hand with God we learn.

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we believe that every child is uniquely created in the image and likeness of God and deserves to flourish academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually.

We recognise that children who are looked after or have previously been looked after may have experienced disruption, trauma or loss. As a Catholic school, we are committed to providing a nurturing, inclusive and supportive environment where every child feels safe, valued and loved.

Our aim is to remove barriers to learning, promote educational achievement and ensure that all looked after and previously looked after children are given every opportunity to reach their full potential.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that St Joseph's Catholic Primary School:

- promotes the educational achievement and wellbeing of Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)
- fulfils statutory duties
- works effectively with Derby City Virtual School, social workers, carers and parents
- provides a consistent whole-school approach to supporting vulnerable learners.

2. Legal Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with:

- Children Act 1989
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Promoting the Education of Looked After Children (DfE)

- Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children Statutory Guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current version)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- Equality Act 2010

It also reflects guidance issued by Derby City Virtual School.

3. Definitions

Looked After Child (LAC)

A child is looked after if they are in the care of the Local Authority or accommodated by the Local Authority under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989.

This includes children living:

- with foster carers
- in residential care
- in children's homes
- in residential schools where appropriate.

Previously Looked After Child (PLAC)

A previously looked after child is one who is no longer looked after because they have been:

- adopted
- made subject to a Special Guardianship Order
- made subject to a Child Arrangements Order
- adopted from state care outside England and Wales.

4. Principles

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School we believe:

- every child deserves high aspirations
- educational achievement should never be limited by previous experiences
- positive relationships are fundamental to success
- children should have stability, consistency and belonging
- all staff have a responsibility to understand the impact of trauma and attachment.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- appoint a Designated Teacher
- ensure policies support vulnerable children
- monitor educational outcomes
- ensure statutory duties are fulfilled
- support staff training.

Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- promote a culture of inclusion
- ensure adequate resources are available

- support the Designated Teacher
- ensure confidentiality is maintained
- ensure staff receive appropriate training.

Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher will:

- champion the educational achievement of looked after children
- act as the main point of contact for Derby City Virtual School
- attend appropriate training
- ensure high-quality Personal Education Plans (PEPs)
- monitor attendance, progress and attainment
- support transitions
- oversee use of Pupil Premium Plus funding
- liaise with carers, social workers and other professionals
- promote ambitious expectations for every child.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL will:

- ensure safeguarding concerns are acted upon promptly
- work closely with the Designated Teacher
- ensure information is shared appropriately
- contribute to multi-agency planning.

All Staff

All staff will:

- understand the needs of looked after children
- provide a safe, nurturing environment
- maintain confidentiality
- promote positive relationships
- have high expectations
- understand the impact of trauma and attachment.

6. Admissions

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School recognises that looked after and previously looked after children receive the highest priority within the school's admissions arrangements, in accordance with the School Admissions Code.

Where appropriate, admissions will be managed promptly to minimise disruption to education.

7. Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

Every looked after child will have a Personal Education Plan.

The school will:

- contribute fully to PEP meetings
- provide accurate attainment information
- identify barriers to learning
- agree measurable educational targets

- review progress regularly
- work with Derby City Virtual School to secure the best outcomes.

8. Pupil Premium Plus

The school will use Pupil Premium Plus strategically to improve educational outcomes.

Funding may support:

- targeted teaching
- academic intervention
- emotional wellbeing
- educational resources
- enrichment opportunities
- attendance support
- transition arrangements.

The impact of spending will be reviewed regularly.

9. Curriculum

The curriculum will:

- provide ambitious learning opportunities
- promote resilience
- celebrate diversity
- encourage participation
- recognise children's strengths
- provide appropriate challenge and support.

10. Attendance

Excellent attendance is essential.

The school will:

- monitor attendance closely
- identify barriers early
- work with carers and professionals
- provide support where attendance becomes a concern.

11. Behaviour

We recognise that trauma may influence behaviour.

Responses will:

- focus upon understanding behaviour
- use restorative approaches where appropriate
- maintain high expectations
- avoid unnecessary sanctions
- promote positive relationships.

Any decisions regarding suspension or exclusion will consider statutory guidance and involve the Designated Teacher wherever appropriate.

12. SEND

Many looked after children may also have special educational needs.

Where appropriate, the school will:

- identify needs early
- work with external agencies
- implement appropriate interventions
- ensure SEND support complements the child's Personal Education Plan.

13. Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

The school recognises that many looked after children have experienced adversity or trauma.

Support may include:

- trusted adult relationships
- nurture approaches
- emotional literacy support
- pastoral intervention
- access to external services where appropriate.

14. Safeguarding

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Staff will follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and current statutory guidance.

Any safeguarding concerns will be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis to protect the child whilst maintaining confidentiality.

15. Partnership Working

Effective partnership working is essential.

The school will work closely with:

- Derby City Virtual School
- social workers
- foster carers
- adoptive parents
- special guardians
- Local Authority officers
- educational psychologists
- health professionals
- other relevant agencies.

Parents and carers will be treated as valued partners in supporting educational success.

16. Confidentiality

Information relating to a child's care status will only be shared with staff who need the information to fulfil their professional responsibilities.

The wishes and dignity of the child will always be respected.

17. Training

The Designated Teacher will undertake statutory training.

All staff will receive appropriate awareness training covering:

- attachment
- trauma-informed practice
- adverse childhood experiences
- safeguarding responsibilities
- the needs of looked after children.

18. Monitoring

The Governing Body will receive anonymised reports regarding:

- attainment
- attendance
- exclusions
- progress
- PEP completion
- use of Pupil Premium Plus
- training.

No individual child will be identifiable within governor reports.

19. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or local authority guidance changes.

Appendix 1 – Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher will:

- promote educational achievement;
- ensure every looked after child has an up-to-date Personal Education Plan (PEP);
- attend and contribute to PEP meetings;
- monitor attendance, attainment and progress;
- support transitions into, within and beyond the school;
- advise colleagues on attachment-aware and trauma-informed practice;
- work with Derby City Virtual School to maximise educational outcomes;
- oversee the effective use of Pupil Premium Plus funding;
- ensure the voice of the child is heard in educational planning.

Appendix 2 – Useful Contacts

- Derby City Virtual School
- Derby Children's Social Care
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (School)
- SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)
- Local Authority Admissions Team
- Educational Psychology Service

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