

# Looked-After and Previously Looked-after Children Policy



To be approved by governors at TLP on: 10<sup>th</sup> February 2025

To be Reviewed: February 2026

- Foxes Piece is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment
- A suitable member of staff is appointed as the Designated Teacher for Looked-After and previously Looked-After Children.
- The Designated Teacher promotes the educational achievement of Looked-After and previously Looked-After Children and supports other staff members to do so.

Who are Looked-after Children?

- Children who are in the care of the local authority, or
- A child who is looked after by a local authority/Social Services if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority.

### **Who are Previously Looked-after Children?**

- they were looked after by a Local Authority but ceased to be as a result of any of the following:
- child-arrangement order (relates to who the child lives with and when they are to live with them)
- special guardianship order
- adoption order
- have been in state care outside of England and Wales because they would not have otherwise been cared for adequately
- ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted

### **Personal Education Plan (PEP)**

This is part of a looked-after child's care plan that is developed with the school. It forms a record of what needs to happen and who will make it happen to ensure the child reaches their potential.

### **Virtual School Head (VSH)**

This is a Local Authority Officer responsible for promoting the educational achievement of their authority's looked-after children, working with schools to monitor and support these pupils as if they were in a single school. The VSH is also responsible for providing information and advice to schools, parents and guardians when needed.

### **Designated Teacher**

As stated above, a Looked-after child must have a designated teacher (role is listed below). At Foxes Piece School the Designated Teacher is **Mrs Karen Byer** who can be contacted at [office@foxespiece.co.uk](mailto:office@foxespiece.co.uk)

#### Role of the Designated Teacher

- To act as a central point of initial contact within the school for any matters involving Looked-after and previously Looked-after children.
- To promote the educational achievement of every Looked-after and previously Looked-after child by working with VSH and to promote a whole-school culture where the needs of pupils matter and are prioritised.
- To take a lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand the experiences which can affect how Looked-after and previously Looked-after children learn and achieve.
- To ensure the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils.
- To contribute to the development and review of whole school policies to ensure they consider the needs of Looked-after and previously Looked-after children.
- To promote a culture in which Looked-after and previously Looked-after children are encouraged and supported to engage with their education and other school activities.
- Act as a source of advice for teachers about working with Looked-after and previously Looked-after children.
- To work directly with Looked-after and previously Looked-after children and their carers, parents and guardians to promote good home-school links, support progress and encourage high aspirations.
- To lead responsibility for the development and implementation of PEPs for Looked-after children.
- To work closely with DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) to ensure any safeguarding concerns are dealt with quickly and efficiently.
- To involve parents and guardians of previously Looked-after children in decisions affecting their child's education.

### **Supporting Looked-after Children at Foxes Piece School**

The Designated Teacher will:

- Ensure Looked-after children's PEPs meet their needs by working closely with other teachers to assess each child's specific educational needs.
- Have overall responsibility for leading the process of target setting in PEPs.
- Monitor and track how Looked-after children's attainment progresses under their PEPs.
- If a child is not on track to meet their targets, be instrumental in agreeing the best way forward with them in order to make progress and ensure that this is reflected in their PEP.
- Ensure the identified actions of PEPs are put in place.
- During the development and review of PEPs help the school and relevant Local Authority decide what arrangements work best for pupils.
- The Designated Teacher will make sure that: a Looked-after child's PEP is reviewed before the statutory review of their care plan, this includes making sure the PEP is up to date and contains new information since the last PEP review including whether agreed provision is being delivered. PEPs are clear about what has or has not been taken forward, noting what resources may be required to further support the child and from where these may be sourced. The updated PEP is passed to the child's social worker and VSH ahead of date of statutory review of their care plan.
- Transfer a Looked-after child's PEP to their next school or college making sure it is up to date and that the Local Authority responsible for looking after them has the most recent version.

The Designated Teacher will also support Looked-after and previously Looked-after children by:

- Ensuring the specific needs of Looked-after and previously Looked-after children are understood by staff and reflected in how the school uses Pupil Premium (PP) funding.
- Working with VSHs to agree how PP funding for Looked-after children can most effectively be used to improve their attainment.
- Helping to raise the awareness of parents and guardians of previously Looked-after children about PP funding and other support for these children.
- Playing a key part in decisions on how PP funding is used.
- Encouraging parent and guardian involvement in deciding how PP funding is used to support their child and be the main contact for queries about its use.
- Ensuring teachers have awareness and understanding of the specific needs of Looked-after and previously Looked-after children in areas like attendance, homework, behaviour and future career planning.
- Being aware of any SEN related needs and ensure SEND Code of Practice is followed (liaise with SENCo).
- Making sure PEPs work in harmony with any Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) that a Looked-after child might have.
- Ensuring that with VSHs they have the skills to identify signs of potential SEN issues in Looked-after and previously Looked-after children and know how to access further assessment and support where necessary.
- Ensuring potential mental health issues are understood and subsequently understand where school can find specialist services.
- Putting in place robust arrangements to have strengths and difficulties questionnaires (SDQs) completed which will also inform PEPs.
- Putting in place mechanisms for understanding the emotional and behavioural needs of previously Looked-after children.

### **Team Around the Child**

The Designated Teacher will:

- Proactively engage with social workers and other professionals to enable the school to respond effectively to the pupil's needs.
- Discuss with social workers how the school should engage with birth parents and ensure the school is clear about who has parental responsibility and what information can be shared and with whom.
- Be open and accessible to parents and guardians of previously Looked-after children and encourage them to be actively involved in their children's education.
- Proactively build relationships with Local Authority professionals such as VSHs and SEN departments.
- Consider how the school works with others outside of the school to maximise the stability of education for Looked-after children such as:

- Finding ways of making sure the latest information about educational progress is available to contribute to the statutory review of care plans.
- Ensuring mechanisms are in place to inform VSHs when Looked-after children are absent without authorisation and work with the responsible authority to take appropriate safeguarding action.
- Talking to the child's social worker/Local Authority regarding any decisions about changes in care placements which will disrupt the child's education, providing advice about the likely impact and what the Local Authority should do to minimise disruption.
- Making sure that if a Looked-after child moves school, their new Designated Teacher receives any information needed to help the transition process.
- Seek advice from VSHs about meeting the needs of individual previously Looked-after children but only with the agreement of their parents or guardians.
- Make sure that for each Looked-after child:
  - There's an agreed process for how the school works in partnership with the child's carer and other professionals, such as their social worker, in order to review and develop educational progress.
  - School policies are communicated to their carer and social worker and where appropriate birth parents.
  - Teachers know the most appropriate person to contact where necessary, such as who has the authority to sign permission slips.
- Where a Looked-after child is at risk of exclusion:
  - Contact the VSH as soon as possible so they can help the school decide how to support the child to improve their behaviour and avoid exclusion becoming necessary.
  - Working with the VSH and child's carers consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to address the causes of the child's behaviour.
- Where a previously Looked-after child is at risk of exclusion, talk to the child's parents or guardians before seeking advice from the VSH on avoiding exclusion.

### **Monitoring Arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and Designated Teacher, to then be approved by the Full Governing Board.

### **Links With Other Policies**

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- SEN Policy
- Exclusions
- Behaviour Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance: [Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children - GOV.UK](#)