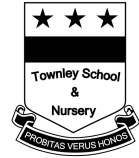
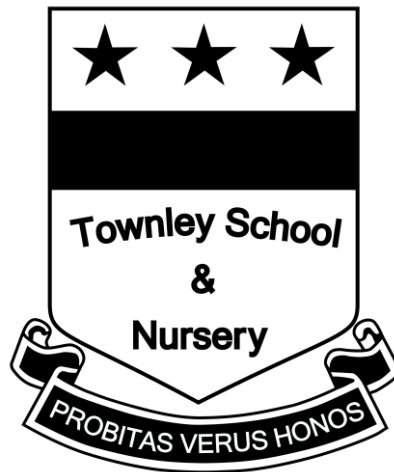


Townley School and Nursery Policy Front Sheet



POLICY DOCUMENT	LAC or previously Looked after
Policy Number	58
Type of Policy –	Statutory
Governor Committee	Full Governing Body
Approval Date	December 2023
Review Frequency	Annual
Date of next review	December 2024
Publication Date	
Chair of Governing Body signature	
Publish on School Website	No
Purpose of Policy	Policy Review
Supporting documents if applicable	
Chair of Governing Body signature	
Date	

Townley School and Nursery



Children who are Looked After or Previously Looked After Policy

DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR CHILDREN IN CARE	Maria Higgins
DESIGNATED PERSON FOR CHILDREN PREVIOUSLY IN CARE	Maria Higgins
HEADTEACHER	Maria Higgins
DESIGNATED GOVERNOR FOR CARE- EXPERIENCED CHILDREN	Sue Rudge

Statement of intent

At Townley School, we recognise that educational achievement and subsequent life chances for 'Looked After Children' (LAC) and 'Previously Looked After Children' LAC and are of real concern. Pupils who are looked after often require additional support and attention in order to improve their situation. 'LAC and 'PLAC' may have very specific needs and may be coping with trauma, abuse or rejection, and are likely to experience personal distress and uncertainty.

Educational achievement and subsequent life chances for LAC and PLAC are of real concern. Children who are looked after require special treatment and additional attention in order to improve their situation. Townley School endeavours to provide positive experiences and offer stability, safety, and individual care and attention, for all our children. This will be achieved by:

- Placing the highest priority on their education
- Promoting regular attendance
- Having high expectations and aspirations
- Promoting access and inclusion in all areas of school life
- Promoting stability and continuity
- Supporting early intervention
- Valuing the voice of the child
- Promoting social, emotional and mental health and well-being
- Working in partnership with parents, carers, social workers and other professionals

1.1 Guiding Principles

- The voice of the child is of paramount importance
- All LAC or PLAC children will receive high quality education which is inspiring and challenging, resulting in the best possible outcomes, thus closing the educational gap between these children and those who are not care experienced
- Every LAC or PLAC child will have a positive educational experience which promotes social and emotional learning and wellbeing alongside academic success to ensure readiness for adulthood
- Townley School will meet the needs of LAC or PLAC children through effective liaison and integrated work with all key partners including the relevant Virtual School

1.2 Definitions

Looked-after children (LAC) are defined as:

- Children or young people who are the subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989.
- Children who are placed in foster care, children's residential homes, with relatives or friends, in semi-independent or supported independent accommodation.
- Children subject to a Care or Interim Care Order whilst placed with a parent, where the LA has parental responsibility.
- Children who are not subject to an order, but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents.

“Previously LAC (PLAC)” are defined as:

- Children who are no longer looked after by an LA in England and Wales because they have either been adopted or are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements 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).

Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 The Head Teacher and Governing Body

We, the Headteacher and Governing Body of Townley School are committed to promoting improved educational life chances for all LAC or PLAC children. We will ensure that the Designated Teacher for children in care has qualified teacher status, appropriate seniority and sufficient time and experience to fulfil this statutory role.

A named governor will be nominated to link with the Designated Teacher and all governors will be fully aware of the statutory guidance for LAC or PLAC children.

The Head Teacher and nominated governor will monitor the role of the Designated Teacher to ensure that all LAC or PLAC children make accelerated and rapid progress and that the whole school staff have relevant skills, knowledge and understanding.

Regular communication between the Head Teacher and Governing Body and the Designated Teacher should include:

- The number of care-experienced children on roll
- Compliance and quality of individual children's Personal Education Plan (for Children in Care)
- The use and impact of the Pupil Premium Plus grant in raising educational outcomes
- Attendance and exclusion data (in comparison to children who are not LAC or previously LAC)
- Progress and attainment data (in comparison to children who are not LAC or previously LAC)
- Destinations for LAC or PLAC children that leave Townley Primary School

2.2 The Designated Teacher for Children in Care (DT) The Designated Person for Children previously in Care (DP)

Our Designated Teacher and Designated Person of Townley School will:

- Have a full understanding of relevant statutory guidance and attend relevant training as required
- Have a lead responsibility in promoting and raising the educational achievement of every care LAC or PLAC child on the school roll
- Ensure every child in care has a high quality up to date Personal Education Plan (PEP) and regularly monitor the progress towards desirable outcomes
- Monitor the effective spend of the pupil premium plus grant to maximise educational outcomes for children in care
- Ensure the social, emotional, mental health and well-being needs of LAC or previously LAC children are recognised and prioritised
- Take the lead responsibility for helping all school staff to understand the factors that can affect how care-experienced children learn and achieve, any barriers they might face and the impact of trauma and poor attachments
- Act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and individuals in relation to care-experienced children
- Share confidential and personal information on a need to know basis only
- Actively encourage and promote home learning and extra-curricular activities
- Recognise the impact of transition and plan accordingly

2.3 Townley School staff

Our staff will ensure their part in embedding a 'LAC and PLAC friendly culture' which is attachment-aware and trauma-informed. This may include attending training, referring to the Designated Teacher for advice and sharing accurate information and data with the Designated Teacher. Our staff will hold high expectations of and aspirations for care-experienced children.

Policy and Procedure

3.1 Staff Development and Training

We, the Head Teacher and Governing Body will ensure that the Designated Teacher and Designated Person are trained for the role when they come to post and will continue to support them to access ongoing professional development pertinent to the role. All staff are encouraged to participate in training that will enable them to meet the needs of care-experienced children more effectively and the Designated Teacher will raise awareness of typical issues and barriers for these children at a whole school level.

3.2 Admissions

In line with national guidance Townley School prioritises the admission of LAC children.

The importance of a thorough and planned transition is recognised and this may include:

- Transition meetings between schools
- The swift transfer of information between schools
- Additional school visits and identification of staff mentor and/or peer buddy
- Additional support and planning for care-experienced children at times of transition
- Structured activities to 'say goodbye', in recognition of the impact of broken attachments and loss

3.3 Attendance and Punctuality

School attendance procedures will reflect the specific needs of LAC or PLAC children. This may include reasonable adjustments such as celebrating 100% attendance despite incidents of non-attendance due to care placement moves.

Where there is a concern about attendance or punctuality Townley School will speak to the child, carer / parent, social worker and other relevant professionals including the Virtual School where a child is in care.

3.4 Exclusions

Past experiences of LAC and PLAC will be considered when designing and implementing the school's Behaviour Policy and Suspension and Exclusion Policy. The 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 an 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 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, the 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.

The 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.

3.5 Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)

Where a LAC child is allocated pupil premium plus, it is to be used for the benefit of their educational needs. Townley School will ensure that:

- The allocation of PP+ promotes high aspirations and seeks to secure the best educational outcomes
- The extra funding provided by the PP+ reflects the significant additional barriers faced by CYP in care
- For children in care, the allocation of PP+ will be linked to clear desirable outcomes as identified in the Personal Education Plan (PEP)

3.6 Pupils with SEND

Support for LAC with SEND, who do not need an EHC plan, 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. 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.

4. 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 practiced 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.