



## **Policy for Designated Teacher for looked after and previously looked after children.**

### **Introduction**

The Governors of Southfield Primary Academy recognise that looked after and previously looked after children are at a greater risk of underachieving and have a greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. The Governors agree with the DfE statutory guidance assertion which states “Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that looked after children are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve and make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well being.”

All staff and governors are committed to ensuring improved educational and life chances for looked after and previously looked after children.

### **Objectives**

- To meet the statutory requirements with regards to looked after and previously looked after children.
- designate a teacher in the school to have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of looked after and previously looked-after pupils

(The designated member of staff must be a qualified teacher who has passed their induction period)

- ensure the designated teacher undertakes appropriate training
- ensure that staff in the school know who is the designated member of staff for looked after and previous looked after children

### **Definitions**

**The policy applies to all children defined below which this policy will now refer to as “Looked after or previously looked after children”**

- a child ‘looked-after by a local authority’ is one who is looked after within the meaning of section 22 of Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014;

- a previously looked-after child is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is

to live with any person<sup>3</sup>, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales; and

- a child is in 'state care' outside England and Wales if s/he is in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.

### **Context - Why do Looked after and previously looked after children need a designated teacher?**

The Dfe statutory guidance explains that *“Many looked-after and previously looked-after children have suffered disrupted learning, may have missed extended periods of school, and many of them have special educational needs (SEN). The gaps in their learning and, in many cases the emotional impact of their experiences, are likely to have become significant barriers to their progress. The complexity of this fragmented educational experience with high incidence of SEN, needs careful assessment and planning. Excellent practice in supporting looked-after and previously looked-after children already exists in many schools. The designated teacher role is statutory to help ensure that effective practice becomes universal. Attainment data for looked-after and previously looked-after children shows that they do not perform as well at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 when compared to non-looked-after children.”*

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Governing Body**

The Governors are responsible for reviewing and approving and monitoring the implementation of this policy. They delegate the day to day implementation of the policy to the Head Teacher .

Governors should utilise the guidance given in paragraph 6 and 7 in the statutory guidance “Designated member of staff for looked after and previously looked after children” in order to hold the Head Teacher to account for the implementation of this policy. This should be done at least annually.

#### **Head Teacher**

The Head Teacher or Head of School is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented and that all staff are familiar with it. They are responsible for ensuring an appropriately qualified and



trained designated member of staff is appointed and providing that member of staff with the necessary support to carry out their role.

### **Teachers and support staff**

Teachers and support staff should be familiar with this policy and know who the Designated Teacher for looked after and previously looked after children is. They should understand the implication of being a looked after or previously looked after child on life chances and understand their own role in improving it. They should seek the advice and support of the Designated Teacher whenever it is necessary.

### **Responsibilities of the Designated Member of staff for looked after and previously looked after children**

See APPENDIX 1.

### **Related Policies**

- Safeguarding and child protection
- Confidentiality policy

### **Named Designated Teacher**

The name of the Designated Teacher for looked after and previously looked after children in Southfield Primary Academy is **Rachel Cosgrove**

***This policy was approved by the Full Governing Body in their meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2021***

***Next review Due; Jan 2023***

## APPENDIX 1

### Responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children

- Have regard to the DfE statutory guidance “The Designated teacher for looked after and previously looked after children”
- Carry out appropriate training including update training. Cascade information for staff development.
- Contributing to the development and review of whole school policies and procedures to ensure that they do not unintentionally put looked-after and previously looked-after children at a disadvantage; including admissions, exclusion, SEN, transition .
- Promoting a culture in which looked-after and previously looked-after children;
  - are able to discuss their progress and be involved in setting their own targets,
  - have their views taken seriously, and are supported to take responsibility for their own learning;
  - are prioritised in any selection of pupils who would benefit from one-to one tuition, and that they have access to academic focused study support;
  - are encouraged to participate in school activities and in decision making within the school and the care system;
  - believe they can succeed and aspire to further and higher education or highly skilled jobs;
  - can discuss difficult issues (such as SEN, bullying, attendance) in a frank manner with a sympathetic and empathetic adult.
- Promoting a culture in which teacher understand the considerable impact being looked after or previously looked after has on children’s lives and being a source of advice for teachers about how the whole school can support the educational achievement of these pupils;
  - differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual pupils who are looked-after or previously looked-after children;
  - have high expectations of looked-after and previously looked-after children’s learning and set targets to accelerate educational progress;
  - are aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation (attachment awareness) from birth families and that some children may find it difficult to build relationships of trust with adults because of their experiences, and how this might affect the child’s behaviour;

- understand how important it is to see looked-after and previously looked-after children as individuals rather than as a homogeneous group, not publicly treat them differently from their peers, and show sensitivity about who else knows about their looked-after or previously looked-after status;
  - appreciate the central importance of the looked-after child's PEP (Personnel Education Plan) in helping to create a shared understanding between teachers, carers, social workers and, most importantly, the child's own understanding of how they are being supported;
  - have the level of understanding they need of the role of social workers, Virtual School Heads and carers, and how the function of the PEP fits into the wider care planning duties of the authority which looks after the child
- Working directly with looked-after and previously looked-after children and their carers, parents or guardians including;
    - Understand that some carers do not always feel confident to approach schools and so the designated teacher enables the home school relationship to be effective by making themselves and their role known to the carer.
    - Ensuring that carers and the child receive early notification of school meetings, parents evenings and other events to help them engage with their child's learning.
    - Liaise over the educational progress of the child, encourage high aspirations and advise how school work can be supported at home
    - Ensuring that carers of previously looked after children are aware of the criteria for PP+ funding and the benefits of securing it
  - having lead responsibility for the development and implementation of looked after children's PEP (Personnel Education Plan <sup>1</sup>) within school in partnership with others as necessary including;
    - Organise and Chair PEP meetings (meeting the minimum number of meetings required in accordance with national guidelines)
    - Ensure the schools contribution to the development of PEPs is made as soon as possible and within 20 days of the child or young person entering care or joining a new school.
    - Ensure the educational targets in the PEP are SMART and linked to identified needs. They should reflect the outcomes everyone, most importantly the child or young person, aspires to.
    - Seek the young person's views and ensure they are noted on the PEP
    - Send a copy of the needs and targets from the PEP to relevant colleagues in the school
    - Keep PEP and other records up to date, particularly in time to inform review meetings
    - Produce and submit the online PEP form (vehicle for requesting PP+ funding)

- Ensure school support systems are in place where they have been agreed in the PEP and that referrals are made to any education agencies that can provide agreed additional support
- Ensure the transfer of records if a looked after child moves school
  
- Ensure the school is represented at the 6 monthly LAC reviews organised by the Local Authority.
  
- working closely with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to.
  
- Liaise with the Virtual School for Looked after Children (VSLAC), including seeking advice, reporting progress and inviting to PEP meetings as appropriate.
  
- Take the lead in monitoring the academic progress of looked after and previously looked after children. For looked after children this must be reported to the Virtual School.

#### 1. The personal education plan (PEP)

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

The PEP should be prepared with the child and carer, in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers and agencies, and be linked to the Care Plan meetings. Where appropriate, the PEP should take account of any Individual Education Plan (IEP), Pastoral Support Plan (PSP), Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP), career plan or any other relevant plans. The PEP should inform and be reviewed, concurrently with the Care Plan, i.e. within 28 days, 3 months and 6 months and, at least, every 6 months.