

MAGDALEN COLLEGE SCHOOL

Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children Policy

Statutory Policy – Annual Review

GOVERNORS' EDUCATION & WELFARE COMMITTEE

Date next due for review by committee	Reviewed by committee	Any Changes YES/NO	Approved by Committee
	16 November 2021	New policy	16 November 2021
November 2022	22 November 2022	Updated	22 November 2022
November 2023	04 March 2025	No	04 March 2025
March 2026			

1. Aims

Our looked-after and previously looked-after children policy aims to:

- Set out how our school will support and make provision for looked-after and previously looked-after pupils
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for looked-after and previously looked-after pupils

The school's aims in relation to looked-after and previously looked-after pupils are to meet the needs of individuals in order that they can meet their potential as learners and to enable them to make a positive contribution to the community.

2. Objectives

In order to meet our aims our objectives are to:

- Provide curriculum access for all
- Work with pupils, parents and carers, and other agencies, as required, to identify pupils' needs both educational and welfare, to plan and deliver appropriate provision
- Ensure that staff have the skills needed to meet the needs of each pupil
- Evaluate the effectiveness of provision to inform future decision about how needs can be met

3. Legislation and guidance

Available from www.Gov.uk

Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children (DfE February 2018)

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

The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children (DfE February 2018)

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

Care Leavers strategy (DfE October 2014)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-leaver-strategy>

4. Definitions

- 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.
- Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if s/he is in their care or is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They include the following:
 - (i) children who are accommodated by the local authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20);
 - (ii) children who are the subject of a care order (section 31(1)) or interim care order (section 38); and
 - (iii) children who are the subject of emergency orders for the protection of the child (section 44).

- 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, 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.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children

The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children is Leah Martindale, Pastoral Deputy Headteacher

The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children will:

- be a central point of initial contact within the school.
- have a leadership role in promoting the educational achievement of every looked-after and previously looked-after child on the school's roll. This involves, working with Virtual School Heads to promote the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children and promoting a whole school culture where the personalised learning needs of every looked-after and previously looked-after child matters and their personal, emotional and academic needs are prioritised.
- 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.
- take responsibility for ensuring school staff understand the things which can affect how looked-after and previously looked-after children learn and achieve and how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils.
- appreciate the central importance of the looked-after child's PEP in helping to create a shared understanding between teachers, carers, social workers and other agencies
- have a day-to-day role in promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, either directly or through appropriate delegation.
- have high expectations of looked-after and previously looked-after children's learning and set targets to accelerate educational progress
- for previously looked-after children, understand the importance of involving the child's parents or guardians in decisions affecting their child's education, and be a contact for parents or guardians who want advice or have concerns about their child's progress at school.
- contribute 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
- 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

5.2 The child protection/safeguarding governor

The Child protection/Safeguarding Governor is Neil Arnold

The child protection/safeguarding governor will:

- help to raise awareness of looked-after and previously looked-after pupils' issues at governing board meetings
- ensure that the quality and effectiveness of the provision for looked-after and previously looked-after pupils within the school meets the needs of pupils and reports this to the governing body
- work with the designated teacher to determine the strategic development of the looked-after and previously looked-after policy and the provision in the school

5.3 The headteacher

The headteacher will:

- work with the designated teacher and child protection governor to ensure the welfare and educational needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children are regularly reviewed and met.
- take overall responsibility for the provision and progress of looked-after and previously looked-after pupils
- ensure that regular PEPs and Looked After Children (LAC) reviews are carried out in accordance with guidance from Virtual Schools

5.4 Leaders of learning

Leaders of learning will:

- review progress of looked-after and previously looked-after pupils within their year group, in accordance with the school calendar, and identify those whose progress is falling behind that of their peers
- review the behavior and attendance of looked-after and previously looked-after pupils within their year groups, and ensure that appropriate interventions are in place, where there are concerns
- Liaise with the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after and heads of faculty to ensure that individual pupils' needs are being met in the classroom.

5.5 Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- the progress and development of every pupil in their class
- working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- ensuring that they use all the information available about individual pupils provided by the designated teacher looked-after and previously looked-after to inform their teaching
- ensuring they follow this looked-after and previously looked-after policy

6 Admissions

Please refer to the schools' current Admissions policy

7 Personal Education Plan (PEP)

- All looked-after children must have a PEP.

- If a pupil joins without a PEP, the designated teacher will pursue the matter with the child's social worker who has a statutory obligation to initiate the PEP
- The PEP is a vital document because it provides a 'collective memory' about the child's education. It is an integral part of a looked-after child's wider care plan.
- The designated teacher will lead on the PEP in school, other school staff including the SENDCO may contribute. The PEP is used to ensure the pupil's progress towards the education targets are monitored. They will have overall responsibility for monitoring and tracking attainment and ensuring that identified actions are put into place. They should work closely with other staff in school to judge whether teaching and learning and intervention strategies are effective in supporting well-being and attainment.
- The PEP will also contain the voice of the child and this should be sought prior to any PEP meetings being held to determine who is going to be the voice of the child in the instance that the child doesn't wish to attend.
- The PEP is reviewed regularly in accordance with the local authority guidelines the child is placed with.
- The PEP, in addition to being part of the overall care plan, is part of a looked-after child's official school record. If a child moves school, the PEP should be forwarded as a matter of urgency, along with other school records, to the new school when known, and to the main contact (usually the child's social worker) in the local authority which looks after the child.

8 Pupil Premium Funding

Pupil Premium plus funding will be used appropriately to provide additional identified support and intervention, considering the specific needs of the pupil. The designated teacher will work with the social worker, carer and pupil to identify support which will help the pupil achieve their potential. All funding for looked-after children will be monitored and agreed by the Virtual School and will be discussed, reviewed, and agreed at the pupil's PEP meeting.

9 Special educational needs

Looked-after children and previously looked-after children are significantly more likely to have special educational needs (SEN) than their peers. Of those with SEN, a significant proportion will have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC plans). It is vital that the designated teacher is aware of the SEN needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children.

In respect of looked-after children, the designated teacher should ensure that:

- the special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice 0 to 25 years, as it relates to looked-after children, is followed; and
- pupil's PEPs work in harmony with their EHC plan to, coherently and comprehensively, set out how their needs are being met.
- ensure that they work closely with the virtual school and the the SENDCO at Magdalen College School, pupils have access to further assessment and support where necessary.

10 Mental Health

Looked-after children and previously looked-after children are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional, and mental health issues than their peers. This can impact on their behaviour and education.

Magdalen College school will ensure that school staff are able to: identify signs of potential issues and understand how to access assessment and support where necessary; understand the impact trauma, attachment disorder and other mental health issues can have on looked-after and previously looked-after children and their ability to engage in learning.

11 Exclusions

The past experiences of looked-after and previously looked-after children can impact on their behaviour. The Governing body, the head teacher and the designated teacher must refer to the DfE's guidance on *Exclusions from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England*.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/921405/20170831_Exclusion_Stat_guidance_Web_version.pdf

In line with that guidance, the head teacher should, as far as possible, avoid excluding any looked-after child.

Where a looked-after child is at risk of either fixed term or permanent exclusion, the designated teacher should contact the relevant authority's virtual school head 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.

For previously looked-after pupils the school should look to support the child to improve their behaviour to avoid exclusion becoming necessary. Where a previously looked-after child is at risk of exclusion, the designated teacher should talk to the child's parents or guardians who may seek the advice of the virtual school on avoiding exclusion.