

*Care. Aspire. Achieve*

# Alexandra Park Primary

## Policy for the Education of Looked After and Previously Looked After Children



## September 2022

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## **Definition**

For the purposes of this policy a child 'looked after by a local authority' is one who is looked after within the meaning of section 22 of the 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, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales. A child is in 'state care' outside of England and Wales if s/he is in 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.

## **School Commitment**

Alexandra Park Primary School recognises that looked after children and previously looked after children may have very specific needs and may be coping with trauma, abuse or rejection, and are likely to experience personal distress and uncertainty.

Nationally, looked after children and previously looked after children significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Their academic and social progress is likely to be affected by their experiences, and compounded by instability in their personal circumstances. 75% of, looked after children and previously looked after children leave education with no formal qualifications. Only 12% go on to further education compared with 68% of the general population. Helping looked after children and previously looked after children succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority in our school.

Alexandra Park Primary School recognises that looked after children and previously looked after children can experience specific and significant disadvantage within a school setting, and are committed to ensuring they reach their potential in all areas. We are aware that looked after children and previously looked after children may have specific difficulties in transport and attendance, doing homework, getting parental consent for activities, obtaining funding for extra activities, obtaining correct uniform and equipment, as well as stigma about their circumstances. At Alexandra Park Primary School, we believe that all looked after children and previously looked after children should have every opportunity to access excellent educational provision and achieve their true potential. We, as a school community, aim to be champions for looked after children and previously looked children, to address the unacceptably high level of underachievement by bringing their attainment more in line with that of the general population so that they personally experience improved outcomes in every aspect of their lives, now and in the future as an adult.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Headteacher**

- Identify, or be, the Designated Teacher for Looked after children and previously looked after children, whose role is set out below. It is essential that another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take sick leave.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusions of Looked after children and previously looked after children and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of Looked after children and previously looked after children to all parties involved.
- Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.
- Ensure that Pupil Premium funding is used to good effect.

### **The governing body**

The governors will carry out their role in line with statutory guidance.

**The designated governor in school is Glenys Millins.**

The governing body, head teacher and school leadership team will support the education of looked after and previously looked after children by ensuring that the designated teacher has:

- Appropriate seniority and professional experience to provide leadership, training, information, challenge and advice to others
- Training opportunities, including time away from timetable commitments<sup>5</sup>, to acquire and keep up-to-date the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding, including a good knowledge of SEN
- Appropriate monitoring arrangements to ensure that the school is providing appropriate support for looked-after and previously looked-after children

They will also ensure that school policies consider the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children. This consideration will include additional arrangements for looked –after and previously looked-after children when considering;

- Admission
- Exclusion
- Behaviour management
- Mental health needs
- Specific safeguarding challenges

- Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- Teaching and learning needs
- Educational visits and extended school activities

The Governing body will hold the school to account on how it supports its looked-after and previously looked-after children, including;

- how the Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) is used
- level of progress

### **1. The designated teacher**

The designated teacher will carry out their role in line with statutory guidance.

**The designated teacher is Charlotte Millward.**

The designated teacher (DT) is the central point of initial contact within the school. They will join up resources and support to minimise any disruption to a child's learning.

- The DT will work with Virtual Schools to promote the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children by 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.
- They will take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils. Our school will make sure that all staff:
  - have high expectations of 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)
  - understand how important it is to see children as individuals
  - appreciate the central importance of the looked-after child's PEP
  - • 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.
- The designated teacher will have a direct and day-to-day role in promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children. They will
  - Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies and procedures

- Ensure the pupil premium plus is used effectively within school to have the greatest positive impact on children’s learning. This includes;
  - Ensuring parents and guardians of previously looked-after children are reminded that they need to inform the school if their child is eligible to attract PP+
- Ensure looked after and previously looked after children are prioritised for support; listened to; encouraged to participate; and believe they can achieve through an ethos of aspiration.
- The designated teacher will chair Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings to effectively plan to utilise school resources and ensure each child has access to the support they need to achieve.
  - These meetings will take place 3 times per academic year to review support and deploy effective resources.
  - Documentation will be coproduced with family and social care and shared with appropriate professionals as part of the child’s care plan.
- The designated teacher will work closely with professional agencies including the foster carer; allocated social worker; virtual school head; learning and behaviour support agencies; EPS; SENDs, HYMSs, local police/youth offending service; community nurses and any other professional agency involved in supporting the child and family.

## **2. Transfer out of care**

- When children cease to be looked-after the designated teacher will maintain links with VSHs for the purposes of promoting the educational achievement of this group of previously looked-after children.
- The Designated teacher will ensure that family members and carers are aware that they must pass on information about previous care status to any education settings. This information cannot be passed from school to school as it will be protected information under GDPR.

## **3. Voice of the child**

- We will listen to the voice of looked-after and previously looked-after children as a vital part of successfully understanding and meeting their needs.

## **4. Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)**

Looked-after children and children adopted from care, on a special guardianship or child arrangements order are eligible for PP+ funding. This is additional funding

provided to help improve the attainment of looked-after and previously looked-after children and close the attainment gap between this group and their peers.

- All pupil premium spending will take account of the specific needs of eligible pupils.
- PP+ reflects the significant additional barriers faced by looked-after and previously looked-after children
- PP+ is allocated according to need rather than a personal budget.
- Our school will use pupil premium to address need in social, academic and mental health needs. This will be in agreement with the VSH from the child's home authority

## **5. Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

- Looked-after children and previously looked-after children are significantly more likely to have SEN than their peers. Of those with SEN, a significant proportion will have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC plans).
- The designated teacher will ensure that:
  - They work closely with the SENCO and local authority support team where applicable
  - Children's PEPs work in harmony with their EHC plan

## **6. Meeting Mental Health needs**

- 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.
- The designated teachers has an important role in ensuring they and other school staff can identify signs of potential issues and understand where the school can draw on specialist services
- Our school will utilise the CAMHS education link to support understanding mental health needs for looked-after and previously looked –after children.
- This will enable us to improve a whole school understanding of attachment and trauma and the impact on learning and behaviour for vulnerable children.
- We also recognise the impact on staff when working with traumatised children. We will ensure all staff feel supported to address their own needs as well as those of the vulnerable children they are caring for.

## **7. Exclusions**

- The past experiences of looked-after and previously looked-after children can impact on their behaviour
- Where a looked-after child is at risk of either fixed term or permanent exclusion, the designated teacher will contact the relevant authority's 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.

## **8. Admissions and Transitions**

At Alexandra Park Primary School, we will:

- ensure that all applications for new admissions or transfers are processed through Stockport's admissions team
- ensure that on admission or transfer all relevant information is obtained at the outset
- make every effort to provide continuity of schooling and educational experience
- prioritise looked after children and previously looked after children within school's own admissions procedures and aim to admit pupils in less than 20 days (if appropriate), following an education planning meeting as requested by the admissions team, recognising the importance of re-establishing school stability for looked after children and previously looked after children

## **9. Attendance**

At Alexandra Park Primary School, we will:

- Establish a 'first day of absence' procedure where attendance becomes a problem
- Inform the social worker when a child is absent for three consecutive days or more
- Ensure that the school's attendance officer communicates with the virtual school link teacher who may contact school to query attendance.