
Looked After & Previously Looked After Children Policy

Recommended by: MRa

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Ratified by: LAGB

Signed:



Position on the Board: Chair

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Next Review: Spring term 2028

Policy Tier (Central/Hub/School): School AV

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

Table of Amendments

Date Amended	Page	Amendment
01/11/2024	11	Change 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 states on page 14' to 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 states on page 47'.
01/11/2024	11	Change 'Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England (2015)' to 'Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England (2024)'
01/11/2024	12	Change "The exclusion rates for certain groups of pupils are consistently higher than average. This includes: pupils with SEN; pupils eligible for Free School Meals; looked after children and pupils from certain ethnic groups." To "There are longstanding national trends which show that particular groups of children are more likely to be excluded from school"(P.23, Para 53) going on to list: "Pupils who have a social worker, including looked after children and previously looked after children"(P.24 Para 58)".
01/11/2024	13	Remove 22. 'As well as having disproportionately high rates of exclusion, there are certain groups of pupils with additional needs who are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of exclusion. This includes pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP), SEN and looked after children. Head teachers/Principals should, as far as possible, avoid excluding permanently any pupil with an EHCP or a looked after child.' As no longer in guidance
01/11/2024	13	Amend paragraph numbers.
01/11/2024	13	Change 'Statutory guidance for local authorities and schools on Information Passports and Personal Learning Plans and Core Entitlement for all pupils in Pupil Referral Units and other Alternative Provision (2009). To Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (2013) as guidance withdrawn on 7th March 2024. Content amended accordingly.

Aims of the Policy

To support our Looked After Children (LAC) and previously Looked After Children in a safe and secure environment and give them access to every opportunity to continually achieve and enjoy their learning.

To recognise and support the specific challenges faced by LAC/PLAC (see Appendix 1), while continuing to foster a culture of high expectations of learning, behaviour and progress. The Trust recognises that equality of opportunity does not mean equal provision for all, but indeed that some children, such as LAC/PLAC, need additional support in order to be given equal chance of excelling at school.

Definition

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after if s/he is in the care of, or is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by, a local authority. The term 'Looked After Children' (LAC) refers to:

- (i) Children accommodated by the Local Authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- (ii) Children subject to a care order (section 31.1) or interim care order (section 38)
- (iii) Children who are subject to emergency orders for the protection of the child (section 44)

A previously looked-after child (PLAC) 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 other person, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales.

The Trust

- Will ensure that there is a qualified and experienced teacher named as the **Designated Teacher (DT)** for Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children, and that s/he is enabled to carry out his/her responsibilities.
- Ensure that the DT has access to appropriate training, and have sufficient time to carry out duties and to receive support.
- Support the Principal, DT and other members of staff in ensuring the needs of Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children are met, and in particular to have a **named governor for LAC/PLAC**
- Receive as a minimum an annual report from the DT (see Appendix 4)

The Principal

- will ensure that the DT carries out their role to the highest possible standard, as outlined in Appendix 2
- will ensure that all staff, led by the DT, fulfil their roles and responsibilities so that LAC/PLAC become the best they possibly can be

The Designated Teacher (DT)

- Will ensure that all staff are fully aware and up to date with information about their roles and responsibilities regarding LAC/PLAC as outlined in appendix 3
- Ensure CPD to keep staff, including new staff, fully informed about LAC/PLAC

All Staff

- Will ensure they know and fulfil their roles and responsibilities relating LAC/PLAC
- Will be fully aware of the information relating to LAC/PLAC (Appendix 5)
- Will know who LAC/PLAC are, and do all they professionally can to support LAC/PLAC

All Governors and staff

- will support individual local authorities in their statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children

BACKGROUND (APPENDIX 1)

The Trust recognises that many Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children have suffered disrupted learning and may have missed extended periods of school. 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 any fragmented educational experience needs careful assessment and planning. There is potential that these gaps may have grown during the Coronavirus pandemic.

We understand that all Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children will have suffered significant loss and trauma and may have experienced abuse and/or neglect. This is likely to have considerable impact on their ability to access the curriculum. Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children are prioritised in this school for additional support to manage their learning and behaviour, where needed.

We also recognise that whilst in care, some events can retrigger traumatic experiences (eg a court hearing, contact with family or friends, or an aspect of the curriculum that cannot be anticipated). This can affect behaviour and may affect progress, even for pupils who had previously been settled and 'on track'. Staff working with the child will need to use additional strategies, specific to that child's needs.

THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN/ PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN IN THE SCHOOL (APPENDIX 2)

The Role of the Designated Teacher is:

- To promote a culture in which Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children believe they can succeed, and aspire to further training, education and higher education, and/or employment.
- To maintain an up to date register of Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children and inform colleagues on a need to know basis. Sensitivity and confidentiality are critical.
- To attend relevant training so that they are aware of statutory responsibilities and procedures for Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children.
- Ensure that they keep the school up to date with current legislation and its implications for the school in respect of Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children.
- To understand the impact of trauma, loss and separation and how this can affect behaviour. Including how attachment styles can affect their learning.
- To co-ordinate/deliver training to staff, (teaching and non-teaching), and governors so they are aware of the complex issues and educational disadvantage affecting many Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children and young people. To understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome any disadvantages, and the need to promote the involvement of Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children in, for example: school homework clubs, extra- curricular activities, home reading schemes, school councils.
- Report to the Governing Body annually on the performance of the Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children who are on the roll of the school (see section *Responsibilities of the School Governing Body*).
- To ensure all teachers know when there is a Looked After Child/ Previously Looked After Child in their class, and what that child's specific needs are. This does not mean that all staff are given all the details about a Looked After Child's/ Previously Looked After Child's background.
- To develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers, social care colleagues and other Children's Services professionals who support the child.
- To be the first point of contact for other professionals working with Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children and ensure the speedy transfer of information between agencies. To ensure in conjunction with the social worker, that all relevant education and care information is available at the point of admission into the school so that appropriate placement can occur. Where a child leaves the school, to pass the child's records to the social worker if possible, so as to avoid admission delays with the new school. Where difficulties arise in obtaining information from a previous school, the Integrated Service for Looked After Children (ISL)/Virtual School can help to obtain this information.

- To monitor the educational progress of all Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children in order to inform the school's development plan. To ensure that all Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children have targets which although realistic are also challenging. The targets should reflect the high expectations we hold about Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children.
- Ensure the child, carer(s), social worker and other relevant parties receive early notification of school-based meetings, parent's evenings and other events and that communication, both written and verbal, remains regular and positive.
- To intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement, repeated or sustained absence, internal truancy or risk of exclusion.
- To identify with teachers the student's strengths and gaps in learning, and any barriers to learning. This should form the basis of the PEP, or the refinement of it.
- To ensure the young person has an up-to-date Personal Education Plan (PEP). If not, then to arrange the meeting in partnership with the child's social worker. The DT will ensure that the school has updated information on the child's attainment, progress and educational needs, regardless of whether a PEP meeting has been arranged.
- To ensure that the actions identified in the plan are implemented and reviewed at least annually, but preferably termly.
- To facilitate the completion of the student section of the PEP.
- Ensure that someone is available to attend LAC Reviews on each child/young person and/or always prepares a written report which promotes the continuity and stability of their education.
- To supervise admission of new Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children and ensure appropriate induction and transition support into school.
- It is important that each Looked After Child starts school with the correct uniform and a school planner where appropriate. Most Looked After Children do not want to be identified as different, and staff will respect and support this.
- To consider, wherever possible:
 - that the child starts school on the same day that other children are admitted
 - that they have a 'buddy' allocated from the first day
 - that they know where to go to report to, in the event of any difficulties that may arise.

- Ensure that each pupil in care has an identified member of staff they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher but should be based on the child's own wishes. **Members of staff who take on this role may themselves need some emotional support at times, by an appropriate member of staff. They should also be alert to any child protection issues, any disclosures that pupils may make and know what action to take. They should link closely therefore with the school's Designated Senior Member of Staff for Safeguarding and Child Protection.**
- Ensure that Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children play a full and active part in the life of the school and have access to extended school provision where required.
- Ensure that if/when the child transfers to another school, all relevant information is forwarded to the receiving school with minimal delay.
- If a Looked After Child on roll moves educational setting, the DT will advise the social worker about the likely impact of a move on the child's education and what should be done to minimise this.
- To liaise with the appropriate ISL/Virtual school team member for the twice yearly monitoring of the Looked After Children in the school.
- To contact/liaise with ISL/Virtual School if a Looked After Child in the school needs extra support
- If a Looked After Child transfers out of care, their educational needs are unlikely to have changed. The Designated Teacher will liaise with/hand-over monitoring and support to YTL/HOY, in order to ensure that the child's needs continue to be met.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL STAFF (APPENDIX 3)

The school staff will:

- Ensure any child in care/previously in care is sensitively supported and that confidentiality is maintained.
- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievements of Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children.
- Respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of Personal Education Plans and other documentation needed as part of review meetings.
- Contribute to the Designated Teacher's requests for information on educational attainment and needs, as appropriate.
- Attend LAC Reviews as a professional with direct understanding of the child/young person's educational needs, where appropriate, and as indicated by the Designated Teacher.
- Be aware of challenging behaviours that can result from trauma. Adapt behaviour management strategies in response to any challenging behaviour resulting from re-triggering of trauma, and seek advice from the Designated Teacher, as needed.
- Provide a supportive climate in school, enabling children in care to achieve stability.
- As a corporate parent, make additional efforts to communicate to Looked After students/ Previously Looked After students your belief in their ability to achieve.

DESIGNATED TEACHER ANNUAL REPORT TO GOVERNORS (APPENDIX 4)

Governors must receive as a minimum an annual report from the DT. The report should typically include:

- The number of Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children in the school (both Worcestershire and from other Local Authorities).
- A clear overview of the educational needs and progress of Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children in the school
- Attendance and fixed term exclusion compared to the whole school population
- Any SEN
- Whether any Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children are gifted or talented, or high prior attainers (HPA)
- Destinations of Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children who leave the school
- Ensure that school policies and procedures give Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children equal access and/or positively discriminate Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children by prioritising their needs eg
 - Transition support
 - Public examinations
 - Additional support
 - Curriculum planning
 - Extra-curricular activities
 - Work experience and career guidance
- How the teaching and learning needs of Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children are reflected in school development plans.
- Whether the school is making full use of all available resources, in order to maximise opportunity for Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children.
- As part of arrangements for monitoring the effectiveness of the role, the report should enable the Governing body to make overall judgments about the DT role in the context of wider school planning.

Confidentiality

The Designated Teacher will decide, in conjunction with relevant local authority staff, their approach to sharing sensitive information about an individual child. This is not just about keeping records but also about a child's identity in school. Many Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children are reluctant for information to be known, as they may feel stigmatised or different because they do not live with their families. For other children there will be official requirements that their status is not identified. All staff must be sensitive to the degree of information disclosure needed, according to the case and situation. All effort is taken to fully include the Looked After Child/ Previously Looked After Child in the school and local community, and steps are taken to avoid stigmatising. For example, the DT will address any parental or community concerns with individuals, on an 'as and when basis'. Teaching staff will address any issues or prejudice amongst students through the curriculum (preferably when the Looked After Child/ Previously Looked After Child is not present).

The DT will decide, with local authority staff, the extent to which information will be shared, and with which staff, including Teaching Assistants, on a case-by-case basis. It may not be necessary to share details of the child's traumatic past, where an understanding can be reached about the child's current needs and strategies to support these. Some cases may require selected staff to understand how specific previous experiences are impacting on current behaviour.

Where information is shared by selected staff, the young person is made aware of this, although how this is shared with them will depend on their age and understanding. (The explanation should emphasise that the school, social worker and carers are working together to promote the young person's education). For a child who is newly looked after, it is likely to be important to establish his/her view of their changed circumstances, and to monitor how this impacts on their behaviour, attendance and performance.

Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children may need adult support to prepare for when they are asked about home by other students or staff. We aim to plan for this by discussing this with the child, on their entry to the school. (Or before, where possible, eg at a transition planning meeting). This may also need to be considered when their care status changes, as needed.

Looked After Children Placed by Other Authorities

Looked After Children placed in care placements outside their originating authority, and especially those who are a long way from home, are especially vulnerable. It is the responsibility of the originating authority to ensure that the identified educational needs of any child placed in another authority area will be effectively met in the proposed placement before it is agreed.

School and the social worker should ensure that the Personal Education Plan is completed within 20 school days of the young person starting school, and that this is completed with the child and their carer. Where additional support is identified by the school, record this on the Personal Education Plan.

However, where there are delays, school will endeavour to gain information from the previous school. Good practice would be to assess educational needs promptly and to plan for additional support where needed. This can occur before a PEP meeting and in readiness for the PEP.

In Worcestershire we work with the ISL/Virtual school to ensure that the 'sending' LA has been consulted in order to ensure that all appropriate records are received.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children are likely to have English as an Additional Language and associated learning needs. They have often experienced trauma both in their home country and/or on route to the UK. This group of young people are often at risk of exploitation prior to being taken into care. School will seek support from ISL and Local Authority EAL support professionals about the language and cultural needs of these students on roll. All UASC will need access to enriched language environments. This needs to be carefully planned for, and a tailored timetable will be provided to meet each individual learner's needs. School staff will work closely with the care placement to help meet the student's cultural, social, emotional and personal development needs.

Private Fostering

A child is in private fostering if they live with friends/neighbours or relatives who are one step removed, (e.g. second cousin). The arrangement must exist for longer than 28 days. Placements under this time do not count as private fostering. In accordance with an amendment to the Children Act 2004 schools should alert carers that the latter need to inform children's services of these arrangements by calling the Family Front Door.

Family Front Door: Telephone 01905 822666 8:30am to 5:00pm Monday to Thursday
8:30am to 4:30pm on Friday

Family Front Door: Telephone 01905 768020

(Out of office hours)

The Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005 clearly states that education, health and other professionals have a duty to notify the local authority of a private fostering arrangement that comes to their attention if they are not satisfied that the parent or carer has notified the local authority.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 states on page 47 that "practitioners should, in particular, be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who is privately fostered" If you believe that a child is being privately fostered, you should notify Children's Services: By phone: 01905 822666 or make a referral through the Family Front Door Professional Portal at: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/childrenreferral

Young people who are privately fostered are likely to be experiencing significant upheavals and instability in their home lives. They are likely to need additional pastoral and learning support and may need closer monitoring and tracking of progress. We will implement student progress meetings to tackle barriers to learning on a half termly basis.

Including Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children

Admission

Fewer children are moving care placement, however, there still remains a high degree of mobility within the looked after population, often resulting in a change of school and subsequent gaps in education. It is critical that Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children are admitted to school with minimal delays. Prolonged periods at home can put the foster placement under great pressure and young people more likely to become disaffected.

Where the school is contacted directly by professionals regarding a place for a LAC, it will consider the application in line with the current Admissions Policy and liaise with the child's social worker.

Arriving at School

Some Looked After Children may have long journeys to school, particularly if they live long distances from the school, as a result of changes in care placement. It is important that consideration is given to how late arrivals are managed and recorded, given that this may be out of the child/young person's control. Staff should be sensitive to how they address this.

Attendance

It is vital that Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children have good attendance, as a means to improve their educational outcomes. School closely monitors the attendance of all Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children on roll. Where attendance of a Looked After Child/ Previously Looked After Child is a cause for concern:

The form tutor will raise with the Head of Year any concerns with attendance. Typically, the Head of Year will problem-solve barriers to attendance with the carer and student in a face-to-face meeting at the earliest opportunity. If concerns continue, these will be raised with the Education Welfare Officer/Service and a multi-agency approach to improving attendance and engagement in learning will be planned and recorded as part of the PEP (LAC Review). Holistic needs and barriers to learning should be addressed by identified professionals within a specified time frame on a case-by-case basis

Exclusions

Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England (2015) draws particular attention to LAC as a group particularly at risk of exclusion: *"The exclusion rates for certain groups of pupils are consistently higher than average. This includes: pupils with SEN; pupils eligible for Free School Meals; looked after children and pupils from certain ethnic groups."*

The School will try every practicable means to maintain the child in school and will involve the child's social worker and seek advice and support from Children's Services professionals and ISL/Virtual School as soon as possible.

Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England (2024) sets out the following guidelines for schools:

55. Schools should engage proactively with parents in supporting the behaviour of pupils with additional needs.

[...]

60. Where a looked-after child (LAC) is likely to be subject to a suspension or permanent exclusion, the Designated Teacher (DT) should contact the local authority's VSH as soon as possible. The VSH, working with the DT and others, should consider what additional assessment and support need to be put in place to help the school address the factors affecting the child's behaviour and reduce the need for suspension or permanent exclusion. Where relevant, the school should also engage with a child's social worker, foster carers, or children's home workers.

61. All looked-after children should have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) which is part of the child's care plan or detention placement plan. This should be reviewed every term and any concerns about the pupil's behaviour should be recorded, as well as how the pupil is being supported to improve their behaviour and reduce the likelihood of exclusion. Monitoring of PEPs can be an effective way for VSHs to check on this.

62. Where previously looked-after children face the risk of being suspended or permanently excluded, the school should engage with the child's parents and the school's DT. The school may also seek the advice of the VSH on strategies to support the pupil.

Where a managed move is sought for a Looked After Child/ Previously Looked After Child, steps will need to be taken to minimise the impact of previous multiple rejections that Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children have typically received, and also to ensure that transitions are managed and planned supportively. The aim of such move is usually to encourage behavioural change, provide a fresh start, whilst understanding that a move is likely to have a deeper emotional impact on a Looked After Child/ Previously Looked After Child than other students. The impact of trauma, separation and loss on all Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children should be considered as part of an assessment of needs, when planning significant interventions such as managed moves. We recognise that any move is often seen as another rejection by a Looked After Child/ Previously Looked After Child and the consequences of this can be considerable and long term. These measures are only considered when all other options and strategies have been exhausted.

Part Time and Alternative Provision

Where a part-time timetable is sought to support the Looked After Child to access a curriculum and/or to address a behavioural need, we recognise that the child continues to have an entitlement to a full-time education. Any changes to this must be agreed with the child's social worker and carer through a pastoral support plan or Personal Education Plan. Part-time schooling can place the care placement under enormous pressure, if school is considering this, it must be discussed with the designated member of staff. In the event of part time provision at school, or elsewhere, we will have regard to the *Alternative Provision Statutory guidance for local authorities (2013)*. This outlines the 'core entitlement' that is the baseline of what is expected:

39. Provision should:

- Have a clear purpose with a focus on education and achievement as well as meeting the pupil's needs and rigorous assessment of progress;

- offer appropriate and challenging teaching in English, mathematics and science (including IT) on par with mainstream education – unless this is being provided elsewhere within a package of provision;
- be suited to the pupil's capabilities, give pupils the opportunity to take appropriate qualifications and involve suitably qualified staff who can help pupils make excellent progress; and
- have good arrangements for working with other relevant services such as social care, educational psychology, child and adolescent mental health services, youth offending teams and drug support services etc. (P. 12)

Where a student cannot cope with full time education, they should be provided with as many hours of provision as they are capable of attending. We understand that engagement in full time education is proven to reduce the risk of offending and anti-social behaviour in children/young people. The school will consider how the remaining hours of education per week will be delivered, so that learning is uninterrupted, wherever possible. The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children will have oversight of all the education provided, where it is delivered elsewhere. No students are placed on part time timetables indefinitely. A part time timetable is always part of a plan to return the student to full time education (e.g. a pastoral support plan, or a personal education plan, for alternative provision) and within a specified time frame (e.g. within four weeks).

The guidance suggests that where Looked After Children have been identified as being in need of alternative provision they should be placed in suitable provision within two weeks; and support services should be put into place no later than two weeks after the placement starts. When a LAC/PLAC is placed into alternative provision, we recognise the importance of multi-agency support and will work with education psychologists, CAMHS and social workers as appropriate.

The Personal Education Plan (PEPs)

Personal Education Plans for Looked After Children are statutory planning meetings which should occur within 20 school days of a child becoming looked after and reviewed at least annually. Our practice is to update PEPs termly, this maybe part of the six-month LAC review. A current PEP is in evidence at every statutory review of the child's care plan, and updated if significant changes occur (e.g. change in school place, care placement, school programme disruption). PEPs are significant vehicles for celebrating the achievements of young people and effecting change. Education targets and strategies set through the PEP should be known by teaching staff. This is especially important if issues have arisen regarding classroom, homework or behaviour in certain lessons.

The young person is wherever possible involved in the PEP. Where a young person does not wish to attend, the meeting should nevertheless take place, and they should be encouraged to comment on their education and progress through the relevant section of the PEP. Issues around confidentiality for the Looked After Child should be respected, and information shared on a need-to-know basis. Teaching staff who are in contact with the child should be aware that he/she is looked after, in order to promote an understanding of the child's / young person's needs, and to ensure positive systems of support are in place.

The PEP would encompass all the additional educational plans, such as those described under part time and alternative provision. The PEP will also outline how the Pupil Premium+ would be used to improve outcomes.

Improving learning and Raising Achievement

Curriculum Guidelines

Some aspects of the curriculum may be difficult for Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children such as 'My Family', or designing a card for Mother's/Father's day. In such instances, teachers plan for alternatives. For further advice on the curriculum, advice and ideas are sought from ISL/Virtual School.

Flexible Curriculum

Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children, like many young people, will often need additional support during key stages 3 and 4 in order to make adequate progress. They are given every opportunity to learn and achieve in ways best suited to their individual needs, including being offered a flexible, personalised curriculum. Where there has been extended school absence, or changed syllabuses between school placements, alternative means of securing attainment and progress is always made, and all professionals supporting the student are made aware of what will need to be done to secure this. Where there are strong reasons for not entering a Looked After Child for specific qualifications, these are agreed with the child's carer and social worker and recorded in the Personal Education Plan. High expectations of the child's ability to make good progress should be in evidence by everyone delivering education. School staff will also make efforts to support and encourage other professionals, in the network around the looked after child/ Previously Looked After Child, to have similarly high expectations of progress and behaviour.

Examinations

Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children should be given every opportunity to succeed in their examinations. In the case of absence for any reason, the student is given advice and guidance on revision, and where possible, they are offered revision classes at school and take the exams on school site. Additional support is provided where needed.

Expectations

Low expectations by adults have been identified as one of the key reasons that Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children fail to achieve. Sometimes assumptions are made that limit young people's achievement rather than encourage them to do well. The School and Trust will support an ambitious agenda for Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children through a combination of high expectations and standards with inclusion. This will entail analysis of student performance data, setting targets for achievement and promoting teaching strategies aimed at raising attainment through personalised learning, and addressing barriers to learning.

Extended School

We aim to support all Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children to feel secure and confident in their membership and inclusion of the school community. This is very important for their social and emotional development and can help to raise self-esteem through the acquisition of skills which are often transferable to school. All Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children are encouraged to take a full and active part in positive out of school activities. These may be identified as part of a Personal Education Plan. Funding is sometimes sought via the Pupil Premium+ and/or the 'retained' portion of Pupil Premium that is administered by the Virtual School.

One to One Tuition

All Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children are prioritised for one to one/small group tuition where they are not meeting expected standards or levels of progress. Some Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children, who do not meet these criteria but are also **not** meeting their expected rate of progress, are provided with additional support to boost attainment and progress as part of a reviewed intervention plan.

Further and Higher Education

Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children are under-represented in higher education and there is a high drop-out rate in further education. They need additional encouragement to consider educational and training opportunities post 16, as there may not be any other adult in their lives able to communicate this. The Personal Education Plan and Pathway Plan (in the case of a LAC young person aged 16), provide practical tools for focusing on educational development, including the opportunity for young people to explore their potential for higher education. Where there are opportunities to attend taster days offered by colleges and universities, LAC/PLAC are encouraged to attend. In such circumstance, financial support will be made available, if appropriate.

Key Stage 4

All children need help in choosing options/learning pathways for study at Key Stage 4. Looked After Children/Previously Looked After Children, who have changed care placements or moved school placements frequently, may have missed out on such opportunities, and may have received little or no advice when choosing options. We recognise that it is important that Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children do not miss out on these opportunities. Choices for Key Stage 4 should be recorded in the PEP and the young person should be supported to choose appropriate subjects that will interest and challenge them. Wherever possible we aim to ensure that children arriving part way through key stage 4 can continue with existing subject specification or adapt work to fit new course specifications. The DT encourages staff to be mindful that the student is likely to have personal and social development needs, regardless of academic ability (eg independent living preparation). It should not be assumed that because a Looked After Child/ Previously Looked After Children is achieving at national expectations that they do not need additional support with Personal and Social Development.

Learning Mentors

School will consider allocating a learning mentor to Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children, to act as a regular point of contact through the duration of the child's time at school. School will be mindful that all Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children may need mentoring, and this should not exclude Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children who are high achievers. Mentor support may be needed to provide emotional support and guidance at times of pressure and stress, where language ability and emotional development enable this to occur. Evidence from other schools and LAs indicates very positive outcomes, including increased attainment when barriers to learning are addressed. Many Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children value the time spent with their mentors and the opportunity to share issues concerning their education. There may be no other adult that Looked After Children/ Previously Looked After Children are able to have this detailed discussion with on a regular basis.