

# Looked After Children (LAC) Policy



Approved by Governors Date: STILL TO BE RATIFIED  
Review date: November 2026

## **1. Introduction**

Phoenix Primary School is committed to promoting the educational achievement and wellbeing of Looked-After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked-After Children (PLAC). We recognise that these pupils may have experienced trauma, disruption, instability or loss and may require additional emotional, pastoral and academic support. This policy sets out our approach in line with the Children Act 1989, the Children and Families Act 2014, the Education Act 2002, and the statutory guidance 'Promoting the Education of Looked-After Children and Previously Looked-After Children' (DfE, 2018).

## **2. Definitions**

A Looked-After Child (LAC) is a child who is in the care of a Local Authority or is provided with accommodation by a Local Authority for more than 24 hours, including children in foster care, residential care, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and children subject to care orders. A Previously Looked-After Child (PLAC) is a child who was previously Looked-After but has since left care through adoption, a Special Guardianship Order or a Child Arrangements Order.

## **3. Aims**

Phoenix Primary aims to: ensure LAC and PLAC experience a stable, nurturing and high-quality education; remove barriers to learning and promote positive progress; support social, emotional and mental health needs; ensure prompt, effective communication between school, carers, social workers and other agencies; promote attendance and reduce exclusions; ensure staff understand the needs of LAC and PLAC; and ensure Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and support strategies are implemented effectively.

## **4. Designated Teacher for LAC and PLAC**

The school's Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children is **Mrs Barlow**, the SENDCo. She is responsible for ensuring that statutory requirements are met, staff are supported, and LAC/PLAC receive appropriate provision. The Designated Teacher works closely with the Headteacher, class teachers, carers, Virtual School, social workers and external professionals.

## **5. Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher**

Mrs Barlow will: act as the central point of contact for all matters relating to LAC and PLAC; ensure each child has a high-quality, up-to-date Personal Education Plan (PEP); ensure PEP meetings take place termly and involve carers, social workers and Virtual School representatives; monitor attendance, progress, attainment and wellbeing; ensure the child's voice is included in planning and reviews; ensure staff understand the impact of trauma, attachment and adverse childhood experiences; coordinate additional support such as pastoral interventions, tutoring or external referrals; ensure pupil premium funding for LAC and PLAC is used effectively to support individual needs; and ensure transfer of information during transitions.

## **6. Responsibilities of Class Teachers**

Class teachers must: have high expectations for LAC and PLAC; ensure the child's needs are known, understood and supported; differentiate teaching and provide appropriate resources; contribute to PEP meetings and reviews; maintain confidentiality; work closely with Mrs Barlow to ensure early identification of

concerns; and maintain effective communication with carers and the Designated Teacher.

### **7. Personal Education Plans (PEPs)**

All Looked-After Children must have a PEP which is initiated within 10 working days of entering care and reviewed at least termly. PEPs must include academic targets, social and emotional support, attendance information, safeguarding considerations, pupil voice, and details of funded interventions. PEPs for PLAC may also be used where appropriate to support continuity of provision.

### **8. Attendance**

Attendance for LAC and PLAC is monitored daily. Any concerns regarding attendance are followed up immediately with the carer and relevant professionals. Phoenix Primary promotes strong attendance through supportive pastoral systems.

### **9. Exclusions**

Exclusion of a Looked-After Child should be a last resort. Alternatives such as pastoral support plans, behaviour support, regulation strategies and trauma-informed approaches must be explored first. If exclusion is unavoidable, the Designated Teacher and Headteacher will liaise with the Virtual School and social care.

### **10. Supporting Emotional Wellbeing**

Phoenix Primary recognises that LAC and PLAC may have attachment difficulties, emotional needs or behavioural responses linked to trauma. The school uses regulation strategies, access to safe spaces, Thrive approaches and pastoral support to help children feel safe and secure. Staff receive training to understand trauma and attachment needs.

### **11. Working with External Agencies**

The school works closely with the Virtual School, social workers, health professionals, the SEND team, carers, foster agencies, educational psychologists and Early Help services. Good communication is essential to ensuring coordinated support.

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

Pupil Premium Plus funding is allocated to support the specific educational needs of LAC and PLAC. Spending must be agreed with the Virtual School for LAC and must be used to raise attainment, support progress and meet pastoral needs. Mrs Barlow oversees the use and impact of this funding and ensures records are kept.

### **13. Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

Information about a child's care status is confidential. Only staff who need to know will be informed. The Designated Teacher ensures that information is shared in line with GDPR and safeguarding legislation.

### **14. Transitions**

Transitions between classes and to new schools are carefully planned. Additional visits, transition booklets, staff handover and multi-agency planning meetings are arranged where appropriate. Information is shared promptly with receiving schools.

## **15. Monitoring and Review**

The Headteacher and Governing Body monitor outcomes for LAC and PLAC through attendance data, progress information, PEP quality and pastoral reports. This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if statutory guidance changes.

Reviewed: November 2025

Next Review: November 2026

Approved by Governors: Still to be ratified