



**OLSJ**  
OUR LADY + ST JOSEPH  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

***LAC POLICY***  
***OUR LADY & ST JOSEPH CATHOLIC PRIMARY***  
***SCHOOL***

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## Looked After Children Policy

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### **The School's aims and intentions**

At OLSJ we want children to achieve the very best whatever their background. We understand that Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) have very specific needs, and often need support and/or intervention in order to reach their full potential. These needs may be very specific to the child, so each child is supported in a specific manner.

We intend for our LAC and PLAC children to progress and achieve in the school environment like every other child. To achieve this we ensure all staff have awareness of the specific needs a LAC or PLAC might have, and how best to support them.

### **Definition of LAC and PLAC**

The Department for Education's guidance named: "The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children - Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities" (February, 2018) says:

“• 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, 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.”

These are the definitions followed by the school.

### **Supporting Strategies for PLAC and LAC**

At OLSJ we understand that every child is different and has specific needs. This is even truer for PLAC and LAC. Because of this, we do not offer a "one size fits all" approach. Instead, we look at each child's needs individually and make a plan on how to best support them (we call these plans a Personal Support Plan (PSP)). Throughout this process we keep the child at the centre, but we also believe strong effective success can only be achieved with the school

and parents, carers and/or guardians working together. When writing an action plan for our LAC and PLAC we ensure the parents, carers and/or guardians views are listened to and taken into account. For each LAC and PLAC we produce a twice-yearly PSP looking at what we do to support him or her and the impact it is having. We invite the parents, carers and/or guardians to these meetings for their input. We also believe the voice of the child is very important to the success of such a plan. We will always aim to gain the voice of the child in our PSP. Dependent on the child we will endeavour to achieve this in the most positive and impactful manner, this may mean meeting the child more informally or discussing key points with a trusted adult. The DfE offer support on how to listen to the child's voice:

- Be available, take the time to get to know me
- Notice if I am upset or angry and listen to me when I need help
- Understand that even though I've had a different past than most people, it doesn't mean I need to be treated differently
- Understand my experience of being looked-after
- Understand that my past will affect my present and my future behaviour even if I don't notice

Due to GDPR reasons we do not make these forms available publically, however a template can be found in the appendix.

All LAC must have a "Personal Education Plan". Dependent on the child's needs this can take the place of a Personal Support Plan. However, in some cases a child will have both, but the PEP always takes priority, the Personal Support Plan should only be there as a supplement and support for the document. PEPs are drawn up by the local authority and are a key document in supporting LAC, more information regarding these can be found in "The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children -Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities" (February, 2018).

### **The Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher**

Many PLAC and LAC may have suffered from disrupted learning. They may have missed extended periods of school. In many cases the emotional impact of their experiences may become a gap in their learning.

The Designated Teacher is a central point of contact within the school. Mr Alex Everden is the Designated Teacher as he is in a position of leadership and has had additional training in LAC and PLAC. He has given all staff members training in PLAC and LAC. Mr Everden will work closely with the PLAC and LAC's class teachers. The Designated Teacher is a source of advice for teachers, working directly with carers, parents or guardians and promotes high expectations for all PLAC and LAC children. Additional information regarding the role of the Designated Teacher can be found in the DfE's "The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities" (February, 2018).

When a PLAC/LAC joins the school the Attendance Officer will make the Designated Teacher aware. They will meet the children on their first day and the parents, guardians and/or carers within the first week.

### **The Roles and Responsibilities of the Governing Body**

The Governing Body (and school leadership) offer a “critical eye” to the school’s processes regarding PLAC and LAC. The school has a link governor for Pupil Premium Children and LAC/ PLAC. We aim to have twice-yearly meetings with the link governor. The Headteacher also works with the Designated Teacher to support and ensure the best outcomes for the child. The DfE’s “The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children - Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities” (February, 2018) states:

“The governing body, headteacher and school leadership team will want to consider the following in supporting the designated teacher role:

- Does the designated teacher have appropriate seniority and professional experience to provide leadership, training, information, challenge and advice to others that will influence decisions about the teaching and learning needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children?
- Does the designated teacher have appropriate seniority and skills to work with the school’s senior leadership and governing body to help ensure school policies and approaches appropriately reflect the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children and act as a champion for them?
- Does the designated teacher have training opportunities, including time away from timetable commitments, to acquire and keep up-to-date the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to respond to the specific teaching and learning needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including a good knowledge of SEN?
- How does the designated teacher role contribute to the deeper understanding of everyone in the school who is likely to be involved in supporting looked-after and previously looked-after children to achieve?
- What resource implications might there be in supporting the designated teacher to carry out their role?
- What expertise can designated teachers call on within and outside the school such as SENCOs, health and mental health support?
- What monitoring arrangements might be appropriate to ensure that the role of the designated teacher is providing appropriate support for looked-after and previously looked-after children on the school roll?”

### **Pupil Premium Plus and Virtual School**

If a child is LAC they will be linked to the Virtual School. This is a school, which will support the child, and the school with their education. They do not attend this school, their role is to champion the LAC and PLAC within their actual school environment.

A child who is PLAC or LAC means the school is in receipt of Pupil Premium Plus; this may come directly as funding or through the Virtual School.

Pupil Premium Plus is an important tool to support LAC and PLAC, however it is important also to note these points from “The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children - Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities” (February 2018)

*“43. For both looked-after and previously looked-after children PP+ is not a personal budget for individual children. The VSH [Virtual School Headteacher] and school manage their PP+*

*allocation for the benefit of their cohort of looked-after or previously looked-after children and according to children's needs.*

*44. The designated teacher should:*

- for looked-after children, liaise with the VSH so that the designated teacher can contribute to decisions about how PP+ will support improving the child's educational outcomes;*
- help raise previously looked-after children's parents' and guardians' awareness of the PP+ and other support for previously looked-after children - this includes encouraging parents of eligible previously looked-after children to tell the school if their child is eligible to attract PP+ funding;*
- play a key part in decisions on how the PP+ is used to support previously looked-after children; and*
- encourage parents and guardians' involvement in deciding how the PP+ is used to support their child and be the main contact for queries about its use.*

*45. The PP+ can be used to facilitate a wide range of educational support for looked-after and previously looked-after children. It is important that interventions supported by pupil premium should be evidence based and in the best interests of the child."*