



## **Thorner's Church of England VA Primary School** **LAC and PLAC Policy**

### **Purpose**

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of looked after and previously looked after children within Thorner's School.

At Thorner's School we aim to provide a safe, secure, caring environment where everyone is valued and respected equally. We aim to provide an inclusive education where children develop independent learning skills and are taught according to need whatever their age, gender, background, beliefs or abilities. National legislation regarding disabilities, special education needs, equality, race relations and related aspects underpin this policy which also reflects other national, local and internal policies and guidance.

The Education of Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children Thorner's School aims to maximise opportunity for every pupil to succeed. Children and young people who are looked after and previously looked after by local authorities are one of the groups most likely to underachieve nationally. We are committed to supporting looked after and previously looked after pupils to achieve their full potential alongside other pupils, to enjoy their learning and to experience success in school.

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is 'looked after' by a local authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority.

## **Definitions**

Looked after children fall into four main groups:

- children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
- children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21).

The term 'In Care' refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the Court under Section 31 of the Children Act 1989 - they may live with Foster Carers, in a Children's Home, in a Residential School, with relatives or with parents under supervision.

Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are 'accommodated' by the local authority under Section 20 of the Children Act – they may live in foster care, in a children's home or in a residential school.

All these groups are said to be 'Looked After Children' (LAC). They may be looked after by the Local Authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in Dorset. 'Previously Looked After Children' are children or young people who were previously in one of the groups listed above.

## **Aims**

To work together with the Local Authority, Children Who Are Disabled Team, Foster Carers, Medical and Nursing Services, Therapy Services and all other stakeholders in an effective partnership to ensure that children's needs are met

To contribute to the provision of a successful and integrated service for children who are looked after by the LA (known as Looked After Children or Children in Care) and Previously Looked After Children

To ensure that children who are looked after or previously looked after have equality of opportunity in school, enabling them to access, experience and benefit from education alongside peers and respecting their right anonymity if this is their wish

To comply with the LA guidelines on the education and care of looked after and previously looked after children and young people.

To work in partnership with the Virtual School to effectively meet the needs of looked after pupils and to access appropriate funding for looked after and previously looked after pupils, such as the Pupil Premium. (See Pupil Premium Report for further information.)

To ensure these aims are achieved Thorner's School will:

Identify a designated teacher (the Head Teacher) to co-ordinate the education of looked after and previously looked after children, to ensure that staff in the school are aware of any looked after and previously looked after children, know each carer and understand individual circumstances including parental rights and access.

Liaise effectively with other agencies involved with the child and attend review meetings which will be either the DT, Head of Department or form tutor.

Work in partnership with carers, parents and others with parental responsibility to ensure that looked after and previously looked after children receive their full entitlements including provision and access to school news and information.

Ensure that all records are kept and maintained appropriately.

Provide information to the Governing Body and LA about the progress and outcomes

of looked after children on the school roll.

Secure training for the designated teacher or others to ensure that the school can meet the needs of looked after and previously looked after children.

#### Monitoring the progress of Looked After Children

Thorner's School assesses each looked after child's attainment on entry to ensure continuity of learning. The social worker or Virtual School teacher for the looked after child initiates a Personal Education Plan – PEP - within 10 days of the pupil joining the school, or of entering care, and ensures that the young person is actively involved.

Following the initial PEP, the role of the Designated Teacher or school representative is to liaise with other agencies involved to arrange further PEP review meetings and provide copies of the PEP to any stakeholders. The allocation and purpose of the Pupil Premium (PP) will be included within the PEP. All PEPs are completed according to the wishes of the child's home authority.

Meetings for previously looked after children will be held regularly to include the DT, the social worker, the parents/carers. The progress and needs of the child/young person will be discussed and any additional support needed will be highlighted and put into place. Any additional funding needed will be sought.

#### Roles and responsibilities in school

##### The Governing Body (GB)

Governors will fulfil their responsibilities to looked after children through:

- Ensuring that this policy is implemented
- Nominating a governor to maintain interest in the well-being of looked after and previously looked after children

- Ensuring that the GB takes up suitable training opportunities
- Monitoring appropriate training for school staff

#### The Head Teacher (HT)

The Head Teacher has day to day responsibility for the management and organisation of the school and is the first point of contact for any matters relating to the pupils.

The HT will fulfil responsibility to looked after children through:

- Ensuring that this policy is approved by the GB and that it is reviewed annually
- Ensuring that any practical guidelines needed to ensure the well-being of any particular child are identified
- Liaising with teachers to take pastoral responsibility and ensure the well-being and education of looked after and previously looked after children
- Monitoring and informing of the legal position with regard to parental access, provision of schools reports
- Promoting the role of key workers and carers
- Ensuring sensitivity relating to the child's past experiences
- Managing any other relevant information

The HT should report to the GB on:

- The admission of any looked after or previously looked after children
- Progress and achievement of looked after and previously looked after children
- Significant issues, events or incidents involving looked after and previously looked after children
- The level of attendance in relation to school averages

The HT should ensure appropriate training opportunities are taken up and promote and maintain good working relationships with other key personnel on other agencies

#### The Designated Teacher (DT)

The DT in conjunction with Heads of Department and other teachers will fulfil their responsibility to the looked after and previously looked after child through:

- Liaising with the HT, foster carers and other agency workers as requested to ensure a coherent approach across services
- Being aware of the care plan for each child
- Contributing to the development and maintenance of a personal education plan in partnership with other relevant professionals
- Knowing who has parental responsibility for the child
- Knowing who the primary carers are
- Ensuring that information is provided for those who are entitled to receive it
- Working sensitively with information to ensure that looked after and previously looked after children are not exposed to inappropriate or intrusive attention from staff or pupils
- Establishing good relationships and lines of communication with key workers and foster carers
- Contributing to or attending meetings as requested
- Maintaining an overview of the experiences and education of the child
- Participating in appropriate training to develop the skills and knowledge needed to support the looked after or previously looked after child

Policy prepared by: Mike Sitch, LAC teacher, February 2023  
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