



FAIRFORD CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Isaiah 49:16 'I have written your name on the palms of my hands'.

Actively learning together in a safe, happy environment shaped by the certainty that each individual is loved and known by God.

Fairford C of E Primary School



Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children

Reviewed by Curriculum and Standards Committee: June 2025

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FAIRFORD C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL
DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR LOOKED-AFTER AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED- AFTER
CHILDREN

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Vision and Values

Our school vision is: *Isaiah 49:16 "I have written your name on the palms of my hands".*

Actively learning together in a safe, happy environment shaped by the certainty that each individual is known and loved by God.

At Fairford Primary School we have chosen those values that best reflect our thoughts as a school and community

Perseverance

Friendship

Respect

Forgiveness

Trust

Thankfulness

1.0 Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

- 1.1 a suitably trained and qualified teacher on the staff of the school is appointed as the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children;
- 1.2 the designated teacher promotes the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, and supports other staff members to do this too; and
- 1.3 staff, parents, carers and guardians are aware of the identity of the designated teacher, how to contact them and what they are responsible for.

2.0 Legislation and statutory guidance

- 2.1 This policy is based on the Department for Education's [statutory guidance *The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children*](#).
- 2.2 It also takes into account [section 20](#) and [section 20A](#) of the Child and Young Persons Act 2008 and the Designated Teacher (Looked After Pupils etc) (England) Regulations 2009.

3.0 Role of the Governing Body

- 3.1 The Governing Body of the school will ensure that the school has at all times an appropriately trained and qualified designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children and that statutory guidance is followed.

4.0 Definitions

4.1 **Looked-after children** are those registered pupils who are 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.

4.2 **Previously looked-after children** are registered pupils who fall into either of the following categories.

4.2.1 They were looked after by a local authority in England and Wales but ceased to be as a result of any of the following:

- a child arrangements order, which includes arrangements specifying with whom the child is to live and when they are to live with them;
- a special guardianship order; or
- an adoption order.

4.2.2 The Governing Body is satisfied that:

- the child was looked after by a public authority, a religious organisation or other provider of care outside England and Wales whose sole purpose was to benefit society; and
- ceased to be in that care as a result of being adopted.

4.3 **Personal education plan (PEP)** is part of a looked-after child's care plan which is developed with the school. It forms a record of what needs to happen and who will make it happen to ensure the child reaches their full potential.

4.4 **Virtual school head (VSH)** is a local authority officer responsible for promoting the educational achievement of their authority's looked-after children, working across schools to monitor and support these pupils as if they were in a single school. The VSH is also responsible for providing information and advice to schools, parents and guardians in respect of previously looked-after children.

5.0 Identity of our designated teacher

5.1. Our designated teacher is Mrs Rae Cotton.

Contact details: rcotton@fairford.gloucs.sch.uk

5.2 Our designated teacher takes lead responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children at our school. She is the initial point of contact for any of the matters set out in paragraph 6 below.

6.0 Role of the designated teacher

6.1 Leadership responsibilities. The designated teacher has the leadership responsibilities set out below:

6.1.1 to ensure the school observes statutory guidance with regard to looked-after and previously looked after children and to undertake the appropriate training necessary to do so;

- 6.1.2 to act as a central point of initial contact within the school for any matters involving looked-after and previously looked-after children;
- 6.1.3 to promote the educational achievement of every looked-after and previously looked-after child on roll by:
 - working with VSHs; and
 - promoting a whole school culture where the individual personal, emotional and academic needs of these pupils matter and are prioritised;
- 6.1.4 to take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand:
 - the emotional, social and psychological factors which can affect how looked-after and previously looked-after children learn and achieve;
 - that they must have high expectations of looked-after and previously looked after children and set targets to accelerate educational progress;
 - how the whole school should support the educational achievement of these pupils;
 - how important it is to see looked after and previously looked after children as individuals rather than as a homogeneous group, not to treat them differently from their peers and show sensitivity as to who knows of a child's looked after or previously looked after status; and
 - the importance of the looked after child's PEP and how it fits into the wider care planning duties of the local authority which looks after the child.
- 6.1.5 to contribute to the development and review of whole school policies to ensure they consider the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children;
- 6.1.6 to promote a culture in which looked-after and previously looked-after children are listened to, encouraged to believe they can succeed and supported to engage with their education and other school activities;
- 6.1.7 to act as a source of advice for teachers about working with looked-after and previously looked-after children;
- 6.1.8 to work directly with looked-after and previously looked-after children and their carers, parents and guardians to promote good home-school links, support progress and encourage high aspirations;
- 6.1.9 to lead the development and implementation of looked-after children's PEPs;
- 6.1.10 to work closely with the school's designated safeguarding lead to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to; and
- 6.1.11 to involve parents and guardians of previously looked-after children in decisions affecting their child's education.

6.2 Supporting looked-after children

6.2.1 The designated teacher will:

- ensure looked-after children's PEPs meet their needs by working closely with other teachers, including the SENCO if the child has special needs;

- assess each child’s specific educational needs;
- have overall responsibility for leading the process of target-setting in PEPs;
- monitor and track how looked-after children’s attainment progresses under their PEPs;
- if a child is not on track to meet their targets be instrumental in agreeing the best way forward with them in order to make progress and ensure that this is reflected in their PEP;
- ensure the identified actions of PEPs are put in place; and
- during the development and review of PEPs, help the school and relevant local authority decide what arrangements work best for pupils.

6.2.2 The designated teacher will ensure that:

- a looked-after child’s PEP is reviewed before the statutory review of their care plan – this includes making sure the PEP is up to date and contains any new information since the last PEP review, including whether agreed provision is being delivered;
- PEPs are clear about what has or has not been taken forward, noting what resources may be required to further support the child and from where these may be sourced;
- the updated PEP is passed to the child’s social worker and VSH ahead of the statutory review of their care plan;
- transfer a looked-after child’s PEP to their next school or college, making sure it is up to date and that the local authority responsible for looking after them has the most recent version.

6.3 Supporting both looked-after children and previously looked-after children

6.3.1 The designated teacher will:

- ensure that all school staff understand that listening to the voice of looked-after and previously looked-after children is a vital part of successfully understanding and meeting their needs;
- ensure the specific needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children are understood by staff and reflected in how the school uses pupil premium funding;
- work with VSHs to agree how pupil premium funding for looked-after children can most effectively be used to improve their attainment;
- help raise the awareness of parents and guardians of previously looked-after children about pupil premium funding and other support for these children;
- play a key part in decisions on how pupil premium funding is used to support previously looked-after children;
- encourage parents’ and guardians’ involvement in deciding how pupil premium funding is used to support their child, and be the main contact for queries about its use;
- ensure teachers have awareness and understanding of the specific needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children in areas like attendance, homework, behaviour and future career planning;

- be aware of the special educational needs (SEN) of looked-after and previously looked-after children, and make sure teachers also have awareness and understanding of this;
- ensure the [SEND code of practice](#), as it relates to looked-after children, is followed;
- make sure PEPs work in harmony with any education, health and care (EHC) plans that a looked-after child may have;
- ensure that, with the help of VSHs, they have the skills to identify signs of potential SEN issues in looked-after and previously looked-after children, and know how to access further assessment and support where necessary;
- ensure that they and other staff can identify signs of potential mental health issues in looked-after and previously looked-after children and understand where the school can draw on specialist services;
- put in place robust arrangements to have strengths and difficulties questionnaires (SDQs), which measure emotional and behavioural issues, completed for looked-after children, and use the results of these SDQs to inform PEPs; and
- put in place mechanisms for understanding the emotional and behavioural needs of previously looked-after children.

6.4 Relationships beyond the school

6.4.1 The designated teacher will:

- proactively engage with social workers and other professionals to enable the school to respond effectively to the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children;
- discuss with social workers how the school should engage with birth parents and ensure the school is clear about who has parental responsibility and what information can be shared with whom;
- be open and accessible to parents and guardians of previously looked-after children and encourage them to be actively involved in their children's education; and
- proactively build relationships with local authority professionals, such as VSHs and SEN departments.

6.4.2 The designated teacher will consider how the school works with others outside the school to maximise the stability of education for looked-after children. The designated teacher should:

- find ways of making sure the latest information about educational progress is available to contribute to the statutory review of care plans;
- ensure mechanisms are in place to inform VSHs when looked-after children are absent without authorisation and work with the responsible authority to take appropriate safeguarding action;
- talk to the child's social worker and/or other relevant parties in the local authority regarding any decisions about changes in care placements which will disrupt the child's education, providing advice about the likely impact and what the local authority should do to minimise disruption;

- make sure that, if a looked-after child moves school, their new designated teacher receives any information needed to help the transition process; and
- seek advice from VSHs about meeting the needs of individual previously looked-after children, but only with the agreement of the child's parents or guardians.

6.4.3 The designated teacher will make sure that for each looked-after child:

- there is an agreed process for how the school works in partnership with the child's carer and other professionals, such as their social worker, in order to review and develop educational progress;
- school policies are communicated to the child's carer and social worker and, where appropriate, birth parents; and
- teachers know the most appropriate person to contact where necessary, such as who has the authority to sign permission slips.

6.4.4 Where a looked-after child is at risk of exclusion, the designated teacher will:

- contact the 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;
- working with the VSH and child's carers, consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to address the causes of the child's behaviour; and
- where a previously looked-after child is at risk of exclusion, talk to the child's parents or guardians before seeking advice from the VSH on avoiding exclusion.

7.0 Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Curriculum and Standards Committee.

8.0 Links with other policies

This policy has links to, and should be read and construed in accordance with, the following policies and procedures:

- Accessibility;
- Anti-Bullying;
- Attendance and Absence;
- Positive Relationship and Behaviour;
- Equality and Diversity Policy;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection;
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND); and
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs.