



*Curiosity, Courage, Compassion*  
*'A community learning together in God's love'*

Thundridge and Tonwell St Mary's  
Church Schools' Federation

# **Children Looked After Policy**

**Date updated: September 2022**

**Review Date: September 2024**

## **Introduction:**

The governing body is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. This governing body recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of children in residential and foster care, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in "Guidance on the Education of Looked After Children" (May 2000) and Section 52 of the Children Act 2004. Children who are "looked after" may be "Accommodated" "In Care" or "remanded/ detained" as follows:

### Accommodated (Section 20)

This is a voluntary arrangement, because parents are ill, missing, unable to cope, or as part of a child protection plan negotiated with the family. The parents retain parental responsibility.

### In Care

A child is in care only if a court has granted a Care Order which it will issue if it believes a child to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. A care order generally gives parental responsibility to the local authority, or shares this with the parents.

### Remanded/Detained

A child can be remanded or detained as in the following:

- an emergency protection order
- removed by police using their powers of protection
- remanded by a court following criminal charges
- a court directing a social services department to accommodate a child (already on a supervision order for criminal behaviour) for up to six months.

Children looked after may (or may not) have some or all the following issues:

- low self esteem
- poor education standards due to time out of school
- delayed social/emotional/ cognitive development
- be bullied or bully others.
- be prone to mental health issues
- be isolated with few friends
- have behaviour issues.
- poor attachments to others.
- have a need to be very private.

This makes them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life-chances. The governing body is committed to ensuring that these children are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following are in place, and are working effectively:

- a Designated Teacher for Children Looked After (**Sarah Bridgman (Tonwell St Mary's) and Heather Foster (Thundridge)**)

- Personal Education Plans for all Children Looked After.
- all staff have a clear understanding of confidentiality and issues that affect looked after children.
- effective strategies that supports the education of this vulnerable group.

### **Role of the designated teacher:**

The Designated Teacher should:

- be an advocate for Looked After Children;
- when new to the school, ensure a smooth and welcome induction for the child and carer, and note any specific requirements, including care status;
- ensure that a Personal Education Plan(PEP) is completed, as soon as possible. This should be prepared with the child and the carer, in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies, and be linked to the Care Plan meetings, within 28 days, 3 months and 6 months and, at least, every 6 months.
- keep PEPs and other records up to date, particularly in time to inform review meetings;
- Liaise with the Virtual School and keep up-to-date with training  
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/Virtual-School/Hertfordshire-Virtual-School.aspx>
- ensure that each child in public care (if they wish) has an identified member of staff that they can talk to
- co-ordinate support for the child in the school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary;
- ensure staff receive relevant information and training and act as an advisor to staff and governors;
- ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis;
- seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded.
- ensure that any returns on looked after children are completed – as requested by the LA

### **The role of the governing body:**

The governing body of this school will:

- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Looked After Children;
- be aware of whether the school has Looked After Children and how many (no names);
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Looked After Children;
- liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out her/his responsibilities in relation to Looked After Children;
- support the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of Looked After Children are met;
- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body (These reports should not include any names of individual children for child protection and confidentiality reasons).

### **(Nominated governor: Kathy Dunnett)**

- review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years.

**Personal Education Plan (PEP):**

- Social worker informs school of a child becoming looked after (or a looked after children entering the school)
- Date is set for the completion of a Personal Education Plan (PEP).
- A copy of the form is sent to the school to enable completion of educational data PEP meeting takes place within 20 days, involving the social worker designated teacher (or other appropriate staff), carer and young person if appropriate.
- A date is set for the next pep meeting Personal Education Plan is taken to the child's statutory review and discussed within the wider context of the child's life.





