Policy for Children who are Looked After and Previously Looked After

Mary Webb School and Science College

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1. Statement of Intent

At Mary Webb School and Science College, we are committed to promoting the educational achievement, attendance, wellbeing and wider outcomes of all Children Looked After (CLA/LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC).

We recognise that children who are or have been in the care of a local authority may have experienced significant disruption, trauma, loss or adversity which can impact upon their education, emotional wellbeing and life chances. We are committed to providing a nurturing, inclusive and aspirational environment in which all children can thrive, fulfil their potential and achieve positive outcomes.

We believe that every child deserves stability, high expectations and a strong sense of belonging within the school community.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Promote high aspirations and positive outcomes for all CLA and PLAC students.
- Ensure that looked after and previously looked after children receive appropriate educational, pastoral and emotional support.
- Remove barriers to learning, attendance and participation.
- Promote effective partnership working between school, families, carers, social care and other agencies.
- Ensure compliance with statutory responsibilities relating to looked after children.
- Support successful transitions into, through and beyond school.
- Encourage students to have a voice in decisions affecting them.

2. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE (2018) 'Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2024) 'Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'

It is also based on guidance provided by our Virtual School: Shropshire Virtual School | Shropshire Council

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies and documents:

- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives Statement
- Safeguarding Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy and Information Report
- Student Premium Strategy Statement

Please find school policies here: Documents & Policies - Mary Webb School & Science College

3. Definitions

Children Looked After (CLA/LAC)

A child who is in the care of a local authority or who is provided with accommodation by a local authority for a continuous period of more than 24 hours.

Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)

Children who were previously in the care of a local authority but who ceased to be looked after because they were:

- Adopted
- Subject to a Special Guardianship Order (SGO)
- Subject to a Child Arrangements Order
- Adopted from state care outside England and Wales

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure there is a Designated Teacher for CLA and PLAC.
- Monitor the educational outcomes of CLA and PLAC students.
- Ensure the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities.
- Promote a culture of inclusion and high expectations.

Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Promote the educational achievement of CLA and PLAC students.
- Ensure that staff understand their responsibilities.
- Support the work of the Designated Teacher.
- Ensure appropriate resources are available.

Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher for CLA and PLAC will:

- Act as the key point of contact within school.
- Champion the needs and progress of CLA and PLAC students.
- Monitor attendance, attainment, progress and wellbeing.
- Attend and contribute to Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings.
- Liaise with social workers, carers, Virtual Schools and external agencies.
- Advise staff on the impact of trauma and attachment difficulties.
- Ensure effective use of Pupil Premium Plus funding.
- Support transition arrangements.
- Ensure students' views are sought and considered.

All Staff

All staff will:

- Maintain high expectations for CLA and PLAC students.
- Be aware of the potential impact of attachment and trauma.
- Promote inclusion and belonging.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality.
- Follow agreed support strategies and recommendations.

5. Admission Arrangements

Mary Webb School welcomes applications from CLA and PLAC students and recognises their priority status within admissions arrangements.

When a looked after or previously looked after child joins the school, we will:

- Gather relevant educational and pastoral information.
- Liaise with the student's previous school.
- Meet with carers, parents and relevant professionals.
- Identify any support, provision or reasonable adjustments required.
- Plan a personalised and supportive transition.

6. Supporting Educational Achievement

We are committed to ensuring that CLA and PLAC students have access to a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum.

Support may include:

- High-quality teaching and adaptive classroom practice.
- Academic mentoring.
- Small group or individual intervention.
- Homework support.
- Literacy and numeracy programmes.
- Revision and examination support.
- Access arrangements where appropriate.
- Careers education, information, advice and guidance.

Progress will be monitored regularly through assessment data, attendance information, student voice and professional discussion.

7. Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

Every Child Looked After must have an up-to-date Personal Education Plan (PEP).

The school will:

- Attend PEP meetings.
- Contribute accurate and meaningful information.
- Monitor progress against agreed targets.
- Ensure actions from the PEP are implemented.
- Involve the student in the planning process wherever possible.

PEPs will focus on educational achievement, wellbeing, attendance, aspirations and any support required to secure positive outcomes.

8. Pupil Premium Plus Funding

Pupil Premium Plus funding will be used strategically to address barriers to learning and improve outcomes.

Funding may be used to support:

- Academic intervention.
- Emotional wellbeing support.
- Educational resources.
- Enrichment opportunities.
- Educational visits.
- Revision materials.
- Mentoring and transition support.

Expenditure will be reviewed to evaluate impact and ensure value for money.

9. Attendance and Engagement

Regular attendance is essential for educational success.

The school will:

- Monitor attendance closely.
- Identify barriers to attendance at an early stage.
- Work collaboratively with carers, social workers and external agencies.
- Put supportive measures in place where attendance concerns arise.

- Celebrate and recognise positive attendance and engagement.

10. Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health

We recognise that many CLA and PLAC students may have experienced adversity, trauma, separation or loss.

We are committed to providing:

- A safe and nurturing environment.
- Trusted adults within school.
- Access to pastoral support.
- Emotional literacy and wellbeing interventions.
- Referrals to specialist services where required.
- Trauma-informed and attachment-aware approaches.

Where appropriate, support plans will be developed in partnership with students, carers and professionals.

11. Safeguarding

The school recognises that looked after and previously looked after children may be particularly vulnerable to safeguarding risks.

All safeguarding concerns will be managed in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Designated Teacher and relevant professionals will work together to ensure students remain safe and supported.

12. Student Voice

We believe that students should be actively involved in decisions about their education and support.

CLA and PLAC students will be encouraged to:

- Attend review meetings where appropriate.
- Share their views and aspirations.
- Contribute to support planning.
- Participate fully in school life.

Their views will be considered alongside those of carers, families and professionals.

13. Transition Support

Particular attention will be given to periods of transition, including:

- Entry to Year 7.
- Mid-year admissions.
- Movement between year groups.
- Post-16 transition.
- Further education, employment and training pathways.

We will work closely with carers, social workers, Virtual Schools and post-16 providers to ensure students are well prepared for their next steps.

14. Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through:

- Student progress and attainment data.
- Attendance information.
- PEP outcomes.
- Student and carer feedback.
- Behaviour and wellbeing information.
- Monitoring by senior leaders and governors.

The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where changes in legislation or local guidance require it.

Commitment

Mary Webb School and Science College is committed to ensuring that all Children Looked After and Previously Looked After Children feel valued, supported and ambitious for their future. Through high expectations, strong relationships and effective partnership working, we strive to ensure that every young person is able to achieve their full potential and enjoy a successful transition into adulthood.