

# Designated Teacher Policy (looked-after and previously looked- after students)

Baginton Fields School



Approved by:	Governing Board	Date: October 2023
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## 1. Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

- A suitable member of staff is appointed as the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after students
- The designated teacher promotes the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after students, and supports other staff members to do this too
- 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. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's [statutory guidance on the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after students](#).

It also takes into account [section 20](#) and [section 20A](#) of the Student and Young Persons Act 2008.

## 3. Definitions

**Looked-after students** are registered pupils that are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services functions, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours

**Previously looked-after students** are registered pupils that fall into either of these categories:

- They were looked after by a local authority but ceased to be as a result of any of the following:
  - A student arrangements order, which includes arrangements relating to who the student lives with and when they are to live with them
  - A special guardianship order
  - An adoption order
- They appear to the governing board to have:
  - Been in state care in a place outside of England and Wales because they would not have otherwise been cared for adequately, and
  - Ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted

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

**Virtual school head (VSH)** is a local authority officer responsible for promoting the educational achievement of their authority's looked-after students, 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 students.

## 4. Identity of our designated teacher

Our designated teacher is Alison Francis

You can contact her by email: [headteacher@bagintonfields.coventry.sch.uk](mailto:headteacher@bagintonfields.coventry.sch.uk)

The designated teacher takes lead responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after students at our school. They are your initial point of contact for any of the matters set out in the section below.

At Baginton Fields School the Deputy Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher for Key Stage 4 will play a key role in the school life and educational meetings, monitoring of progress etc. for looked-after and previously looked-after students.

Deputy Headteacher (KS3): Franck Lavie

[franckl@bagintonfields.coventry.sch.uk](mailto:franckl@bagintonfields.coventry.sch.uk)

Assistant Headteacher (KS4): Rachel Burnisde

[rachelb@bagintonfields.coventry.sch.uk](mailto:rachelb@bagintonfields.coventry.sch.uk)

## 5. Role of the designated teacher

### 5.1 Leadership responsibilities

The designated teacher will:

- Act as a central point of initial contact within the school for any matters involving looked-after and previously looked-after students
- Promote the educational achievement of every looked-after and previously looked-after student on roll by:
  - Working with VSHs
  - Promoting a whole school culture where the needs of these pupils matter and are prioritised
- Take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand:
  - The things which can affect how looked-after and previously looked-after students learn and achieve
  - How the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils
- Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies to ensure they consider the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after students
- Promote a culture in which looked-after and previously looked-after students are encouraged and supported to engage with their education and other school activities
- Act as a source of advice for teachers about working with looked-after and previously looked-after students
- Sign off all ePEPs on completion

The Deputy Headteacher & Assistant Headteacher will:

- Work directly with looked-after and previously looked-after students and their carers, parents and guardians to promote good home-school links, support progress and encourage high aspirations
- Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of looked-after student's PEPs
- Work closely with the school's designated safeguarding lead to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after students are quickly and effectively responded to
- Involve parents and guardians of previously looked-after students in decisions affecting their student's education

## 5.2 Supporting looked-after students

The Deputy Headteacher & Assistant Headteacher will:

- Make sure looked-after student's PEPs meet their needs by working closely with other teachers to assess each student's specific educational needs
- Make sure that teachers set SMART PEP targets
- Monitor and track how looked-after students' attainment progresses under their PEPs
- If a student 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
- During the development and review of PEPs, help the school and relevant local authority decide what arrangements work best for pupils
- Ensure that:
  - A looked-after student'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 student and from where these may be sourced
  - The updated PEP is passed to the student's social worker and VSH ahead of the statutory review of their care plan
- Transfer a looked-after student'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

## 5.3 Supporting both looked-after students and previously looked-after students

The designated teacher will:

- Ensure the specific needs of looked-after and previously looked-after students 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 students can most effectively be used to improve their attainment
- Help raise the awareness of parents and guardians of previously looked-after students about pupil premium funding and other support for these students
- Play a key part in decisions on how pupil premium funding is used to support previously looked-after students
- Encourage parents' and guardians' involvement in deciding how pupil premium funding is used to support their student, 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 students in areas like attendance, homework, behaviour and future career planning
- Ensure the [SEND code of practice](#), as it relates to looked-after students, is followed
- Make sure PEPs work in harmony with the education, health and care (EHC) plans that a looked-after student may have
- Ensure that they and other staff can identify signs of potential mental health issues in looked-after and previously looked-after students and understand where the school can draw on specialist services
- Put in place mechanisms for understanding the emotional and behavioural needs of previously looked-after students

## 5.4 Relationships beyond the school

The designated teacher and the other lead professionals will:

- Proactively engage with the VSH, social workers and other professionals to enable the school to respond effectively to the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after students
- 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 students and encourage them to be actively involved in their students' education
- Consider how the school works with others outside of the school to maximise the stability of education for looked-after students, such as:
  - Finding ways of making sure the latest information about educational progress is available to contribute to the statutory review of care plans
  - Ensuring mechanisms are in place to inform VSHs when looked-after students are absent without authorisation and work with the responsible authority to take appropriate safeguarding action
  - Talking to the student's social worker and/or other relevant parties in the local authority regarding any decisions about changes in care placements which will disrupt the student's education, providing advice about the likely impact and what the local authority should do to minimise disruption
  - Making sure that, if a looked-after student moves school, their new designated teacher receives any information needed to help the transition process
- Seek advice from VSHs about meeting the needs of individual previously looked-after students, but only with the agreement of their parents or guardians
- Make sure that for each looked-after student:
  - There's an agreed process for how the school works in partnership with the student's carer and other professionals, such as their social worker, in order to review and develop educational progress
  - School policies are communicated to their carer and social worker and, where appropriate, birth parents
  - Teachers know the most appropriate person to contact where necessary, such as who has the authority to sign permission slips
- Where a looked-after student is at risk of exclusion:
  - Contact the VSH as soon as possible so they can help the school decide how to support the student to improve their behaviour and avoid exclusion becoming necessary
  - Working with the VSH and student's carers, consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to address the causes of the student's behaviour

- Where a previously looked-after student is at risk of exclusion, talk to the student's parents or guardians before seeking advice from the VSH on avoiding exclusion

## 6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by SLT. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

## 7. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour
- Safeguarding & Child Protection
- Exclusions
- SEN
- Supporting pupils with medical needs
- Manual Handling Policy
- Management of Student Behaviour and Discipline
- Care and Control