



Policy for Looked After Children

Tracked Changes

Date	Details of Changes
March '23	Removed reference to statutory school age: p.2
March '23	Moved responsibility for progress monitoring and reporting this to the Governing Body to the Head teacher
March '24	No changes
March '25	ELT changed to Head teacher (p.2), named governor updated (p.2)
March '26	Updated policy to include PEP-EHCP alignment, strengthened PP+ guidance, clarified PLAC support, added trauma-informed/attachment-aware expectations, and expanded induction, transition and leaving arrangements. Change of designated teacher.

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Aims

We at Iminster Avenue Nursery School (IANS) will do for children in care what we do for all our children only more so. We aim to ensure that children in care excel, as we aim for all children to excel. We aim to overcome their barriers to learning and enable them to leave us happy and secure in themselves, we will listen to what children in care tell us about what they want from their education and try to address any concerns or issues raised through various means including The HOPE (Bristol's Virtual School for children in care).

Iminster Avenue Nursery School strives to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school are such that, whatever the heritage and origins of members of the school, pupils should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and celebrate diversity.

This policy follows the statutory guidance for school governing bodies outlined in DFE statutory guidance; 'The Designated Teacher for Looked-after and 'Previously Looked-after children' February 2018

We aim to ensure that children in care leave us feeling emotionally secure and confident, supported by strong relationships with trusted adults and a consistent, trauma-informed approach across the school.

Objectives

We will support children in care by:

- Ensuring an effective transition when joining the school, transferring to a new school, or when coming into care whilst already on the school roll.
- Balancing high levels of support with real challenge.
- Ensuring that each child has a high-quality Personal Education Plan.
- Linking each child to a key person they relate well to.
- Making it a priority to know the children well and to build strong relationships.
- Developing strong relationships with carers, local authorities including the Head and Early Years Support Teacher from The Hope Virtual School and specialist agencies.
- Encouraging and supporting children in care to take responsibility for their learning where appropriate.
- Intervening promptly if a problem emerges such as with behaviour or attendance.
- Giving integrated but low-profile support in school for each child in care so that they are not made to feel different from other children.
- Planning for future transitions.

Ensuring staff understand attachment, trauma, and the impact of loss, so that approaches to behaviour and learning are sensitive, consistent, and developmentally appropriate.

In pursuit of this policy, we will;

- Nominate a Designated teacher for Looked After Children who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them.

- Nominate a school governor to ensure that the needs of Looked After Children in the federation are considered at a school management level and to support the Designated Teacher.
- Ensure the Designated Teacher and governor for LAC receive training which will be refreshed regularly.

Roles and responsibilities - see annex 2 for full detail

The Governor with special responsibility for children in care in this school is: Fran Southway

The Designated Teacher in this school is: Caroline Kelly

Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

All children in care must have a care plan which is drawn up and reviewed by the local authority which looks after them. The care plan must include a Personal Education Plan (PEP), which forms part of the child's official school record. The school and the Local Authority have a shared responsibility for making sure that the PEP is a useful document and for helping children in care to achieve and enjoy. These take place initially, within 28 days after becoming a CiC or if already in care after starting at IANS, three months after that and then every 6 months after that Discussion about how together they can make that happen through the content, implementation and review of the PEP should be done through a meeting involving the carers, the social worker, a teacher, designated teacher and others such as, staff from 'The Hope' Bristol's Virtual School for Children in Care. Where a child also has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the SENCO/Designated Teacher will ensure that the PEP and EHCP review cycles are aligned wherever possible. This creates a single, coherent overview of the child's needs, targets and provision. The SENCO/Designated Teacher will coordinate this alignment with the Local Authority, The HOPE Virtual School and other professionals as needed, ensuring that duplicated meetings are avoided and that information is consistent across both statutory processes.

Full guidance on PEP meetings and how to use the PEP is provided on the BCC Virtual School website. PEP paperwork when completed is sent to all appropriate people who have attended the meeting.

Additional funding

Children in long term care, and previously looked after children, are entitled to additional funding (Pupil Premium Plus; PP+) to help improve their outcomes and narrow the gap between their outcomes and those of their peers. Which young people are eligible and the amount of such funding available will be determined as a result of government policy.

The school is committed to ensuring effective use of this dedicated funding where available for all eligible children in care on roll to provide additional, personalised support to ensure accelerated progress in order to improve outcomes. Spending decisions for PP+ must be clearly linked to PEP targets and agreed with The HOPE Virtual School. Evidence of impact will be reviewed at each PEP meeting and recorded accordingly.

Please see the schools Pupil Premium Policy for further detail.
The appropriate use of allocated funding is to be assessed through the Personal Education Plan.
The impact of interventions for these students is closely monitored the Head teacher.

Previously looked after children

From February 2018 the Designated Teacher is also required to promote the educational achievement of previously looked after children (PLAC) who are on the school roll. A previously looked-after child is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is the subject of an adoption, Special Guardianship Order or child arrangement order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person*, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales'. For PLAC, the school will work closely with adoptive parents or guardians to identify the child's needs and ensure appropriate support. Parents are encouraged to share relevant background information where comfortable, so the school can respond appropriately.

*This duty does not apply to Child Arrangement Orders which only govern where a child is to spend time and/or contact.

Admission/Induction Arrangements

- Children in Care are a priority for admission and, as such, we will follow the Local Authority's published admission criteria.
- On admission to the school, the Designated Teacher will identify any relevant issues, academic or pastoral, and ensure the child and carer are made to feel supported in our school.
- On admission, records will be requested from the child's previous school. As soon as practicable after the records are received, a meeting will be held with the carer/parent, social worker and other relevant professionals, to put together a new Personal Education Plan, this early meeting will ensure that communication systems are established early.
- If records are not received promptly we will undertake our own assessment to make sure that the teaching and support received are appropriate.
- We will endeavour to meet the statutory time scales for PEPs as outlined in guidance.
- A transition meeting will be offered prior to the child starting, where possible, to gather key information about routines, emotional triggers, regulation strategies and learning preferences.
- When children already on our school roll enter care, the school will ensure that a meeting with other parties will be arranged and PEP prepared as soon as possible (within 28 days max) in the same way as for those children already in care admitted to school.

At the first PEP meeting, we will seek clarification from the social worker as to who requires school reports and who may give permission for school trips or other such activities. At this meeting any means of communication to aid the exchange of information between statutory meetings will be discussed and agreed (such as a home/school book to detail any sudden significant changes in

a child's circumstances).

Leaving Arrangements

When a child in care leaves the school, we will find an appropriate and meaningful way to say goodbye to ensure the smoothest transition we can for them. We will also ensure the swift transfer of information to the next school. The Designated Teacher will prepare a brief transition summary for the receiving school, highlighting successful strategies, support needs and any safeguarding considerations (shared in accordance with statutory guidance).

Policy Reviewed: March-**2026**

Annex 1 - Definitions and complaints procedure

Children in Care

The terms Looked After Child (LAC) and child in care (CiC) are interchangeable. For the purposes of this policy we are using the term CiC. Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They include the following:

- (i) children who are accommodated by the local authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents;
- (ii) children who are the subject of a care order or interim care order;
- (iii) children who are the subject of emergency orders for the protection of the child;
- (iv) children who are compulsorily accommodated. This includes remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement.

A looked after child may be in residential care, a foster placement or could be living with their parents. If living with their parents, this could be on a part time basis or possibly before returning home permanently after a care placement.

Legal Framework

From 1 September 2009 the governing bodies of all maintained schools are required under the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 (the 2008 Act) to appoint a designated teacher (DT) to promote the educational achievement of children in care who are on the school role.

DFE guidance 2018 states that a designated teacher has the responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of previously looked-after pupils

Complaints

If a parent/carer or social worker wishes to complain about the provision or policy, they should in the first instance raise it with the designated teacher, who

will try to resolve the situation alongside the carer and the social worker. At all stages, the school will prioritise minimising disruption to the child and will ensure that any concerns raised do not negatively affect their education, wellbeing or relationships within school.

If the issue cannot be resolved within 10 days, the carer or social worker can submit a formal complaint in writing to the Head teacher. The Head teacher will investigate the complaint and respond within 10 working days, unless the formal complaint is about the conduct of the Head teacher, in which case the complaint will go straight to the chair of governors.

Any issues that remain unresolved at this stage should be addressed through a meeting in order to assess the impact of any such complaint upon the young person's education. This meeting may include the named Governor and any other outside agency that both parties deem necessary to attend. This meeting should normally be held within 10 working days of the Head teacher's response.

Annex 2 - Roles and Responsibilities

The Role of the Governing Body:

- The Governing body will ensure that the designated teacher and the named Governor undertake appropriate training;
 - Ensure that the designated teacher is a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
 - Governors will consider an annual report from the designated teacher covering attainment, attendance, progress, Personal Education Plans, CiC with Special Educational Needs or who are gifted and talented, impact on school development plans and how the school supports the work of The HOPE (Bristol's virtual school for children in care).
 - The governing body, Head teacher and school leadership team will act on any issues raised in the report and will ensure that:
 - o The school has a clear overview of the educational needs and progress of CiC on roll;
 - o The school's policies are effective in reflecting the needs of CiC;
- Resources are allocated to support the designated teacher to carry out this role effectively for the benefit of CiC;

The role of the Head teacher:

- to ensure that, in partnership with the Governing body, the designated teacher has the opportunity to acquire and keep up to date the necessary skills, knowledge and training to understand and respond to the specific teaching and learning needs of children in care;
- to make sure that the designated teacher role contributes to the deeper understanding of everyone in the school who is likely to be involved in supporting children in care to achieve;
- in partnership with the Governing body, monitor the effectiveness of the role of the designated teacher;
- oversee the development of the policy on children in care;
- evaluate the standards and achievement of CiC and report these annually to the governing body and discuss them at Core SIP/SIO/HOPE meetings; <https://www.bristol.gov>; search 'CiC report template' for an example)
- ensure that all staff are given the opportunity to attend training courses etc.

that help them develop the skills and knowledge needed to support children in care.

- identify any areas a child may not be making expected /age related progress and ensure strategies put in place to support them e.g. through PEP or IEP's /support plan
- to report to the governing body annually in Term 6 on support for CiC and their progress

The role of the Designated Teacher within the school:

The designated teacher has lead responsibility for helping school staff understand the things which affect how CiC learn and achieve. The DT will:

- promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how CiC learn;
- promote the educational achievement of every child in care on the school's roll.
- Ensure that all staff receive regular updates on the needs of children in care, including attachment-aware practice, trauma-informed responses, and consistent approaches to emotional regulation.
- contribute to the development and review of whole school policies to ensure that they do not unintentionally put children in care at a disadvantage;
- make sure, in partnership with other staff, that there are effective and well understood school procedures in place to support children in care's learning;
- make sure the carer has a voice in setting learning targets;
- be a source of advice for staff about differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children
- make sure that CiC are prioritised in intervention arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home;
- have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of the child's personal education plan (PEP) within the school;
- set up systems to monitor and record the progress of all children in care and establish a system for contacting and forwarding educational records to new schools to facilitate a smooth and speedy transfer;
- act as the named contact for colleagues in social care and health and ensure effective communication between all relevant parties;
- have lead responsibility for supporting school staff to understand the things which can affect how children in care learn and achieve;
- ensure that the school file for CiC holds all the essential information a template for which can be found <http://www.bristol.gov.uk> search for 'CiC file template'

The role of all those involved in supporting children in care:

- ensure that all children in care are made to feel welcome and included;
- have high expectations of children in care's involvement in learning and educational progress;
- be aware of attachment issues, the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation from birth families;
- understand the reasons which may be behind a child in care's behaviour, and why they may need more support than other children;
- understand how important it is to see children in care as individuals and not to publicly treat them differently from their peers;

- Use de-escalation and co-regulation strategies as part of everyday practice, recognising that behaviour is a form of communication, often rooted in earlier experiences of trauma or instability.
- appreciate the central importance of showing sensitivity about who else knows about a child in care's status;
- understand what a PEP is and its importance in helping to create a shared understanding between teachers, carers, social workers and, depending on age and understanding, the child him or herself of what everyone needs to do to help them achieve their potential.

Annex 3 - Sources of guidance and support:

National policy/statutory guidance

- [Improving the attainment of looked after children in primary schools](#) -
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-children>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children>
- [Department for Education website](#)
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-conditions-of-grant-2017-to-2018>
- DfE 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'

Bristol policies and information

- Pupil premium policy:
<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/289934/Pupil+premium+policy+for+Bristol+2017+2018>

- Bristol LA Guidance on Personal Education Plans (PEP) and other PEP resources:

https://www.bristol.gov.uk/search?p_p_id=webworxxsearch_WAR_webworxxportlet&p_p_lifecycle=0&webworxxsearch_WAR_webworxxportlet_keepFilters=true&webworxxsearch_WAR_webworxxportlet_searchKeyword=PEP+guidance&searchTerm=PEP%20guidance

- Education of children in care The Hope website:
<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/schools-learning-early-years/resources-professionals/children-in-care-education>

School's own policies e.g.

- Behaviour policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- PSED/PHSE
- Learning and Teaching
- Confidentiality
- Safeguarding Children Policy
- SEND Policy

Website links in policy document:

- PEP guidance
<https://www.bristol.gov.uk> (see related documents section)
- The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-children>
- Template for report to full governing body on the progress of children in care:
<https://www.bristol.gov.uk> search CiC report template

Model school file for children in care:

- <http://www.bristol.gov.uk> search CiC file template