# Riccall Community Primary School Looked After Children (LAC) & Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) Policy

Adopted: March 2025 by Governing Body
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**Designated LAC & PLAC Teacher (as of March 2025): Jamie Llewellyn**

## Aims

Many LAC (Looked After Children) & PLAC (Previously Looked After Children) will have experienced disrupted schooling and gaps in learning. In addition, a significant proportion of LAC & PLAC have some form of Special Educational Need and or have been excluded from school. This has resulted in the attainment of this group not being in line with the attainment of their peers nationally.

At Riccall Community Primary School, we will address this by:

- providing a safe environment for all LAC & PLAC, where their educational experience is valued, high aspirations are encouraged and belief in the potential of all children is held.
- Ensuring that all LAC & PLAC are provided with, and have access to, support to enable them to have every opportunity to enjoy, learn and achieve in line with their peers.
- Ensuring that our policies and procedures for LAC & PLAC meet the requirements outlined within '*The designated teacher for looked after and previously looked-after children, Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities, DfE February 2018.*'

## Definitions

Looked After Children (LAC) or Children in Care (CiC) refers to a child 'looked-after by a local authority' as outlined by section 22 *Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.*

LAC/CIC are children who are in the care of the Local Authority for more than 24 hours and include children who are:

- living with foster parents/carers
- living in a residential children's home or
- living in residential settings like schools or secure units

Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) refers to children who are

'…no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any persons, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales,'

## Responsibilities

**The Governors**

Governors will ensure that:

- The needs of LAC & PLAC are considered, reflected and supported within all relevant school policies.
- Governors and Senior Leadership are aware of the legal responsibilities and guidance in regards to LAC & PLAC in education.

- Our admissions practices continue to give LAC & PLAC the highest priority admission to the school, as outlined within *'School Admissions' DfE guidance 2014.*
- The annual LAC & PLAC monitoring report is scrutinised to ensure that the academic progress of LAC & PLAC is effectively being tracked and challenged, and that staff have the training and resources needed to support this group of children.
- PP and PP+ spending is scrutinised ensuring that is used appropriately and effectively.
- Resources are available to address the needs specific to LAC & PLAC, and that disparity in academic progress in comparison to their peers within school, including patterns in attendance and exclusion and provision for gifted and talented children are highlighted and swiftly addressed.
- An appropriate member of staff is appointed as Designated Teacher, who has access to training and resources (including time) to undertake their responsibilities, and has the seniority to influence BHPS's Senior leadership, to meet and champion the needs of LAC & PLAC throughout the school.
- All staff are supported in recognising and meeting the needs of LAC/PLAC.

**The Headteacher**

Is responsible for ensuring that:

- The role of the Designated Teacher (DT) is filled by an appropriate member of staff at all times (including arrangements to allow for staff absences and resignation). The DT should have the seniority to work with Senior Leadership, Governors and all staff to provide information, advice and champion the achievement and needs of LAC & PLAC.
- The DT is provided with the time to fulfil their role and completes the LA Statutory Designated Teacher Training every two years as well as any other training to assist with the fulfilment of their duties.
- Policies and procedures to monitor and address the needs of, and support for LAC & PLAC are in place and adhered to, with reference to academic progress, admissions, attendance, safeguarding and exclusions, and that swift action is taken when concerns arise.
- The curriculum delivered reflects the needs of children with attachment and trauma needs.
- Riccall Community Primary School reports on the progress, attendance and conduct of Looked After Children to Governors, the Department for Education, Ofsted and the Local Authority as required.
- All school staff receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities in regards to LAC & PLAC as detailed within this policy and related guidance.
- All staff are aware of *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'* guidance, particularly in relation to vulnerable groups and their propensity towards being both the victims and perpetrator of Criminal and Child Sexual Exploitation and abuse.
- The exclusion of LAC & PLAC is avoided, alternatives to exclusion are considered and additional support is put in place to support those children at risk of exclusion.
- An Anti bullying Policy is in place and stringently followed which recognises that a significant proportion of LAC have experienced bullying at some point.

**The Designated Teacher (DT) for LAC & PLAC**

The Designated Teacher is responsible for and committed to championing the needs and attainment of LAC & PLAC (up to the age of 18), in an effort to bridge the gap and raise their attainment so that it is in-line with their peers.

The DT is a qualified teacher and “someone with sufficient authority to make things happen…[who] should be an advocate for Looked After Children, assessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them.” or The Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher, as stipulated by *Designated Teacher (Looked-After Pupils etc) (England) Regulations 2009.*

The designated teacher is responsible for:

- Coordinating support for LAC & PLAC in school and providing information, advice and training for staff and governors to raise awareness of their needs e.g. mental health.
- Being the first point of contact for the Local Authority, LAC & PLAC, their carers and associated professionals, ensuring that a member of staff represents the school at all relevant meetings.
- Ensuring that all staff are trained on Trauma & Attachment.
- Liaising with the Virtual School, Social Workers, Carers and other relevant professionals when LAC & PLAC are experiencing difficulties and/or at risk of exclusion, arranging meetings to share concerns and plan interventions.
- Ensuring that all LAC & PLAC (and their carers) have an identified member of staff that they can approach in school.
- Monitoring the progress of LAC & PLAC throughout the school year culminating in an annual progress report to Governors.
- Coordinating and planning smooth LAC & PLAC educational transitions, including starting school, changing Key Stage etc keeping in mind their needs.
- Swiftly identifying possible learning needs, safeguarding and mental health concerns to the Safeguarding Lead, Mental Health Lead and SENCO where appropriate and jointly planning interventions to address these concerns.
- Encouraging LAC & PLAC to take part in extracurricular activities and trips, and removing any hidden barriers to their involvement.
- Ensuring instances of bullying affecting LAC & PLAC is acted upon swiftly and that appropriate support is put in place.
- Maintaining the confidentiality of LAC & PLAC, sharing personal information on a need to know basis only.
- The SENCO is aware of those LAC/PLAC children in school, works closely with the DT and prioritises their access to additional support both internally and externally (including EP assessment).
- Using the PLAC PP+ appropriately and creatively to address the needs of PLAC in school.
- Making sure that LAC & PLAC automatically receive their ‘vulnerable group Bursary’ and that it is allocated appropriately.
- PEP’s (Personal Education Plans)
    - ° Ensuring that PEP’s for LAC are accurate, effective, relevant and completed within the identified timescales with the child, social worker, carers and any other relevant professionals.
    - ° PEP’s for LAC children with ECHP’s complement rather than mirror the EHCP.
    - ° Advising relevant staff of PEP targets, making sure that staff work with children to meet their targets.

° Ensuring that the Pupil Premium for LAC is used appropriately to support the child in meeting targets outlined within the PEP. **All staff**

- Have high expectations in regard to the achievement of LAC & PLAC.
- Ensure that the individual needs of LAC & PLAC are met through quality first teaching.
- Are aware that LAC and PLAC have high rates of SEND and flag concerns regarding learning with the SENCO and DT.
- Are aware of the specific needs of LAC & PLAC in relation to Attachment and Trauma and make appropriate adjustments to teaching and classroom management to meet these needs.
- Are aware of the prevalence of LAC & PLAC mental health needs, and flag concerns to the DT and Mental Health Lead.
- Work proactively with the DT to ensure that LAC & PLAC meet their targets and achieve. Ensuring that any barriers to learning, and inclusion are highlighted at the earliest opportunity.
- Work to ensure the Inclusion of LAC & PLAC within the School community, maintaining their confidentiality while also providing support with raising their self-esteem, and supporting their relationships with peers in line with the Anti Bullying policy.

## Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)

The experiences and outcomes of PLAC can be very similar to those of LAC. PLAC educational needs are unlikely to have changed just because their care status has. To address this, the needs of LAC and PLAC are prioritised and addressed in a similar way.

The progress of PLAC is reviewed termly and we work proactively with parents and carers and other professionals to address any areas of concern and put in place support as appropriate.
Parents and Carers of PLAC are encouraged to identify their child's previously looked after status on entry to the school and are required to produce documentation to support this. All parents and carers are written to annually to request that they make us aware of their child's PLAC status. All information is treated confidentially.

LAC & PLAC receive a similar level of support from the school. The attainment of PLAC is monitored on a termly basis by the Designated Teacher.

Concerns regarding the progress of PLAC are highlighted to parents and carers in a timely fashion so that support can be put in place swiftly. Parents and Carers are directed to the Adoption Fund via LA Social Work assessment where necessary.

## Admissions (See Admissions Policy and Arrangements for detail)

Riccall Community Primary School acknowledges and ensures that LAC & PLAC are given priority for School Admissions as outlined in *DFE School Admissions Code Guidance 2014 (updated March 2022)*. We work collaboratively with the Virtual School regarding any concerns that we might have in relation to the admission of LAC & PLAC. The Designated Teacher attends LAC & PLAC admissions meetings and works closely alongside the Virtual School, Social Worker, Carers and any other professionals to ensure that children feel supported, and have a successful smooth transition into school life.

## Inclusion (See SEND Policy and SEND Information Report for detail)

LAC & PLAC are encouraged to take part in all aspects of school life. Through effective communication with carers, professionals and staff, as well as the appropriate use of pupil premium and the PPG, we work to remove the barriers to LAC & PLAC having a robust, enjoyable and valuable school experience.

The experiences of LAC & PLAC has resulted in disproportionate levels of Special Educational Needs within these groups. In acknowledgement of this, individual attainment is monitored closely by the Designated Teacher via the PEP process and concerns highlighted to the SENCO and Virtual School. Concerns raised by Parents, Carers, Social Workers and the Virtual School are welcomed and swiftly acted upon. Where it is felt that further assessment may be needed, LAC & PLAC access to the SEND assessment process and interventions are prioritised.

A significant proportion of LAC / PLAC have undiagnosed Speech and Language needs which impacts on educational outcomes. In recognition of this, all LAC & PLAC (with the consent of parents & carers) are screened on entry for Speech, Language and Communication Needs. Significant or continuing concerns are referred to specialist support.

## Pupil Premium Grant & Pupil Premium Plus

### Pupil Premium Grant (PPG)

Pupil Premium Grant for LAC is provided by the Local Authority to assist the school with ensuring that children meet the targets outlined within their PEP. It can be used to support:

- Academic achievement and progress.
- Wider achievement e.g. in an area in which the child is gifted and talented.
- Attendance.
- Inclusion [by reducing internal and external exclusion].
- Social skills.
- Transition into the next key stage and/or a new learning provider.

Where further funding is needed for support, advice from the Virtual School will be sought.

### Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)

While the PP+ for PLAC is not a 'personal budget,' should a PLAC require support over and above that which is provided for any other child, the PP+ will be used to fund this.

PP+ for PLAC is also 'pooled' and used to provide additional support and services to raise the attainment of PLAC within school as outlined by our online Pupil Premium Report and as part of a 3 year Pupil Premium Strategy, for instance:

- Attachment Training for all staff
- Purchasing LAC SALT screening tool to use with PLAC who start school
- One to one tuition
- Mentoring programmes

## Attendance (See Attendance Policy for detail)

The attendance of LAC is carefully monitored and reported daily to Welfare Call / the Local Authority. Parents and Carers of LAC & PLAC will be contacted regarding unauthorised absences daily. Concerns regarding attendance including identified patterns of absence will be raised with parents, carers, social workers and professionals.

## Exclusions

LAC and PLAC have disproportionally high levels of exclusions from schools nationally, placing them at a further educational disadvantage.
Advice and support from the Local Authority (Social workers, the Virtual School or the Permanence Educational Support Officer) will be sought where it is felt that a LAC or PLAC may become at risk of exclusion. Support and alternatives to exclusion will be considered.

Alternatives to exclusion may include:

- Internal exclusions
- Restorative Justice
- Managed Moves (in discussion with the Headteacher of the Virtual School)
- CAMHs support
- Additional therapeutic intervention via the Adoption Fund (PLAC only)

Where a fixed term exclusion of a LAC is unavoidable, parents/carers and the Virtual School will be contacted prior to the child leaving the school site and work will be provided to avoid further gaps in education. Plans and support will be put in place to avoid further exclusion on the child's return to school.