



## Designated Teacher policy (Looked After and previously Looked After Children)

Author, date and title	Reviewed on/by	Next review due date	Statutory Requirement
Sarah Woodham (Joint Federation Policy)	February 2023	February 2023	No
Sarah Woodham	March 2023	March 2024	No
Sarah Woodham	March 2024	March 2025	No
Sarah Woodham	March 2025	March 2026	No
Ciara Dumpleton	March 2026	March 2028	No

***As Values Schools, Shillington Lower and Stondon Lower ensures that all its policies, principles and practices adhere to the Values Education ethos.***

***We are committed to recognising, valuing and respecting the diversity of our schools' communities. We adhere to the Local Authority's Equal Opportunities Policy and the Equality Duty 2010. We welcome all members of the schools' communities irrespective of race, ethnic or national origins, religious and political beliefs, gender, disability, sexuality, age, marital status and linguistic ability. We will ensure equality and value diversity, and address any unfair treatment, discrimination and prejudice.***

***All our schools' policies include the Pixie class (Shillington) and the before and after school clubs (both schools).***

Head Teacher: .....

Date: .....

Headteacher: .....

Date: .....

Chair of Governors:.....

Date: .....

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# Shillington and Stondon Federation

## EDUCATION OF LOOKED AFTER AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

### Introduction

Shillington and Stondon Lower School and Governors are committed to providing quality education for all pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. This policy sets out the role which Shillington and Stondon Federation plays in supporting and enhancing the educational experiences of Looked after and previously Looked After Children on roll at either school. The school recognises that nationally there is considerable educational under achievement of children in residential and foster care, when compared with their peers and is committed to implementing the principles and practice. Relevant legislation and guidance includes,

- ‘Promoting the achievement of Looked after and previously Looked After Children and previously Looked after and previously Looked After Children’ (July 2014, updated February 2018), [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/683556/Promoting\\_the\\_education\\_of\\_looked-after\\_children\\_and\\_previously\\_looked-after\\_children.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683556/Promoting_the_education_of_looked-after_children_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf)
- Section 20 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 (“the 2008 Act”)
- Section 20A of the 2008 Act inserted by section 5 of the children and social work Act 2017 (“the 2017 Act”)
- ‘The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked–after children’ Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities (Feb 2018) [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/683561/The\\_designated\\_teacher\\_for\\_looked-after\\_and\\_previously\\_looked-after\\_children.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683561/The_designated_teacher_for_looked-after_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf)

### Definitions

“**Looked-after children (LAC)**” are defined as children who:

- Are provided with accommodation, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours under the Children Act 1989, sections 20 and 21. The child’s placement may include living with a relative, emergency care and short- or long-term formal foster placement.
- Are subject to a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989, part 4. If a court has granted a Care Order (Section 31(1) or interim care order (section 38) which it will issue if it believes a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. A Care Order gives additional parental responsibility to the local authority which it shares with the birth parents.
- Are subject to a placement order.

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**“Previously LAC (PLAC)”** are defined under the Children and Social Work Act 2017 as children who:

- Are no longer looked after by an LA because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order; or were adopted from ‘state care’ outside England and Wales. “State Care” is care provided by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other organisation whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Governing Board of Shillington and Stondon Federation, is committed to ensuring that these children are supported as fully as possible and, as part of its Corporate Parenting role, will ensure that the following are in place and are working effectively:

### **Role and Responsibility of the Governing Board:**

- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for Looked after and previously Looked After Children
- Be aware of whether the school has any LAC on roll and how many in each year group
- Ensure there is a named Designated Teacher for LAC
- Liaise with the Head teacher to ensure the Designated Teacher is able to carry out their responsibilities in relation to LAC
- Support the Head teacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of LAC are met
- Nominate a Governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body (any reports must not include the names of LAC)
- Review the effectiveness of this policy as least every three years.

### **Role and Responsibility of the Designated Teacher**

*The Designated Teacher is currently Mrs Foxall who will:*

- Advocate for Looked after and previously Looked After Children and previously Looked after and previously Looked After Children, within the schools
- Ensure a smooth and welcoming induction for any new looked after child and carer
- Ensure that a PEP is completed as soon as possible, working jointly with the child and carer, in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies and using the results of the Strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ).
- Keep PEPs and other records up to date, particularly in time to inform review meetings
- Ensure that each child in public care has an identified member of staff who they can talk to (this will usually be the child’s form tutor) and where appropriate, a trained peer mentor.

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- Co-ordinate support for the child in school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary
- Ensure school staff receive relevant information and training to ensure progress and provide feedback for review meetings
- Ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share very personal information on a need to know basis
- Provide written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible
- Ensure the child and carer receive notification of meetings, parents evenings and other events
- Encourage LAC to participate in extracurricular activities and out of hours learning where feasible, ensuring they are provided with any entitlements e.g. free music lessons where appropriate, access to the 16-19 bursary arrangements.
- Ensure speedy transfer of information between individuals and other relevant agencies and to a new school during any transfer periods
- Seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties or is in danger of exclusion
- Ensure wherever possible that exclusion is a last resort and where absolutely necessary is as short a period as possible seeking partnership arrangements with other schools for provision elsewhere if at all possible.
- Track the progress of LAC within the school to ensure they remain “on track” and identify and ensure appropriate use of Pupil premium to support
- Ensure that returns on LAC are completed as requested by the local authority.

Relationships beyond the school:

The designated teacher will:

- Proactively engage with external professionals to enable the school to respond effectively to the needs of these children
- Engage effectively with parents and carers and support them to be actively engaged in their children’s education
- Ensure the school is clear about with whom information about these children is shared
- Ensure that school works effectively with others outside of the school to maximise the stability of

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### **Role and Responsibility of all staff:**

- Being aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation (attachment awareness) from birth families and that some children may find it difficult to build relationships of trust with adults because of their experiences.
- Ensure that any child in public care is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained
- Be familiar with and respond to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other review meetings
- Contribute to the Designated Teacher's request for information on educational attainment and needs as appropriate
- As with all children, ensure that no LAC is stigmatised in any way
- Provide a supportive climate to ensure that a LAC can achieve stability within the school setting
- Set high aspirations for the education and personal achievement of all LAC
- Positively promote the self-esteem of LAC
- Being vigilant for any signs of safeguarding concerns surrounding LAC and PLAC due to their increased vulnerability to harm and reporting any concerns to the DSL as soon as possible.

### **Confidentiality:**

Information on Looked after and previously Looked After Children will be shared with school staff on a 'need to know basis'. The Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with which staff at the PEP meeting. Once this has been agreed with the social worker, carer, young person and other parties, complete confidentiality is to be maintained. Any reports to the Governing Body in relation to LAC will not include names of children.

### **Training:**

The Designated Teacher for Looked after and previously Looked After Children will undertake regular training as provided by the local authority.

### **Safeguarding:**

The Federation is aware that LAC and PLAC most commonly become looked after because of abuse and/or neglect and because of this, they can be at potentially greater risk in relation to safeguarding.

The school recognises that many LAC and PLAC have experienced trauma, abuse or complex family circumstances that have led to them being placed in care and will ensure that all staff are aware that experiences of adversity such as these can leave pupils vulnerable to further harm or exploitation.

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All staff will be trained to recognise signs and indicators of safeguarding concerns and will ensure that extra vigilance is practiced in observing and identifying these indicators amongst LAC and PLAC as soon as possible.

### **Mental Health**

All staff will be made aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a pupil has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

The schools are aware that LAC and PLAC are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) issues which can impact their behaviour and education. The schools will support the DT in developing their knowledge, awareness, training and skills to support children with behaviour management and mental health.

The DT will work with the VSH to ensure school staff are able to identify signs of potential mental health issues, understand the impact issues can have on LAC and PLAC, and know how to access further assessment and support, where necessary. This includes being “attachment aware” whereby school staff understand the impact of attachment disorders on a child’s emotional development and learning. A whole school approach will be adopted to identify and support pupils with attachment difficulties

### **Application of this policy:**

This policy and the information within it affects all Looked after and previously Looked After Children regardless of which authority has responsibility for them. The designated teacher will follow the guidance and work with the practices and procedures of the differing authorities where appropriate, although with the recognition that Shillington and Stondon Schools are in Central Bedfordshire and as such the local authority wish to know if any Looked after and previously Looked After Children within its schools are not receiving the necessary support from the appropriate local authority.

### **Local Authority:**

Email: [virtualschoolhead@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:virtualschoolhead@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Telephone: 0300 300 6977

**Linked School Policies:** Child Protection, Admissions, Equality, Special Educational Needs, Confidentiality.

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