

Children Looked After Policy

A place where everyone belongs

Our vision: Templars - a place where everyone belongs; where everyone is proud to belong; and where everyone is welcomed, feels safe and strives to achieve their full potential.

Our mission: Every child. Every day. Every chance.

Our values: Care, Respect and Honesty.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Document status	Statutory / Governing Body policy
Policy owner	Headteacher
Operational lead	Sam Hall
Approved by	Governing Body
Approval date	Previously approved - date retained in governing records
Governing Body minute reference	See governing-body minutes
Effective from	Previously approved - date retained in governing records
Review cycle	Every two years
Next review due	September 2028
Earlier review triggers	Changes to legislation, statutory guidance, local arrangements, identified risk or school circumstances
Version	1.0 - standardised cover, September 2026
Availability	school office / staff SharePoint

Safeguarding and equality are considered throughout the implementation of this document.

Safeguarding:

At Templars Primary School, safeguarding and child protection is paramount and we are fully committed to ensuring the welfare and safety of all our children. We believe that safeguarding is the responsibility of all the adults in the school community. We believe that pupils have a right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment which includes the right to protection from all types of abuse including bullying. All school staff are vigilant for signs of any pupil in distress and are confident about applying the processes to avert and alleviate any such problems. If any behaviour is a concern in relation to safeguarding Templars Primary School procedures and processes will be followed at all times in accordance with the Child Protection Policy. Any concerns will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding team, these people are identified on the noticeboard in the staffroom and on the website.

“An educationally inclusive school is one in which the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of every young person matter. Effective schools are educationally inclusive schools. This shows, not only in their performance, but also in their ethos and their willingness to offer new opportunities to pupils who may have experienced previous difficulties. This does not mean treating all pupils in the same way. Rather it involves taking account of pupils' varied lives experiences and needs.”

The above quote is taken from ‘Evaluating Educational Inclusion – Guidance for Inspectors and Schools’ (DfES 2000) and forms the rationale for this policy.

We are also aware that Children Looked After constitute a group in the sense that they may share common experiences as a result of having been taken into care, but that they are also individuals and members of other groups. We will take this into account when planning to meet their needs and avoid any action that may lead to stigmatisation.

The CLA designated teacher is Miss. S Hall (Assistant Head).

Aim

The aim of this policy is to promote educational inclusion for Children Looked After, to enable them to access the full range of educational opportunities available to them and to reach their potential, both academically and personally.

Objectives**Children Looked After in this school will:**

- receive an appropriate level of monitoring and support
- have access to the full range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities

Teachers and other staff in this school will:

- receive an appropriate level of training on the issues affecting the educational achievement and psychological well-being of Children Looked After and use this to guide their interactions with them
- plan for and meet the individual needs of Children Looked After

THROUGHOUT THIS POLICY WE WILL REFER TO THE CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER (CLA) DESIGNATED TEACHER, MISS HALL, THE ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER WHO HOLDS THIS ROLE AT TEMPLARS.

The CLA designated teacher and Senior Management will:

- identify, arrange and/or deliver training to staff to enable the above to take place
- ensure the development of effective and inclusive strategies to address the needs of Children Looked After
- ensure the smooth transfer of information within school and between school, carers and other agencies

1. Induction

To ensure a supportive and sympathetic induction for Children Looked After admitted to our school, the following arrangements are in place:

- If possible, the CLA designated teacher will arrange a transition meeting with any previous setting to ensure that all relevant information is gained prior to the admission date. If this is not possible or if there has not been any previous setting then she will meet with all relevant parties, this will include the Foster Carer, Social Worker and parents if appropriate.
- Careful consideration will then be made into the most appropriate start date and class teacher, on some occasions it may be necessary to have a reduced timetable at first, this is only required in rare situations.
- The child will be met on their first day, if possible, by the CLA designated teacher, but if not, they will meet one of the Learning Mentor's - Mrs. Parkin or Mrs. McDonald. The Learning Mentor will introduce themselves, discuss their role and show them their room.
- The Learning Mentor will then meet them during the first couple of weeks and will also check that the teacher has no concerns.

2. Pastoral Support

To ensure Children Looked After continue to receive an appropriate level of support, the following arrangements are in place:

- The school Learning Mentors are available to meet with children either on their request, the class teachers, or the carers. They are available to work on friendships, emotional support or self-esteem.
- The class teacher will be made aware of the needs of the child and will be asked to monitor them in terms of academic progress, emotional wellbeing and general presentation.
- The class teacher will provide information for the Personal Education Plan (PEP) and Child in Care (CiC) reviews, which will be collated and shared by the CLA designated teacher at CiC meetings and PEP meetings.
- Should any concerns arise, these will be discussed with the carers if appropriate and the allocated Social Worker.

3. Information

- The CLA designated teacher will seek and receive information about the academic attainment and other educational issues affecting the learning of newly admitted Children Looked After at an early stage and pass this on to relevant staff to avoid unnecessary breaks in learning. This will include the Personal Education Plan if one is in place. If there is no current PEP, the CLA designated teacher will liaise with the Social Worker to ensure this is part of the initial meeting in school.
- Information about the circumstances of Children Looked After will be shared on a 'need to know' basis. If there are learning or behaviour issues for a Child Looked After, all staff will be informed by the CLA designated teacher of strategies in place or if the young person is experiencing particular difficulties. Supply teachers and non-teaching staff will be given an appropriate amount of information, to be determined by the designated CLA teacher and or the Head Teacher.
- The PEP will also include information on who should receive information, sign for trips etc. and will record achievements either in or out of school.

Information about the academic attainment of all Children Looked After in school will be collected as follows:

- Academic achievements of the child will be monitored in line with current school procedures. Data is collected half termly and discussed during Pupil Progress Meetings and shared at PEP meetings.
- Parents' Evenings take place twice a year and both parents and carers are invited to these, if appropriate. End of year reports will be forwarded to parents again if appropriate and to the allocated social worker.

Information about the attendance and behaviour of Children Looked After will be reported during CLA reviews and PEP meetings. If this was a cause for concern further meetings and external agencies may be required to support and to consider whether early interventions may be needed to address this. Careful monitoring around fixed term exclusions would be required.

4. Strategies

4.1 Curriculum

If a Child Looked After appears to be having difficulties with the curriculum or to be failing to engage with it, this will be addressed as follows:

- The class teacher will look at all possible contributory factors and gather a wide range of evidence in conjunction with other relevant staff
- Look for factors which may be masking underlying learning difficulties
- Talk to the child

If concerns persist over time, then issues around Learning Difficulties may need to be considered, see the School Special Educational Needs and Disabilities policy for further information.

We recognise that there are factors which may prevent Children Looked After from achieving as highly as they could, even if there are no apparent learning difficulties. To ensure that underachievement does not

go unrecognised, the attainment of each Child Looked After will be tracked and compared to previous results. If progress is not as could be expected, the school will consider the use of incentive schemes, mentoring and use of interventions, which would be funded using Pupil Premium Plus.

We are aware that certain aspects of the curriculum, for example activities to mark Mother's Day or to investigate family history, may cause difficulties for Children Looked After and we will ensure this is handled sensitively by planning alternative but relevant activities.

4.2 Attendance

If a Child Looked After is identified as having poor attendance or punctuality

- The Social Worker, Virtual Schools and carers will be contacted by the CLA designated teacher to gain their support and collect any relevant information

4.3 Behaviour and SEMH

We recognise that psychological trauma and lack of continuity in the lives of Children Looked After may lead to challenging behaviour in school and that it is especially important to employ positive behaviour strategies in these circumstances. The following arrangements are in place to address behaviour problems at an early stage:

- The CLA designated teacher will contact the Social Worker, Carer, Virtual Schools and if appropriate the parents as soon as behaviour problems are identified or if there are significant changes to the behaviour of a Child Looked After. Refer to the school Behaviour policy for further information.
- If the problem continues, the Social Worker, carers and staff from support services such as the Educational Psychology Service, SEMHL (Social, Emotional, Mental Health and Learning Team) and the Virtual School will be invited to a meeting with appropriate school staff to determine supportive strategies to reduce the problem behaviour. The responsibility for organising such a meeting lies with the CLA designated teacher.
- We recognise that Children Looked After as a group are far more likely to be excluded than the school population, and that exclusion can place additional pressure on foster placements. To reduce the likelihood of this occurring the school will arrange a meeting as soon as possible with all relevant parties to consider if all measures have been taken.

4.4 Homework

Whilst we recognise that Children Looked After may not always find it easy to complete homework, we believe they should be given support and encouragement to do so. School staff can offer support with this if needed.

4.5 Extra-Curricular Activities

We recognise that Children Looked After are often prevented from joining in with after-school activities because of transport arrangements and that they may resist taking part in any school-based activities because of poor relationships with their peers, for example. As we believe it is essential that Children Looked After can play a full part in school life, the following strategies are in place to help them to do this:

- The CLA designated teacher will monitor the involvement of Children Looked After in extra-curricular activities during PEP's and CLA reviews and will discuss any additional clubs and activities that they may be interested in. Barriers to them attending these clubs will be considered and addressed as much as possible during the above meetings, this may result in using Pupil Premium funding.
- The CLA designated teacher or Learning Mentor will liaise with the young person, carers and Social Workers to try to promote involvement in extra-curricular activities during PEP meetings.
- The CLA designated teacher will liaise with LA support services such as the Virtual School to develop strategies for increasing the involvement of Children Looked After in extra-curricular activities if their uptake is shown to be low.

The success of all school strategies and use of funded (Pupil Premium) initiatives will be monitored and evaluated by the CLA designated teacher,

- Collection and analysis of information
- Discussion with school staff, carers, Social Workers and staff from LA Support Services, both informally and during meetings, e.g. those set up to write Personal Education Plans
- Discussions with Children Looked After
- Responsibility for monitoring and evaluating school strategies lies with the CLA designated teacher

5. Liaison with Outside Agencies

To ensure that all those involved in the education and care of Children Looked After work together in their best interests, the CLA designated teacher will devise and implement effective strategies and procedures for

- Accessing additional support, funding or use of funded initiatives (Pupil Premium)
- Liaising with Social Workers to ensure all Children Looked After have a good quality Personal Education Plan (PEP).
- Participation in and co-ordination of review and planning meetings for Children Looked After. Statutory school procedures, such as Annual Reviews for children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) will be timed to coincide with these wherever possible and appropriate.

In addition, school management will do everything possible to enable class teachers or other appropriate staff to attend meetings where this would be in the interests of the young person. Written information will always be gathered and shared.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 The CLA designated teacher is Miss. Samantha Hall.

The designated teacher will:

- Act as a central point of initial contact within the school for any matters involving Children Looked-After (CLA) and Children Previously Looked After (CPLA).
- Promote the educational achievement of every CLA and CPLA on roll by:
 - Working with Virtual School and Children's Services
 - Promoting a whole school culture where the needs of these pupils' matter and are prioritised
- Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies to ensure they consider the needs of Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After
- Promote a culture in which Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After are encouraged and supported to engage with their education and other school activities
- Act as a source of advice for teachers about working with Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After
- Work directly with Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After 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 Children Looked After children's PEPs
- Work closely with the school's designated safeguarding lead to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After are quickly and effectively responded to
- Involve parents and guardians of Children Previously Looked After in decisions affecting their child's education

6.2 Supporting Children Looked After

The designated teacher will:

- Make sure children looked-after PEPs meet their needs by working closely with other teachers to assess each child's specific educational needs
- Monitor and track how children looked-after attainment progresses under their PEPs
- If a child 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
- Ensure that:
 - A child'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 child and from where these may be sourced

6.3 Relationships beyond the school

The designated teacher will:

- Proactively engage with social workers and other professionals to enable the school to respond effectively to the needs of Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After
- 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 Children Previously Looked After and encourage them to be actively involved in their children's education
- Proactively build relationships with local authority professionals, such as VSHs and SEN departments
- Consider how the school works with others outside of the school to maximise the stability of education for Children Looked After, 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 children looked-after are absent without authorisation and work with the responsible authority to take appropriate safeguarding action
 - Talking to the child's social worker and/or other relevant parties in the local authority regarding any decisions about changes in care placements which will disrupt the child's education, providing advice about the likely impact and what the local authority should do to minimise disruption
 - Making sure that, if a child looked-after moves school, their new designated teacher receives any information needed to help the transition process
- Where a Child Looked After is at risk of exclusion:
 - Contact the VSH as soon as possible so they can help the school decide how to support the child to improve their behaviour and avoid exclusion becoming necessary
 - Working with the VSH and child's carers, consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to address the causes of the child's behaviour

6.4 The Head Teacher and Senior Management

The responsibility for the educational and personal well being of Children Looked After rests with the Headteacher, although some of the day-to-day tasks may be delegated to other staff. Working with the Senior Management Team, the Headteacher will ensure that inclusive strategies are in place for Children Looked After and that staff, particularly the CLA designated teacher, are enabled to carry them out.

6.5 The named Governor with special responsibility for Children Looked After is Caroline Elliott.

The named governor will share a report written by the CLA teacher to the Governing Body on an annual basis. This will report on the following:

- The number of CLA pupils in the school
- A comparison of test scores for Children Looked After as a group, compared to those of other pupils
- The attendance of pupils as a discrete group, compared to other pupils
- The level of fixed term/permanent exclusions
- Pupil destinations

The named governor must be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that Children Looked After have equal access to:

- The National Curriculum
- Statutory assessments
- Additional educational support
- Appropriate pastoral support
- Extra-curricular activities

7. Evaluation

The general success and appropriateness of this policy will be evaluated biannually.