



Magdalen Court School

Children in Care (LAC) and Children previously looked after
(PLAC) Policy

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1. Introduction

1.1 The terms Looked After Child (LAC) and child in care (LAC) are interchangeable.

1.2 For the purposes of this policy we are using the term LAC. 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:

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

1.3 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.

1.4 Magdalen Court School (MCS) will do for LAC what we do for all learners only more so. We aim to ensure that looked after children excel, as we aim for all learners to excel. We aim to overcome their barriers to learning and enable them to leave us happy and secure in themselves, understanding that they do have control over their destiny and that education does matter. 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 Children in Care Council and the Virtual School.

1.5 MCS strives to ensure that the culture and ethos 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.

2. Legal Framework

2.1 This policy follows the statutory guidance for school governing bodies outlined in [Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children](#) DfE February 2018.

3. Culture and Support

3.1 Magdalen Court school will support children in care by:

- Ensuring an effective induction when joining the 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 Virtual School Head and specialist agencies;
- Encouraging and supporting looked after children to take responsibility for their learning;
- Engaging looked after children in learning outside the classroom and after-school activities;
- 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.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Magdalen Court School has a Designated Teacher for LAC and a representative from the LGB with special responsibility for LAC. These names will be published in the Key Information for Parents section on the school website.

4.2 Trust Board and Local Governing Board – key monitoring responsibilities include:

- The governing body will ensure that the designated teacher and the named governor undertake appropriate training;
- Ensure that the designated teacher is part of the Senior Leadership Team;
- Governors will consider an annual report from the designated teacher covering attainment, attendance, progress, Personal Education Plans, LAC with Special

Educational Needs and Disability or who are gifted and talented, impact on school development plans and how the school supports the work of the Virtual School.

- School policies are effective in reflecting the needs of LAC;
- Resources are allocated to support the designated teacher to carry out this role effectively for the benefit of LAC.

4.3 The Head Teacher's responsibility is:

- To ensure that 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 learners in care;
- To make sure that the designated teacher role contributes to the deeper understanding of everyone in the school;
- Monitor the effectiveness of the role of the designated teacher;
- Evaluate the standards and achievement of LAC;
- Ensure that all staff are given the opportunity to attend training courses etc. that help them develop the skills and knowledge needed to support looked after children.

4.4 Designated teacher within the school:

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

- Promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how LAC learn.
- Promote the educational achievement of every LAC on the school's roll.
- Make sure, in partnership with other staff, that there are effective and well understood school procedures in place to support the learning of each Looked after Child.
- Promote a culture in which LAC are able to discuss their progress and be involved in setting their own targets, have their views taken seriously and are supported to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Be a source of advice for staff about differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children.
- Make sure that LAC are prioritised in one to one tuition 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 looked after children 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 helping school staff to understand the things which can affect how looked after children learn and achieve.
- Maintain the ePep.

4.5 The role of all those involved in supporting looked after children:

- Ensure that all looked after children are made to feel welcome and included;
- Have high expectations of looked after children's involvement in learning and educational progress.
- Be aware of 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 looked after children as individuals and not to publicly treat them differently from their peers.
- 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.

5. Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

- 5.1 All LAC 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.
- 5.2 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. 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 young person, carers, the social worker, a teacher and others such as, where appropriate, staff from The Virtual School for Looked after children.
- 5.3 It is good practice where possible, to tie in the Education Health and Care Plan with the PEP. Full guidance on PEP meetings and how to use the PEP is provided on the [CiC education web pages](#).

6. Additional Funding

- 6.1 Looked after children are entitled to additional funding to help improve their outcomes and narrow the gap between their outcomes and those of their peers. The young people eligible and the amount of funding available will be determined as a result of government policy.
- 6.2 MCS is committed to ensuring effective use of this dedicated funding where available for all eligible looked after children on roll to provide additional, personalised support

to ensure accelerated progress in order to improve outcomes. The dedicated funding for children in Year R to Year 11 is currently called the LAC Pupil Premium Grant

7. Admission/Induction Arrangements

- 7.1 On entry to the school the designated teacher will identify any relevant issues, academic or pastoral, and ensure the child is made to feel supported in our school.
- 7.2 On admission, the designated teacher will contact the carer and Virtual School to ensure attendance at PEP meetings.
- 7.3 When children already on school roll enter care the school will ensure that the learner meets with the designated teacher and is fully informed of the school procedures and additional support arrangements available. A meeting with other parties will be arranged and PEP prepared as soon as possible in the same way as for those children already in care admitted to school.

8. School Trips and Special Activities

- 8.1 We aim to ensure that children in care enjoy as many extra-curricular opportunities as possible by reserving placements for them on trips or enrichment activities which they are eligible for and allowing sufficient time to gain the necessary consent.
- 8.2 The responsibility for giving permission for school trips and enrichment opportunities is that of the social worker, although they often delegate this to foster carers. The person who may give permission will be clarified at the first PEP meeting. If in doubt we will always send consent forms to the social worker.

9. Leaving Arrangements

- 9.1 When a child in care leaves the school we will find ways to say goodbye. We will also ensure the swift transfer of information to the next school.