



CHILDREN IN CARE (Looked-after children)

Brierley CE (VC) Primary School

Approved by Governing Body: Autumn 2025

Last reviewed: September 2025

Next review: September 2026

Our Vision

Though we are many, we are one body. Together, we learn and grow.

God is at the heart of all we do, shining His light to guide us on our journey. Together, we face change and transformation with courage.

In love, we nurture all to be resilient, hopeful and aspirational; to become the very best version of ourselves, knowing that we are loved.

Each member of our school community is honoured and celebrated for their unique character and qualities: difference is met with dignity and compassion. Though we are many, we are one body.

Our community at Brierley stretches beyond the school, where we share God's message of love through our actions, our thoughts and our words as we continue on life's path.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children Act 1989
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE (2018) 'Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2018) 'The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2024) 'Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement'
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'
- DfE (2023) 'Working together to safeguard children 2023'

Designated teacher for Children in Care / Looked after children– Sharon Gough

What do we mean by the Children in Care?

Children and young people become “looked after” either if they have been taken into care by the local authority or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most will be living in foster homes but a smaller number may be in a children’s home, living with a relative or even be placed back at home with their natural parent(s).

A Child in care will have a care manager (Social Services Division) who arranges for the pupil’s care plan.

“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.
- Are subject to a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989, part 4.
- Are subject to a placement order.

“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.

The Governing Body of Brierley CE (VC) Primary School is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. This commitment is in line with BMBC’s ‘Pledge to Children and Young People in Care’. This Governing Body recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of Children in care when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in DfE statutory guidance ‘Promoting the education of looked-after children – 2018 and noting the guidance in ‘Children Looked-after in England including adoption 2016 to 2017 and the Children and Young families Act (2014). The Children and Young Families Act places a duty to safeguard Children in care, to promote their educational achievements and to ensure that they are able to achieve and reach their full potential.

Role and Responsibility of the Governing Body

The governing body of this school will:

- Complying with their duties under legislation, having regard to [KCSIE](#) guidance and ensuring that policies, procedures and training in the school are effective and comply with the law at all times.
- Adopting a whole-school approach to safeguarding arrangements and child protection, ensuring it is central to the school's processes.
- Holding the school to account on how it supports LAC and PLAC, including how the Pupil Premium+ (PP+) is used and their level of progress.
- Working with the LA to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked after.
- Ensuring the school has a coherent policy for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of LAC and PLAC.
- Reviewing the school's policies and procedures in conjunction with legislation and statutory guidance.
- Ensuring that there are no unintended barriers to the admission of LAC and PLAC either at normal transition or any other point of the school year.
- Appointing a designated teacher (DT), who is appropriately qualified to support the educational achievement of LAC.
- Ensuring the designated teacher for LAC and PLAC has access to appropriate training, resources and support.
- Ensuring that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to each looked after child's:
 - Legal status (i.e. whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order).
 - Contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.
 - Care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the LA.

- Ensuring that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep LAC and PLAC safe.
- Ensuring that there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying and reporting possible safeguarding or mental health concerns amongst LAC and PLAC.
- Ensuring LAC and PLAC have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and that reasonable adjustments are made, if necessary.
- Ensuring they receive feedback from the headteacher regarding the effectiveness of the policy on an annual basis.
- Ensure that the school's other policies and procedures give Children in care equal access in respect of:
 - Admission to school
 - The National Curriculum
 - Additional educational support where this is needed.
 - Extra-curricular activities

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Appointing the designated teacher for LAC and PLAC.
- Allowing the designated teacher the time and facilities to succeed in carrying out their duties.
- Overseeing this policy and monitoring its implementation, feeding back to the governing board [annually](#) on the following:
 - The number of LAC and PLAC in the school
 - An analysis of assessment scores as a cohort, compared to other pupil groups
 - The attendance of LAC and PLAC, compared to other pupil groups
 - The level of fixed term and permanent exclusions, compared to other pupil groups
- Ensuring all members of staff are aware that supporting LAC is a key priority.
- Ensuring PP+ for PLAC is managed effectively.
- Promoting the advantages of actively challenging negative stereotypes of LAC.

- Understanding the role of the Virtual School Head and working with them to promote the educational achievement of LAC and PLAC.

The designated teacher (DT) for LAC and PLAC is responsible for:

- Working with the Virtual School Head and social worker to:
 - Promote the educational achievement of LAC and PLAC.
 - Develop and implement their PEP.
 - Discuss how funding can be used to support the pupil's progress and meet the needs identified in their PEP.
- Contributing to the development and review of whole school policies affecting LAC and PLAC.
- Building relationships with health, education and social care partners and other partners so that they and the Virtual School Head understand the support available to LAC and PLAC.
- Taking lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand what can affect how LAC and PLAC learn and achieve and how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils.
- Acting as the main contact for social services and the DfE.
- Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations.
- Ensuring LAC are involved in setting their own targets.
- Advising staff on teaching strategies for LAC.
- Ensuring that LAC are prioritised for one-to-one tuition and support.
- Leading on how the child's PEP is developed and used in school to ensure the child's progress towards targets is monitored.
- Liaising with the SENCO to ensure all pupil needs are met.
- Being vigilant in observing any potential safeguarding concerns that could arise surrounding LAC and PLAC due to their increased vulnerability to harm, and reporting these to the DSL as soon as they arise.

- Working with the child's VSH and social worker to develop and implement their PEP.
- Working with the VSH to discuss how funding can be used to support the child's progress and meet the needs identified in their PEP.
- Working with the headteacher to submit an [annual](#) report to the governing board, which details the progress of all LAC and PLAC.

The virtual school head (VSH) is responsible for:

- Ensuring that arrangements are in place to improve the educational experiences and outcomes of LAC placed within and outside the authority.
- Monitoring and evaluating the educational attainment and progress of LAC as if those children attended a single school.
- Ensuring that there are effective systems in place to:
 - Maintain an up-to-date roll of the LAC who are attending the school.
 - Gather information about the education placement, attendance and educational progress of LAC.
 - Ensure social workers, the DT, the school, carers and Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) understand their role and responsibilities in initiating, developing, reviewing and updating the pupil's PEP and how they help meet the needs identified in that PEP.
 - Ensure all LAC at the school have up-to-date, effective and high-quality PEPs that focus on educational outcomes.
 - Avoid drift or delay in providing suitable educational provision, including special educational provision, and unplanned termination of educational arrangements through proactive, multi-agency co-operation.
 - Ensure the educational achievement of LAC is seen as a priority by everyone who has responsibilities for promoting their welfare.
 - Report regularly on the attainment, progress and school attendance of LAC through the LA's corporate parenting structures.

The DSL is responsible for:

- Keeping up-to-date records of LAC's respective social worker and VSH.
- Highlighting the importance of recognising and reporting safeguarding concerns regarding LAC and PLAC as soon as possible due to their increased vulnerability to harm.
- Keeping up-to-date contact details of their LA personal advisor, where a child becomes a care leaver, and liaising with the advisor as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Ensuring they are involved in reviewing PEP and care plans for LAC and PLAC.
- Liaising with the class teacher, designated teacher, specialists and parents when considering interventions to support the progress of PLAC.

Staff are responsible for:

- Keeping up-to-date contact details of their LA personal advisor, where a child becomes a care leaver, and liaising with the advisor as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.
- 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.
- Preserving confidentiality, where appropriate, and showing sensitivity and understanding.
- Developing an understanding of the role of social workers, VSHs and carers, and how the PEP fits into the wider care planning duties of the LA looking after the pupil.
- Understanding the importance of involving the pupil's parents or guardians in decisions affecting their child's education.
- Being a contact for parents or guardians who want advice or have concerns about their pupil's progress at school.
- Being vigilant for any signs of bullying towards LAC and PLAC.

- 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.
- Promoting the self-esteem of LAC and PLAC.

Information Sharing

Brierley School recognises the importance of proactive information sharing between professionals and local agencies in order to effectively meet pupils' needs.

Staff will be made aware that whilst the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 place a duty on schools to process personal information fairly and lawfully, they also allow for information to be stored and shared for safeguarding purposes, as data protection regulations do not act as a barrier to sharing information where failure to do so would result in the pupil being placed at risk of harm.

If staff members are in doubt about sharing information and data protection legislation, they will be encouraged to speak to the DSL. Appropriate and specific arrangements for sharing reliable data will be put in place to ensure that the education needs of LAC and PLAC are understood and met. The arrangements set out will include:

- Who has access to information on LAC and PLAC and how data will remain secure.
- How pupils and parents are informed of, and allowed to challenge, information that is kept about them.
- How carers contribute to and receive information.
- Mechanisms for sharing information between the school and relevant LA departments.
- How relevant information about individual pupils is passed between authorities, departments and the school when pupils move.

School staff will be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of pupils. This will include sharing information about any adults with whom a pupil has contact, which may impact the pupil's safety or welfare, where necessary.

Brierley School will aim to be as transparent as possible by telling families what information they are sharing and with whom, provided that it is safe to do so.

We will ensure that copies of all relevant reports are forwarded to the social workers of LAC, in addition to carers or residential social workers.

The DT will ensure consistent and strong communication with the VSH regarding LAC who are absent without authorisation.

We will share their expertise on what works in supporting the education of LAC and PLAC.

The LAC lead will coordinate review meetings annually.

Training

The DT and other school staff involved in the education of LAC and PLAC will receive the appropriate training, including information about the following:

School admissions arrangements

- SEND
- Attendance
- Exclusions
- Homework
- Managing and challenging behaviour
- Promoting positive educational and recreational activities
- Supporting pupils to be aspirational for their future education, training and employment
- Safeguarding

The governing board will ensure that staff are equipped with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep LAC and PLAC safe through training.

Safeguarding

Brierley School 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.

We recognise 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.

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.

Where a LAC or PLAC has a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding, e.g. responding to absence from education where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

The headteacher will implement appropriate pastoral support services in place throughout the school to ensure that the welfare of LAC and PLAC can be adequately protected to the extent that reflects their increased vulnerability.

Staff will be encouraged to report to the DSL any concerns they have over LAC or PLAC in line with the processes outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

When there is reasonable cause to suspect that a LAC or PLAC is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the school will collaborate in the multi-agency strategy discussion where appropriate to determine the pupil's welfare and plan rapid further action as necessary. The school's representative at any strategy discussion meetings will be sufficiently senior, skilled and experienced, and authorised to make decisions on the school's behalf. Information and analysis about the pupil and their family will be provided as required.

Staff will be regularly encouraged to look for signs of bullying and report to the DT if they believe a LAC or PLAC is being bullied, as this can have a particularly negative impact on pupils who have early experiences of rejection or abandonment.

Related Policies

This Policy links with a number of other school policies, particularly:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Home School Agreement
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Policy

For further information go to <https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/children-families-and-education/children-in-care/>