

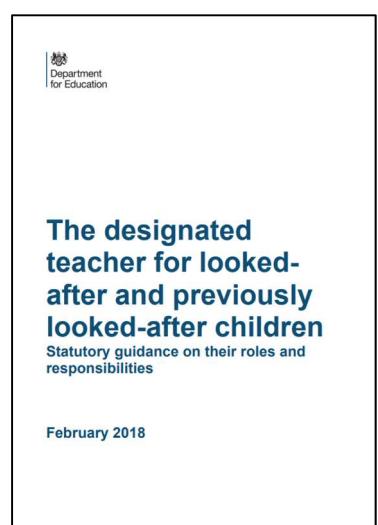
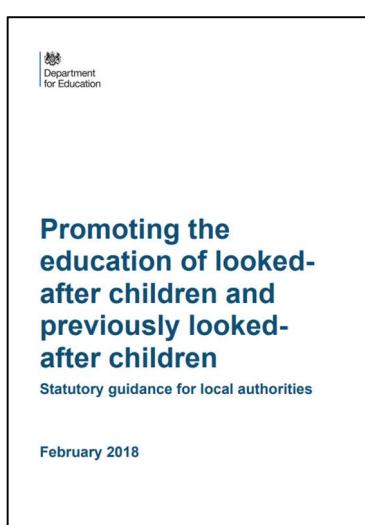
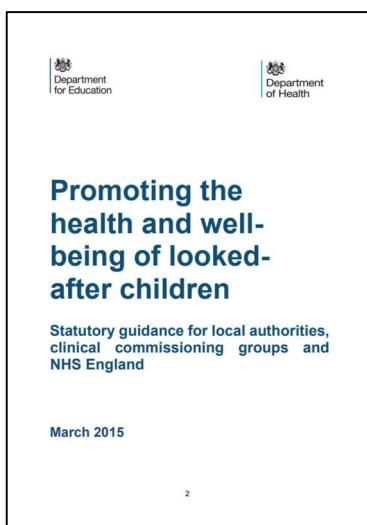
# Banks Road Primary School



## Looked-After Children Policy

Provenance/ Author	Person(s) Responsible	Version	Reviewers	Effective Date	Recommended Review Date	Distribution
James Savage	Headteacher/ DSL	V2	Governors	January 2026	January 2027	All Staff

This policy works in partnership and aligns with the following DfE guidance:



## **A Legal Framework**

This policy implements three statutory guidance documents:

- The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children (DfE, Feb 2018), issued under Children and Young Persons Act 2008 s20(4) & s20A(4) and the Designated Teacher (England) Regulations 2009.
- Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children (DfE, Feb 2018), issued under LASSA 1970 s7, setting out duties under Children Act 1989 s22(3A) (LAC) and s23ZZA (PLAC).
- Promoting the health and wellbeing of looked-after children (DfE/DHSC, Mar 2015; update note Aug 2022), issued under Children Act 2004 ss10–11 and LASSA 1970 s7.

## **Definitions**

Looked After Children (LAC) are defined as:

- Children or young people who are the subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989.
- Children who are placed in foster care, children's residential homes, with relatives or friends, in semi-independent or supported independent accommodation.
- Children subject to a Care or Interim Care Order whilst placed with a parent, where the LA has parental responsibility.
- Children who are not subject to an order but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents or respite care.

Previously - Looked After Children (PLAC) are defined as:

- Children who are no longer looked after by an LA in England and Wales because they have either been adopted or are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order.
- Children who were adopted outside England and Wales from 'state care' (care that is provided by a public authority, religious organisation, or other organisation whose main purpose is to benefit society).

Looked After Children may (or may not) have some or all the following needs to be met by school:

- low self esteem
- poor education standards due to time out of school
- delayed social/emotional/ cognitive development
- be bullied or bully others.
- be prone to mental health issues
- be isolated with few friends
- have behaviour issues.
- poor attachments to others.
- have a need to be very private.

This makes them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life-chances. The Governing Board of Banks Road Primary School, is committed to ensuring that

these children are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following are in place, and are working effectively:

- a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children
- Personal Education Plans for all Looked After Children.
- all staff have a clear understanding of confidentiality and issues that affect looked after children.
- effective strategies that support the education of this vulnerable group.

## **B Roles and Responsibilities**

### Governing Board

- Appoint a Designated Teacher (DT) who is a qualified teacher (or the Head/Acting Head) in accordance with the Designated Teacher (England) Regulations 2009.
- Ensure the DT undertakes appropriate training and has sufficient time and seniority to carry out their responsibilities effectively.
- Have regard to the statutory guidance The Designated Teacher for Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children (DfE, 2018) and other relevant guidance.
- Receive a termly anonymised report from the DT covering:
  - Number of looked-after and previously looked-after children on roll.
  - Attendance, progress and attainment.
  - Exclusions and behaviour interventions.
  - Use and impact of Pupil Premium Plus (PP+).
  - Staff training and development.
- Hold the school to account for how it supports LAC and PLAC, including the quality of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and outcomes achieved.

### Designated Teacher

- Act as the central point of contact for all matters relating to looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- Provide leadership and advocacy to promote high aspirations and educational achievement for every LAC and PLAC on roll.
- Ensure all staff:
  - Have high expectations for these pupils.
  - Understand the impact of trauma, attachment and loss on learning and behaviour.
  - Maintain confidentiality and treat pupils sensitively.
- Lead the PEP process within school:
  - Ensure the PEP is initiated within 10 working days of a child becoming looked-after.
  - Make sure an initial PEP is available for the 20-day care plan review.
  - Review and update the PEP each school term, including SMART targets, PP+ allocation, mental health needs and transition planning.
- Monitor progress rigorously and coordinate interventions where pupils are off-track.

- Liaise with the Virtual School Head (VSH), social workers, carers, parents and other professionals to ensure joined-up support.
- For previously looked-after children:
  - Provide advice and support to parents and guardians.
  - Encourage parents to declare eligibility for PP+ and involve them in decisions about its use.
- Ensure SDQ (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire) teacher element is completed and triangulated with carer and pupil scores where appropriate; use findings to inform PEPs and referrals.
- Work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and SENCO to address safeguarding, SEN and mental health needs.
- Promote smooth transitions between schools and phases, ensuring timely transfer of records and PEPs.

#### Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

- Support the DT by providing adequate time, resources and authority to fulfil the role.
- Ensure school policies (admissions, behaviour, charging, curriculum) do not disadvantage LAC or PLAC.
- Embed a whole-school culture of inclusion and high expectations for these pupils.

#### All Staff

- Understand the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- Implement strategies recommended in PEPs and seek advice from the DT when needed.
- Maintain confidentiality and treat pupils with sensitivity and respect.

#### C Identification, Admissions and Induction

##### Identification

The school will maintain robust systems to identify looked-after children (LAC) and previously looked-after children (PLAC) at the point of admission and throughout their time on roll.

Parents and carers of PLAC will be asked to provide evidence of status (e.g., adoption order, special guardianship order, or child arrangements order) so that appropriate support and funding (including Pupil Premium Plus) can be arranged.

All staff will be briefed on the importance of confidentiality and sensitivity when recording and sharing this information.

##### Admissions

In line with the School Admissions Code, LAC and PLAC are given highest priority in oversubscription criteria.

No looked-after child can be refused admission on the basis of challenging behaviour, nor referred under the Fair Access Protocol for this reason.

Where a child is admitted outside the normal admissions round, the school will liaise promptly with the Virtual School Head (VSH), social worker and carers to ensure a smooth transition.

The school will act swiftly to avoid delay in securing a suitable education placement, aiming for admission within 20 school days in the case of emergency moves.

### Induction

Every LAC or PLAC joining the school will receive a personalised induction plan coordinated by the Designated Teacher. This will include:

- A welcome meeting with the child and their carer/parent.
- Sharing key information with relevant staff on a need-to-know basis.
- Baseline assessment of academic attainment and any additional needs.
- Early discussion of the child's interests, strengths and aspirations.

The Designated Teacher will ensure that the PEP process is initiated immediately for LAC and that any existing PEP or relevant records are transferred without delay.

For PLAC, the DT will liaise with parents to identify support needs and agree strategies, including access to PP+ funded interventions.

### **D Personal Education Plans (PEPs)**

Every looked-after child must have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) as part of their statutory care plan. The PEP is a living document that sets out what needs to happen for the child to make progress and fulfil their potential.

The Designated Teacher (DT) leads the PEP process within school and ensures:

- The PEP is initiated within 10 working days of the child becoming looked-after.
- An initial PEP is available for the first statutory care plan review within 20 working days.
- The PEP is reviewed and updated each school term to reflect progress, new targets and any changes in circumstances.

The PEP must:

- Include baseline and current attainment, attendance and progress data.
- Set SMART short-term and long-term targets agreed with the child and carer.
- Record planned actions, interventions and support (including homework, tuition and study support).
- Detail how Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) funding will be used and the expected impact.

- Identify any special educational needs (SEN) and how these will be addressed, ensuring alignment with any Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan.
- Include information on mental health and emotional wellbeing, including findings from the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) where applicable.
- Capture the child's voice, aspirations and longer-term goals (e.g., transition to secondary school, post-16 education, careers).

The PEP forms part of the child's official school record and must be transferred promptly to any new school if the child moves.

The DT will monitor progress against PEP targets and work with staff, carers, the Virtual School Head (VSH), social workers and other professionals to ensure actions are implemented without delay.

## **E Health and Wellbeing**

The school will work in partnership with health professionals, carers and social workers to promote the physical, emotional and mental health of looked-after and previously looked-after children.

Every looked-after child has a statutory Initial Health Assessment and an ongoing Health Plan, which forms part of their care plan. The Designated Teacher will ensure that relevant health information is reflected in the PEP and shared with staff on a need-to-know basis.

Health assessments and reviews must follow statutory timescales:

- Within 20 working days of becoming looked-after.
- Every 6 months for children under 5.
- Annually for children aged 5 and over.

The school will:

- Support attendance at health appointments.
- Incorporate health needs (including immunisations, dental checks, sensory screening) into planning.
- Promote mental health awareness and early intervention, including use of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) to identify emotional and behavioural needs.

Confidentiality and consent will be respected in line with Gillick competence and statutory guidance. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis to safeguard and support the child.

## **F Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)**

### Eligibility and Purpose

Looked-after and previously looked-after children are entitled to Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) funding to help close the attainment gap and support their progress. This funding is provided because these pupils often face additional barriers to learning.

### Current Funding Rate

For the 2025–26 academic year, PP+ is £2,630 per eligible pupil.

- For looked-after children, PP+ is allocated to and managed by the Virtual School Head (VSH).
- For previously looked-after children, PP+ is paid directly to the school based on the January census.

### Use of PP+

PP+ is not a personal budget for individual pupils. It must be used for evidence-based interventions that improve educational outcomes and are linked to targets in the Personal Education Plan (PEP).

The school will use the DfE Menu of Approaches to guide spending decisions, focusing on strategies proven to raise attainment and support wellbeing. Examples include:

- High-quality teaching and targeted academic support (e.g., one-to-one tuition).
- Social, emotional and mental health interventions.
- Enrichment activities to raise aspirations and engagement.

### Planning and Accountability

- For looked-after children, the DT will liaise with the VSH to agree how PP+ will be used and ensure this is recorded in the PEP.
- For previously looked-after children, the DT will work with parents/guardians to identify needs and agree strategies.
- The school will publish an annual Pupil Premium Strategy Statement by 31 December, using the DfE template, setting out:
  - How PP+ (and other pupil premium funding) will be spent.
  - The evidence base for chosen approaches.
  - How impact will be measured.
- The DT will report termly to governors on PP+ use and its impact on progress.

### G Attendance, Behaviour and Exclusions

The school recognises that the past experiences of looked-after and previously looked-after children can affect attendance and behaviour. We will adopt a proactive, supportive approach to keep children engaged in learning.

Attendance will be monitored closely, and any concerns will be addressed promptly with carers, social workers and the VSH.

Behaviour policies will be applied with flexibility and sensitivity to the needs of these pupils. Staff will use trauma-informed and attachment-aware strategies.

Exclusions should be avoided wherever possible. Where a looked-after child is at risk of exclusion:

- The Designated Teacher will alert the VSH immediately.
- A multi-agency meeting will be convened to agree additional support or alternative strategies.

For previously looked-after children, the DT will work with parents and, where appropriate, seek advice from the VSH.

Reintegration plans will be agreed for any child returning from exclusion, ensuring continuity of learning and emotional support.

## **H Information Sharing and Records**

The school will share information about looked-after and previously looked-after children securely and on a need-to-know basis, in line with statutory guidance and data protection requirements.

The Designated Teacher (DT) will:

- Ensure that the PEP and other relevant documents are kept up to date and stored securely.
- Share essential information with staff who need it to support the child's learning and wellbeing, while maintaining confidentiality.
- Liaise with the Virtual School Head (VSH), social workers, Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs), health professionals and carers to ensure timely exchange of information.

When a child moves school:

- The DT will ensure speedy transfer of the PEP and school records to the new setting.
- The DT will provide any additional information needed to support a smooth transition.

Permission and consent:

- The school will clarify who can give consent for activities such as trips and photographs (usually delegated by the social worker to the carer) and record this in the PEP.
- No child should miss out on opportunities due to delays in obtaining permissions.

## **I Transitions**

The school recognises that transitions can be particularly challenging for looked-after and previously looked-after children. We will:

- Plan carefully for internal transitions (e.g., Nursery to Reception, KS1 to KS2) to ensure continuity of support.
- Provide additional emotional and academic support during KS2 to KS3 transition, working closely with the receiving secondary school.
- Share the most recent PEP, attainment data and any SEN or mental health information with the next school promptly.
- Involve the child and their carers in transition planning, ensuring their voice is heard.
- Where possible, arrange visits to the new setting and provide opportunities for the child to meet key staff before transfer.

The DT will ensure that aspirations and preparation for future learning are included in the PEP from Year 5 onwards, focusing on readiness for secondary education.