



Maplefields Academy

Education and Care of Looked After Children (LAC)

Accountability: Trustee Committee: Quality of Education SLT: J Walker	Ratified by: Quality of Education
Revised Date: February 2026	Name: Su Bernard
Ratified Date: 1 st May 2026	Signed: <i>Su Bernard</i>
Review Date: May 2027	Date: 1 st May 2026
	Chair of Trustees: Howard Reid

1. Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the educational achievement and welfare of Looked After Children (LAC) or Previously LAC (PLAC) at Maplefields. It was approved by the Head Teacher in February 2026 and will be reviewed in January 2027. The application of this policy is the responsibility of all staff.

2. Principles

The policy endorses the 'Narrowing the gap' agenda and is based on the statutory guidance for school governing bodies: 'The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children' (DCSF 2009), 'Supporting Looked After Learners' (DfES 2006) and evidence-based good practice guidance: 'Improving the attainment of looked after children and young people in primary and secondary schools' (DCSF 2009). Children and Families Act 2014 amends section 22 of the Children Act 1989 to appoint a Virtual School Head to promote the educational achievement of the local authorities (Northamptonshire) LAC or PLAC.

3. Aims and Entitlement

Our broad aim is to promote the educational achievement and welfare of Looked After Children that attend Maplefields, as defined under section 52 of the 'Children Act' 2004'. These place a duty on Local Authorities to promote the education of Children in Public Care. The Statutory Guidance for school governors, (2009), sets out the duties for Local Authorities to promote positive educational opportunities, attainments and achievements for Looked After Children and Young People.

Aims:

- To create a learning community where all pupils have the right to learn and grow intellectually, emotionally and socially in a nurturing environment.
- To provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children.
- To support our Looked After Children and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential and enjoy learning.

- To fulfil our Schools' role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our Looked After Children, by asking the question, 'Would this be good enough for my child?'

In Pursuit of this Policy we will:

- Nominate a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them DfE Guidance Document for Designated Teachers (Feb 2018).
- Nominate a School Trustee to ensure that the needs of LAC and PLAC children in the School are considered at a School Management level and to support the Designated Teacher.
- Support the Designated Teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend the Designated Teacher Network meetings and any specific training on LAC and PLAC which is required to ensure that they have the most up to date information on supporting LAC and PLAC Children.
- Review all policies and procedures regularly to ensure that they adequately address the needs of LAC and PLAC and that those children have access to all aspects of education, particularly with regard to admissions, curriculum, examinations, extra support, extra-curricular activities, work experience and careers guidance (where applicable).
- Have a clear and consistent plan for attendance at all Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings (Designated Teacher / SENCo / Class Teacher etc) Virtual school to be invited to attend ensuring coherence and efficiency in planning and attaining targets.
- 'At Maplefields we have a desire to also attend all statutory LAC review meetings' for all our pupils on role we acknowledge this may be at the 'home' address, outside of school hours. If we are unable to attend in person a written report will be sent.
- PEP meetings should be held at least every 4 months and more regularly if needed. Papers required for each meeting will be available prior to the start of the meeting or there will be reading time at the start of the meeting if new papers are tabled (see PEP Agenda).
- Unless otherwise agreed the child / young person should attend a relevant part of the LAC or PEP meeting taking account of their age and be encouraged to express their views and will be released from lessons to do so.
- Following a PEP meeting, targets and actions will be circulated to all relevant teaching and support staff immediately. (The PEP minutes are now electronic).
- Further details raised at PEP meetings will be circulated to other teaching and support staff on a 'need to know' basis as agreed at the meeting and, in best practice, agreed with the child concerned.

Discuss issues relating to attendance and /or suspensions with the Education Entitlement Team for LookedAfter Children and or the Virtual School – (virtualschool@childrenfirstnorthamptonshire.co.uk) ensuring that there is as little disruption to the Looked After Childs education as possible.

- Maintain a register of all LAC and PLAC on roll to include dates of individual statutory LAC reviews and the relevant LAC team. This information is available on the EPEP platform.
- We will update the Trustees annually with a LAC report, covering the pupil targets and outcomes in line with statutory guidance.

The designated teacher will:

- Advocate for all looked after children on the school roll.
- Actively ensure all looked after children have a fully completed, good quality Personal Education Plan (PEP) in place within time scales, which is regularly reviewed, monitored and updated. (See *Guidance on PEPs for Designated Teachers from the Virtual School.*)
- Take the lead in setting academic objectives at the PEP. Where a behaviour target is required this should be linked to the EHCP outcomes and their IBLP.

- Prioritise an assessment of a looked after child's educational needs to inform planning, when the child is admitted to school.
- Ensure issues affecting progress prior to being received into care are identified and addressed – including poor attendance, social and emotional issues and the impact of trauma.
- Routinely monitor and track the attainment and attendance of individual looked after children and the cohort as a whole.
- Make use of assessment tools and approaches to improve short- and medium-term progress.
- Take responsibility for all inter-agency liaisons in respect of looked after children.
- Ensure that when a looked after child starts at the school that child is welcomed and an effective induction package is arranged.
- Share relevant information and act as an advisor to school staff about issues for looked after children.
- Be sensitive to the issue of what information a child may or may not want known.
- Ensure bullying, behaviour and pastoral issues are well dealt with.
- Ensure that every looked after child has a member of staff or a key worker that they can talk to.
- Undertake regular professional development and training related to LAC and PLAC.
- Promote high educational expectations of looked after children.
- Ensure (in conjunction with the school examination officer) that looked after children are entered for national tests and GCSE examinations.
- Ensure effective record-keeping and transfer of information including the PEP at any transition.
- In collaboration with the SENCo, ensure SEND of looked after children are identified, prioritised and met.
- Ensure LAC and PLAC children can benefit from work related opportunities as appropriate.
- Ensure LAC and PLAC children are able to take a full part in school life, by helping to overcome potential barriers.
- Facilitate and promote access to out-of-school hours learning.
- Produce an annual report for the governing body in line with statutory guidance.

All Staff will:

- As with all children and young people, have high aspirations and celebrate the educational and personal achievement of LAC and PLAC Children.
- Be familiar with the Guidance on Looked After Children and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of LAC reviews or PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings.
- Liaise with the Designated Teacher where a LAC and PLAC child is experiencing difficulty in any areas - these may be academic; pastoral; safeguarding; behaviour and / or attendance issues.

All Trustees will:

- Ensure they are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for LAC and PLAC Children.
- Ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for LAC and PLAC who is a member of the senior leadership team (SLT) with the authority and resources to fulfil their role and responsibilities.
- Nominate a Trustee who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the Board of Trustees.
- For child protection and confidentiality reasons, ensure that information will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity, and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.
- Review the effective implementation of this policy, on an annual basis.
- Ensure resources (including Pupil Premium) are allocated to match priorities for looked after children.

- Ensure that the School's other policies and procedures give LAC and PLAC equal access in respect of:
 - Admission to school
 - The National Curriculum and public examinations
 - Additional educational support where this is needed.
 - Extra-curricular activities
 - Work experience and careers guidance.
- Support the Local Authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of LAC and PLAC.
- Ensure the virtual school is contacted if a child in care is at risk of exclusion.
- Ensure that appropriate systems and procedures are in place in the school even if there are no LAC and PLAC on roll at the time and that the Designated Teacher continues to attend training and is up to date in regards to the legal processes.

4. Monitoring

The named Trustee will have an overview of the education provided to LAC and PLAC and the impact this is having on the progress they are making. The trustee will work with the Designated teacher for LAC and PLAC in support of the schools efforts to help these pupils reach their full potential.

Remote learning addendum

LAC students are prioritised during lockdown for onsite education. Where this is not possible, ICT support via laptops are given to our LAC students. The Designated Teacher liaises with social care and virtual school during these periods to ensure the highest participation of education can be given to our LAC students and that all parties are aware of the remote education offer and the engagement of the student at this time. Where the student accesses extra therapeutic support, this is also continued to ensure that the outcomes on the EHCP are continued to be part of their educational offer.

5. Documents / related Policies

Children Act 1989 & 2004 (revised March 2026)

Supporting Looked After Learners (DfES 2006)

Improving the attainment of looked after children in primary and secondary schools (DCSF 2009)

Children and Families Act (2014)

DfE Guidance Document for Designated Teachers (Feb 2018).

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023).

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DoE 2025)

Please refer to the following policies:

SEND, Gifted and Talented, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Policy, Safeguarding, Equal Opportunities and Respect for All, Teaching and learning policy.

6. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Roles and responsibilities

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SCHOOL'S LAC POLICY	RESPONSIBILITY
Policy determination	LAC nominated Trustee and the Board of Trustees in co-operation with the Headteacher, Designated Teacher for LAC / supported by the Pastoral Support Manager.
Day to day management	Designated teacher for LAC - Headteacher
Day to Day operation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Liaising with LAC, foster carers and external agencies• Arranging and attending PEP meetings• LAC meetings	Designated teacher for LAC – Headteacher, Eputy Headteacher, SENCo, Form/class teachers and Pastoral Support Manager. SENCo. Pastoral Support Manager.

Appendix 2 – useful contacts

virtualschool@childrenfirstnorthamptonshire.co.uk

Maplefields Nominated Trustee is – Howard Reid