

# Pathways School

## Designated Teacher for Looked-after and Previously Looked-after Children Policy

### **Policy Monitoring**

Date of last review: January 2024

Reviewed by: Saima Ali Majid, Chair of Governors<sup>1</sup>

Neil Jones, Headteacher

Date of next review: January 2025

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and following any concerns and/or updates to national/local guidance or procedure.

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<sup>1</sup> The Governors of Pathways School are the trustees of Positive Behaviour Support for Learning (registered charity no.1186125)

## 1. Introduction

Many looked-after and previously looked-after children have suffered disrupted learning, may have missed extended periods of school. Many of them have special educational needs (SEN). The gaps in their learning and, in many cases the emotional impact of their experiences, are likely to have become significant barriers to their progress. The complexity of this fragmented educational experience with high incidence of SEN, requires careful assessment and planning. Pathways School is a small specialist school with high levels of staffing which enables the highest levels of individual assessment and planning to meet the individual needs of the cohort of students that attend our school.

## 2. Legislation

- Section 20 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 (“the 2008 Act”)
- Section 20A of the 2008 Act inserted by section 5 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 (“the 2017 Act”)
- The Designated Teacher (Looked-After Pupils etc.) (England) Regulations 2009

## 3. Links to other school policies and practices

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- SEN Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

## 4. Definitions

- **a child ‘looked-after by a local authority’** is one who is looked after within the meaning of section 22 of Children Act 1989.
- **a previously looked-after child** is one who is no longer looked after because she/he is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person, or has been adopted from ‘state care’

## 5. Responsibilities

Pathways School has identified the Headteacher as the Designated Teacher of looked-after and previously looked-after children. The Designated Teacher is responsible for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children on the school’s roll. The Governors support the role by ensuring that the Designated Teacher undertakes training that is appropriate to carrying out this duty.

## 6. The Role of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher is a central point of initial contact within the school. This helps to make sure that the school plays our role to the full in making sure arrangements are joined up and minimise any disruption to a child’s learning. The

Designated Teacher works with Virtual School Headteachers to promote the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children. The Designated Teacher promotes a whole school culture where the personalised learning needs of every looked-after and previously looked-after child matters and their personal, emotional, and academic needs are prioritised.

The Designated Teacher takes lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand the things which can affect how looked-after, and previously looked-after children learn and achieve and how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils.

This means making sure that all staff:

- have high expectations of looked-after and previously looked-after children's learning and set targets to accelerate educational progress.
- are 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, and how this might affect the child's behaviour.
- understand how important it is to see looked-after and previously looked-after children as individuals rather than as a homogeneous group, not publicly treat them differently from their peers, and show sensitivity about who else knows about their looked-after or previously looked-after status.

## **7. Personal Education Plan**

The Designated Teacher collaborates with the child's social worker to produce the Personal Education Plan (PEP) which is a record of the child's education and training. The PEP describes what needs to happen for a looked-after child to help them fulfil their potential and reflect, but not duplicate, any existing plans such as EHC plans.

## **8. Parents and Carers**

The Designated Teacher involves the child's parents or guardians in decisions affecting their child's education and is a contact for parents or guardians who want advice or have concerns about their child's progress at school.

## **9. Pupil Premium +**

For looked-after children, PP+ funding is managed by the Virtual School Head (VSH) for the purpose of supporting their educational achievement. The VSH and schools, including the Designated Teacher, work together to agree how this funding can most effectively be used to improve looked-after children's attainment. All PEPs should include information about how that looked-after child is benefitting from the use of PP+ funding to improve their attainment. For previously looked-after children, PP+ funding is managed by the school. The amount a school receives is based on the number of eligible children recorded in the school's annual January School Census return to the Department for Education.

A key part of the Designated Teacher's role is ensuring that they, and other school staff, have strong awareness, training, and skills around the specific needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children and how to support them. The Designated Teacher links with the VSH to access training and keep up to date with research and good practice.