



Children Looked After and Previously Looked After Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Educational achievement and subsequent life chances for Children Looked After (CLA) and Previously Children Looked After (PCLA) are of real concern. Many children and young people who are in care or who have been previously looked after have suffered abuse or neglect. Despite having as broad a range of abilities as their peers, this group of pupils are particularly vulnerable to underachievement. Their academic and social progress is likely to be affected by their experiences, and compounded by instability in their personal circumstances. As a result, pupils who are CLA or PCLA require special treatment and additional attention in order to improve their situation.
- 1.2. Chads Grove School endeavours to provide positive experiences and offer stability, safety, and individual care and attention for all our pupils. With this in mind, Chads Grove aims to:
 - Encourage pupils to reach their potential and to make good progress in relation to their professional, social and emotional development
 - Ensure that pupils enjoy high quality teaching and a curriculum which meets their needs and the requirements of legislation
 - Plan support for CLA and PCLA realistically and use the school's resources efficiently to ensure the school meets their needs
 - Promote a positive culture in all aspects of school life
 - Help pupils develop their cultural, moral and social understanding
- 1.3. Helping CLA and PCLA succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority at Chads Grove. School staff recognise that CLA and PCLA can experience significant disadvantage within a school setting, and are committed to ensuring that they reach their potential in all areas. Chads Grove believes that the educational experience of all pupils should be outstanding and aims to provide a learning environment in which every child can be successful.
- 1.4. Chads Grove School is aware that CLA and PCLA may have specific difficulties with regard to attendance, getting consent for activities, obtaining funding for extra activities and obtaining correct equipment. The school aims to ensure that appropriate support is provided in order to mitigate these difficulties.
- 1.5. Chads Grove recognises that CLA and PCLA may have:
 - Very specific needs and be coping with trauma, abuse or rejection
 - Experienced personal distress and uncertainty
 - Suffered disrupted learning and missed extended periods of school.
 - Suffered significant loss and trauma which is likely to have considerable impact on their ability to access the curriculum

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
- 1.6. CLA and PCLA may also have some or all the following issues:
 - Low self esteem
 - Poor educational achievement due to time out of school
 - Delayed social, emotional or cognitive development
 - Be bullied or bully others
 - Be prone to mental health issues
 - Be isolated or may struggle to form secure friendships
 - Behavioural challenges
 - Attachment difficulties
 - A need to be very private

This makes them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life-chances.

1.7. It is recognised that, for this group of pupils, some events can retrigger traumatic experiences (e.g. a court hearing, contact with family or friends, or an aspect of the curriculum that cannot be anticipated). This can affect behaviour and may affect progress, even for pupils who had previously been settled and 'on track'. As such, staff working with CLA and PCLA will need to use additional strategies and provide effective support in order to help them overcome any difficulties that they may have. Essential to this support is the provision of emotional guidance.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. Under the [Children's Act 1989](#), a child is Looked After if he/she is in the care of, or is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by, a local authority. The term 'Children Looked After' refers to pupils who are:
- Accommodated by the Local Authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents' ([section 20](#))
 - Subject to a Care Order ([section 31](#)) or Interim Care Order ([section 38](#))
 - Subject to an Emergency Order for the Protection of the Child ([section 44](#))
 - Compulsorily accommodated, for example remanded to the Local Authority or subject to a Criminal Justice Supervision Order with a residence requirement ([section 21](#))
- 2.2. Children Looked After at Chadsgrove may be in the care of Worcestershire Children First (the Local Authority) or in the care of another authority but living within Worcestershire or a surrounding Local Authority such as Birmingham or Dudley. These pupils could be living:
- With foster carers
 - In a residential care setting
 - With relatives or friends
 - With one or both parents under the supervision of Children's Social Care
 - With prospective adoptive parents (but still retain Looked After legal status until the final adoption order is made by the courts)
- 2.3. Previously Children Looked After are those who have ceased to be looked after as a result of:
- A Special Guardianship Order – This order appoints one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian ([Section 14A of the Children's Act 1989](#))
 - A Child Arrangements Order – This order settles the arrangements of the person the child is to live with ([Section 8 of the Children's Act 1989](#), as amended by [Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014](#)). Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order
 - An Adoption Order ([Section 46 of the Adoption and Children's Act 2002](#) and [Section 12 of the 1976 Adoption Act](#))
- 2.4. Pupils who are provided with Short Breaks care, of any duration, under section 17 of the Children's Act, are not deemed to be Looked After for the purposes of this policy.
- 2.5. At Chadsgrove, some pupils are over the age of 18 but remain in the care of the Local Authority as 'former relevant children'. These pupils may live with foster carers under alternative arrangements, such as the Shared Lives Scheme, or in residential care accommodation. They may also be subject to ongoing legal protection, for example a Court of Protection Order. These pupils continue to be considered as 'Looked After' for the purposes of this policy.

3. Relevant Legislation and Guidance

3.1. This policy refers to, and complies with, the following legislation and guidance:

- [Adoption Act 1976](#)
- [Adoption and Children's Act 2002](#)
- [Care Planning, Placement and Case Review \(England\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [Children's Act 1989](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#)
- [Children and Young Persons' Act 2008](#)
- [Children \(Leaving Care\) Act 2000](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education \(DfE 2022\)](#)
- [Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children \(DfE 2018\)](#)
- [School Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions' \(DfE 2021\)](#)
- [Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement \(DfE 2022\)](#)
- [The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children' DfE \(2018\)](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children' DfE \(2018\)](#)

4. Aims of Provision for CLA and PCLA

4.1. Chadsgrove aims to:

- Provide a safe and secure environment where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all pupils
- Support CLA and PCLA and give them access to every opportunity to continually achieve and enjoy their learning
- Recognise and support the specific challenges faced by this group of pupils, whilst continuing to foster a culture of high expectations with regard to learning, behaviour and progress
- Ensure all CLA and PCLA feel secure and confident in their membership and inclusion of the school community as it is recognised that this is very important for their social and emotional development

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Virtual School Head (VSH)

5.1. The virtual school head is responsible for:

- Monitoring the attendance and educational progress of the children their authority looks after; this includes children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders, or who were adopted from state care outside of England and Wales
- Ensuring that arrangements are in place to improve the education and outcomes of the authority's CLA, including those placed out-of-authority
- Building relationships with health, education and social care partners, as well as other partners, so they and the designated teachers understand the support available to CLA and PCLA
- Working with the school to ensure all CLA in attendance are fully supported in reaching their full potential
- Acting as the educational advocate for CLA
- Acting as a source of advice and information to help parents of PCLA as effectively as possible
- Maintaining an up-to-date roll of the CLA, who are in school settings, and gather information about their educational placement, attendance and progress

- Informing the Head Teacher and Designated Teacher if they have a pupil on roll who is looked after by the LA
- Ensuring social workers, schools, designated teachers, careers and independent reviewing officers understand their role and responsibilities regarding a pupil's PEP
- Ensuring that up-to-date and effective PEPs that focus on educational outcomes are maintained for all CLA
- Avoiding delays in providing suitable educational provision.
- Ensuring the education achievement of CLA is seen as a priority by everyone who has responsibilities for promoting their welfare
- Reporting regularly on the attainment, progress and school attendance of CLA through the authority's corporate parenting structures

The Governing Body

5.2. [Section 20 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008](#) places a duty on the Governing Body of maintained schools to designate a member of staff to have responsibility to promote the educational achievement of Children Looked After who are registered pupils at the school. As such, the Governing Body at Chadsgrove School will:

- Ensure that there is a qualified and experienced teacher named as the Designated Teacher for CLA and PCLA, and that he/she is enabled to carry out their responsibilities
- In partnership with the Head Teacher, ensure that the Designated Teacher has access to appropriate training, sufficient time to carry out duties and receives adequate support
- Support the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and other members of staff in ensuring the needs of CLA and PCLA are met
- Support the Local Authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of CLA and PCLA
- Nominate a named school governor for CLA and PCLA
- Ensure that school policies and procedures give CLA and PCLA equal access and/or positively discriminate this group by prioritising their needs
- Receive, as a minimum, an annual report from the Designated Teacher that includes:
 - ❖ The number of Children Looked After in the school and their originating Local Authorities
 - ❖ A clear overview of the educational needs and levels of progress of Children Looked After in the school including whether any are gifted or talented
 - ❖ Attendance and exclusion information for Children Looked After
 - ❖ Any Special Educational Needs of the pupils
 - ❖ Destinations of Children Looked After who leave the school
 - ❖ How the teaching and learning needs of Children Looked After are reflected in school development plans
 - ❖ Whether the school is making full use of all available resources, including Pupil Premium Funding, in order to maximise opportunity for Looked After and Previously Children Looked After

As part of arrangements for monitoring the effectiveness of the role, the report should enable the Governing Body to make overall judgments about the Designated Teacher role in the context of wider school planning. The report should also be acted upon by the Governing Body so as to support the Designated Teacher and maximise the impact of the role

The Designated Teacher

5.3. The Designated Teacher will:

- Help school staff to understand the things which affect how CLA and PCLA, promote a culture of high expectations and be a source of advice for staff about differentiated teaching strategies
- Maintain an up to date record of CLA (as part of the Vulnerable Pupils register) and inform colleagues on a need to know basis

- Attend relevant training so that they are aware of statutory responsibilities and procedures for CLA as well as understand the impact of trauma, loss and separation and how this can impact upon learning
- Co-ordinate or deliver training to staff so that they are aware of the complex issues and educational disadvantage affecting many CLA and PCLA as well as how they could support pupils to overcome these
- Report to the Governing Body annually on the performance of the CLA and PCLA who are on the roll of the school
- Be the first point of contact for other professionals working with CLA, and ensure effective communication between agencies, including the speedy transfer of information prior to admission or upon leaving
- Monitor the educational progress of all CLA in order to inform the school's development plan and ensure that they have targets which are both realistic and challenging
- Ensure all relevant parties receive early notification of school based meetings, parent's evenings and other events and that all communication remains regular and positive
- Identify, with teachers, the pupil's strengths, gaps in learning or any barriers to learning in order to inform the pupils Personal Education Plan (PEP) and facilitate the completion of the pupil section of the PEP
- Contribute to the Personal Education Plan (PEP) meeting with the social worker, carers and Virtual School and seek advice from these agencies if additional support is required
- Ensure that someone is available to attend any CLA Reviews and/or prepare a written report for such reviews
- Supervise the admission of new CLA and ensure appropriate induction and transition support into school
- Support the local authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of CLA

All Staff

5.4. All school staff will:

- Promote a culture in which CLA and PCLA believe they can succeed and have high aspirations for both their educational and personal achievements
- Ensure any CLA are sensitively supported and that confidentiality is maintained
- Respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of Personal Education Plans and other documentation as needed
- Attend CLA reviews, if required to do so, as a professional with direct understanding of the pupil's educational needs
- Seek advice from the Designated Teacher, as needed, in order to support a pupil's learning or emotional needs
- Support the local authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of CLA and PCLA

6. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- 6.1. The Designated Teacher will decide, with relevant Local Authority staff, the extent to which information will be shared, and with which staff, on a case by case basis. Some cases may require selected staff to understand how specific previous experiences are impacting on current behaviour.
- 6.2. Where information is shared with selected staff, the pupil will be made aware of this, if it is appropriate to do so, bearing in mind their age and level of understanding. For a child who is newly looked after, it may be important to establish, where possible, his/her view of their changed circumstances, and to monitor how this impacts on their behaviour, attendance and performance.

- 6.3. CLA may need adult support to prepare for when they are asked about home by other pupils or staff. Staff will aim to plan for this by discussing it with the pupil, where it is developmentally appropriate to do so, on their entry to school.

7. Children Looked After Placed by Other Authorities

- 7.1. Chadsgrove recognises that CLA placed outside of their originating authority, and especially those who are a long way from home, are especially vulnerable. It is the responsibility of the originating authority to ensure that the identified educational needs of any child placed in another authority area will be effectively met at Chadsgrove before the placement at the school is agreed.

8. Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

- 8.1. Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children are likely to have English as an additional language and associated learning needs. They may have experienced trauma both in their home country and/or on route to the UK and, as such, Chadsgrove will seek support both from the Local Authority or other relevant professionals should such a pupil be admitted to school. School staff will also work closely with any care placement in order to ensure that the pupil's cultural, social, emotional and personal development needs are met.

9. Private Fostering

- 9.1. [The Children Act 1989](#) states that if a child under the age of 16 (or 18 if they have a disability) goes to live with someone who is not a close relative for 28 days or more then this is a private fostering arrangement.
- 9.2. If it is thought that a child is being privately fostered then the Designated Teacher will inform the Children's Social Care of this fact.
- 9.3. Pupils who are privately fostered are likely to be experiencing upheaval and instability in their home lives. They are likely to need additional pastoral and learning support and may also need closer monitoring and tracking of their progress. The Designated Teacher will ensure that this takes place.

10. Admission

- 10.1. Changing school as a result of moving care placement could result in a subsequent gap in education and, as such, it is essential that any CLA are admitted to Chadsgrove with minimal delay.
- 10.2. Generally, admission to Chadsgrove will be through liaison with the EHC Plan casework officer within Worcestershire Children First SEN Services and the social worker in order to ensure that a placement at the school will meet the provisions identified in their EHC Plan.
- 10.3. Some Children Looked After may have extended journeys to school, particularly if they live long distances away as a result of changes in their care placement. This will be sensitively managed by school staff, on a case by case basis, and taken into account when dealing with any attendance issues.

11. Attendance

- 11.1. It is vital that CLA have good attendance in order to improve their educational outcomes and Chadsgrove closely monitors the attendance of all CLA on roll. Where attendance is a cause for

concern the Designated Teacher will raise the issue with the pupil's social worker and seek to convene a meeting as soon as possible, with all relevant parties, in order to quickly address any issues and ensure attendance improves.

- 11.2. All Local Authorities who currently place CLA at Chadsgrove also monitor the attendance of the pupils for whom they have responsibility through daily telephone calls to the school office or electronically extracting the relevant data from the schools' Information Management System.

12. Exclusions

- 12.1. Chadsgrove recognises the fact that CLA and PCLA, as a group, are particularly at risk of exclusion. Should the situation arise, Chadsgrove will try every practicable means to maintain a CLA or PCLA in school and will seek advice/support from the child's social worker and the Virtual School as soon as possible in order to ensure that this remains the case.

13. Part Time and Alternative Provision

- 13.1. Where a CLA and PCLA Pupil cannot cope with full time education, for whatever reason, they will be provided with as many hours of provision as they are capable of attending. The school will also consider how the remaining hours of education per week will be delivered, so that learning is uninterrupted, wherever possible.
- 13.2. The Designated Teacher will have oversight of all the education provided, where it is delivered elsewhere, and this will be regularly reviewed with a view to ensuring that the pupil returns to full time education at Chadsgrove as soon as possible
- 13.3. Any changes to the timetable of a CLA will always be agreed with the pupil's social worker and carer through a Pastoral Support Plan or Personal Education Plan.

14. The Personal Education Plan (PEP) and Pupil Premium

- 14.1. All Children Looked After must have a PEP as part of their overall care plan. The PEP will be used to help ensure that the pupil gets the support and provision he/she needs in order to succeed.
- 14.2. Personal Education Plans for CLA are the result of statutory planning meetings between the Social Worker, Virtual School and the Designated Teacher. These meetings generally occur termly and can be telephone meetings or face to face meetings
- 14.3. The majority of CLA at Chadsgrove have electronic PEPs that are maintained either by Welfare Call (Worcestershire pupils), ePEP Online (Dudley, Birmingham and Croydon pupils) or Looked After Call (Gloucestershire pupils).
- 14.4. Prior to a PEP, the Designated Teacher will discuss the pupil's progress with class staff, identify any concerns, consider how Pupil Premium funding has supported the pupil to reach his / her targets and identify any future targets. Following the PEP, class staff will be updated with any relevant information and advised of any targets that have been set. Class teachers have a log in for the PEPs for pupils in their class and are able to use this in order to contribute to the PEP process
- 14.5. Where appropriate, the pupil will be involved in the PEP, either by attending and/or submitting their views prior to the meeting.

14.6. The majority of CLA are in receipt of Pupil Premium and this is directly linked to targets within their PEP. Local Authorities generally release pupil premium funding for LAC pupils once a PEP has been approved.

15. Allocation of Resources

15.1. The Governing Body will ensure that the school allocates resources to support appropriate provision for CLA and PCLA and to meet the objectives set out in this policy. The school works in partnership with Worcestershire Children First and the Virtual Schools of each of the local authorities that currently place CLA at Chadsgrove in order to ensure that these pupils receive the full range of support to which they are entitled to enable them to make progress and achieve.

16. Pupil Emotional Health and Well-being

16.1. CLA and PCLA are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues which can impact their behaviour and education. The Designated Teacher has an awareness, training and skills that support the recognition of a child's needs and how to support them in relation to behaviour management and mental health.

16.2. The Designated Teacher will work with the VSH to ensure the school is able to identify signs of potential mental health issues, understand the impact issues can have on CLA and PCLA, and knows how to access further assessment and support, where necessary.

16.3. The school's mental health lead will work alongside the Designated Teacher to promote the emotional wellbeing and mental health of CLA and PCLA, and will always either be a member of, or supported by the senior leadership team or DSL.

17. Record Keeping

17.1. All information with regard CLA and PCLA is held within ScholarPack and on CPOMS.

17.2. ScholarPack contains basic contact details and can be accessed by all school staff with appropriate access credentials. CPOMS contains records of any safeguarding concerns and CLA reviews etc. Access to CPOMS is restricted to those who have specific responsibility for the child (generally the Class Teacher, Designated Teacher, Phase Leader and the Senior Leadership Team).

17.3. CLA and PCLA are identified as a vulnerable group when tracking, monitoring and reporting on attainment and progress

18. Links with External Agencies and Organisations

18.1. Chadsgrove recognises the important contribution that external support services make in supporting CLA and PCLA. At Chadsgrove, colleagues from the following support services may be involved with individual pupils:

- Social care worker / Children with Disabilities Team
- Virtual School for Children Looked After in Worcestershire
- Virtual Schools for Children Looked After from other Local Authorities
- SEN services at Worcestershire Children First
- Orchard nursing Team
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Physiotherapists

- Occupational Therapists
- Play/Drama Therapist
- School nurses and health visitors
- CAMHS

18.2. Chadsgrove will:

- Ensure that copies of all relevant reports are forwarded to the CLA social workers, in addition to carers or residential social workers
- Coordinate EHC review meetings and other meetings such as Team Around the Child meetings.
- Work with other agencies to exchange information, such as changes in circumstances, exclusions or attendance issues, taking prompt action, where necessary, to safeguard CLA and PCLA
- Effectively manage any difficulties with a pupil's behaviour in consultation with carers, the social worker and the virtual school
- Communicate with the VSH and child's social worker to facilitate the completion of the PEP. It is the responsibility of social care to co-ordinate the setting up of the PEP and the dates for meetings etc.
- Work with the VSH, social worker and other relevant agencies to monitor any arrangements in place so that actions and activities recorded in the child's PEP are implemented without delay.
- Work with the Virtual School to agree on how pupil premium plus (PP+) can be used effectively to accommodate the child's educational attainment and progress (PP+ for previously-CLA will be allocated directly to, and managed by, the school)
- Ensure consistent and strong communication with the VSH regarding CLA who are absent without authorisation.
- Share their expertise on what works in supporting the education of CLA and previously-CLA.

19. Monitoring and Review

19.1. The Head Teacher and Designated Teacher monitor the implementation of this policy, including ensuring that it is updated to reflect the needs and circumstances of the school.

19.2. This policy will be reviewed every year.

19.3. The Governing Body is responsible for approving this policy.

20. Related Policies

20.1. This policy should be read alongside the school's policies on:

- Equality Information and Objectives (Policy Number 38)
- Pupil Behaviour and Anti-Bullying (Policy Number 56)
- Attendance and Absences (Policy Number 60)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection (Policy Number 73)