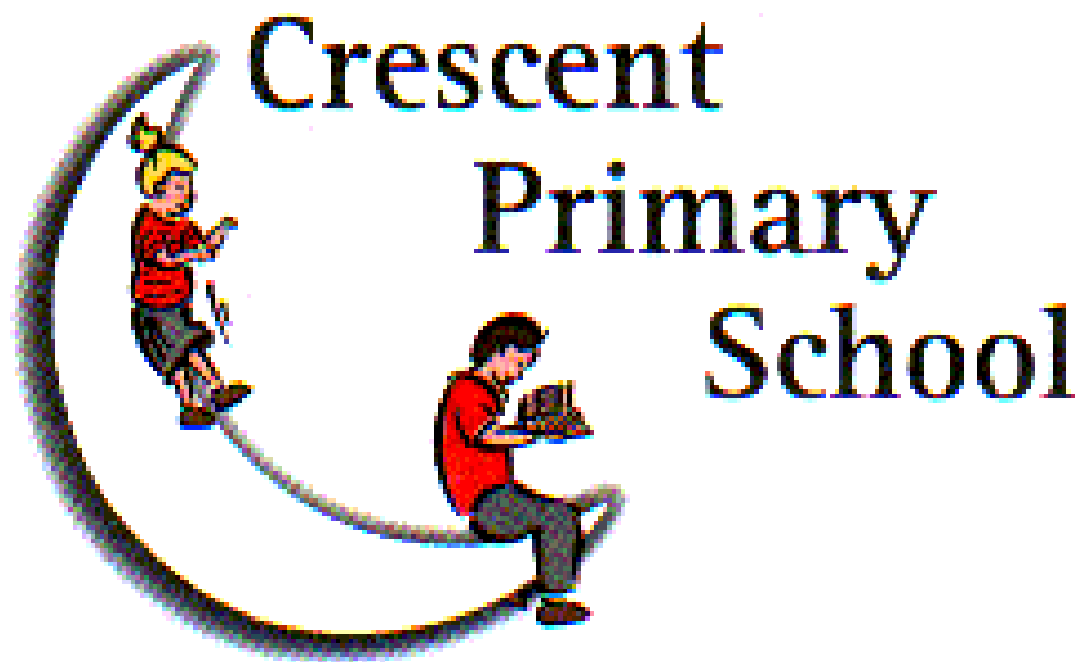


LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY STATEMENT



Approved by: SDP&P
Autumn 2024

Last reviewed on: Autumn 2023

Next review due by: Autumn 2026 (or as required in line with KCSIE)

Rationale:

It is recognised that Looked After Children are the most vulnerable group in our society and our schools. They are often living with the effects of trauma and loss and have had to cope with disruption in both their living arrangements and schooling. These experiences can mean there are barriers to learning.

All Looked After Children (LAC) and previously Looked After Children (PLAC) have the right to receive a quality full time education which matches their needs and enables them to reach their full potential. Raising levels of achievement has been strongly and clearly highlighted as a major part of improving the life chances of looked after children and schools play a pivotal role in this.

This policy sets out how our school is going to support the learning and development of looked after children and previously looked after children despite their early experiences.

Intention:

- To ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for LAC/ PLAC as for all children
- Having high aspirations for LAC/ PLAC
- Ensure a personalised curriculum approach is taken in order to meet an individual child/young person's needs, making all reasonable adjustments to achieve this and ensuring the curriculum is broad and balanced
- Promote early intervention when necessary to minimise risk of exclusion or reduced attendance
- Work with all agencies, particularly the Virtual School, to ensure relevant support is sought to support LAC in the school
- Use all appropriate funding mechanisms e.g. pupil premium, to accelerate progress
- Ensure Personal Education Plans are up to date and completed in order to support the education of LAC
- Promote where possible LAC to participate in decisions around education
- Offer opportunities to join in school life including after - schools clubs, visits and activities

Who Are Looked After Children?

Looked after children are; children and young people who are subject to interim or full care orders under section 31 of the Children Act 1989.

Children and young people who are voluntarily accommodated under section 20 of the Children Act 1989
Children and young people who are accommodated for their protection by the courts or remanded into care by the courts. Children in both instances could be living with foster carers, in a residential unit, with relatives or even parents on a full or part time basis.

Children and young people may be looked after by a local authority other than the authority in which this school sits. Therefore, this school may have Looked After Children who are living in the local authorities area but looked after by another authority e.g. Nottingham City, Derbyshire, Leeds etc

Parental responsibility is shared with social care when children are subject to interim or full care orders. Parents retain parental responsibility if a child or young person is voluntarily looked after under section 20.

A 'Previously Looked After Child (PLAC)' is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/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' outside England and Wales.

Admissions

A Looked After Child or young person may enter the school mid-term and will be made welcome and accommodated in order to settle.

The Admissions Code 2010 prioritises looked after children for admissions and also children formally looked after and now adopted or with carers under special guardianship/residency orders. We will follow the LA's published admission criteria.

The school will work closely with other schools and authorities to ensure no delays are encountered for Looked After Children or young people being admitted.

Exclusions

This school recognises that LAC /PLAC are very vulnerable to exclusion due to the trauma and loss they have experienced affecting their ability to engage in the school setting.

Should a LAC become at risk of exclusion (fixed or permanent) the school will alert the Virtual School immediately and work with all agencies to avoid wherever possible exclusion.

The school's behaviour policy reflects the standard of behaviour expected however the school will work flexibly and proactively to ensure LAC/ PLAC are not excluded.

The Implementation of the Policy for Looked After Children:

Recent legislation and guidance requires schools to have effective policies for supporting and promoting the education of looked after children.

Schools must:

- Ensure access to a balanced and broadly based education to all looked after children
- Prioritise recording and improving the academic achievement of all looked after children
- Prioritise a reduction in the number of exclusions and truancies for all looked after children
- Ensure there is a designated teacher to advocate for the rights of all looked after children
- Develop systems of communications and protocols
- Promote the attendance of looked after children

The Designated Teacher: this is a statutory role within the school. This person will be a qualified teacher and will be a senior person with the school setting.

This member of staff will be responsible for:

- An advocate for the child in school and be at a level that can affect change if required
- Ensure all statutory duties of the school are carried out e.g. report to governors, ensuring personal education plan is up to date
- Know who the LAC are in school and hold confidential up to date records
- Be the liaison for agencies, carers, social workers and virtual school staff around educational needs of the LAC
- Attend relevant meetings including the statutory looked after reviews and Personal Education Planning meetings or designate an appropriate replacement

- Be the key person in school or ensure the LAC has a key person in school to ensure wishes and feelings are heard and the child or young person has a confidant in school
- Actively monitor attainment and progress of LAC in the school and intervene early to ensure appropriate progress can be made
- Attend training on needs of LAC in educational settings and ensure knowledge disseminated through the school staff so that consistency and understanding is the ethos of the school
- Be the point of contact for other schools for transitions at key times, e.g. year 6 to 7, outward transfers
- Ensure that all funding available to support LAC education is used effectively to close the gap (in line with the Authorities Closing the Gap Strategy)
- Ensure that the virtual school is in receipt of TA data at required points in the year and any other statutory data collection on LAC is completed
- Co-ordinate with the SENCO if the LAC has SEND in accordance with the Code of Practice for SEND

At Crescent Primary School the designated teacher is Rachel Spray

The named governor: This governor will work in co-operation with the head teacher and designated teacher to ensure all looked after children have access to all learning opportunities in line with their peers.

The named governor will:

- receive, at minimum, an annual report from the Designated Teacher, on the progress and attainment of the LAC in the school. Confidentiality requires this report does not contain named children and young people and the report will not be published as a public document.
- ensure that all allocated funding to support LAC in the school is spent appropriately to support educational progress e.g. pupil premium.
- ensure this policy is adhered to and will offer to support the school in any way that will positively promote the welfare and progress of LAC within the school.
- ensure the designated teacher has received appropriate training

The nominated Governor for looked after children is Alison Screaton.

Record Keeping:

LAC in the school should have a personal education plan (PEP) within 20 days of becoming looked after. If a child moves to the school as a LAC then an up to date PEP should be part of the record exchange from previous educational settings.

The PEP is an important document for supporting the educational needs of LAC and should be supported by documents already used by the school to ensure progress and attainment are monitored appropriately.

Looked after reviews are a statutory meeting and may require a report which should be held in a confidential file and on CPOMS.

LAC in the school should have a confidential file which will hold relevant information to support the child or young person in the educational setting. This will also be recorded on CPOMS.

Details of carers, birth parents, social workers etc should all be kept in the confidential file with contact information in case of emergency being readily available as with other pupils in the school.

Should a LAC have to leave the school, the Designated Teacher will contact the receiving school as soon as possible and ensure that all relevant documentation is forwarded in a timely manner.

Partnership Working:

The school will proactively work with the Virtual School

The school will proactively work with Social Care staff

The school will proactively work with parents/foster carers

The school will proactively work with all other agencies e.g. CAMHS to support the education of the LAC in the school setting

Racial, Equality & Equal Opportunities Statement:

All children will have equal and inclusive access to the curriculum regardless of their gender, race, disability or ability. This school will ensure everyone can work or learn in an environment that is free from racial intimidation and harassment and have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.