St John and St Nicolas Schools Federation

For the good of all through curiosity, creativity and love

Policy Title:	**Looked After & Previously Looked After Children Policy**
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Other relevant policies:	
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1.0	*28.03.22*	*FGB Minutes 28.03.22*	*Based on West Berks model Looked After & previously Looked After Children policy.*	Mar 2023
1.1	*27.03.23*	*FGB Minutes 27.03.23*	*Reviewed by KH/Policy working party, first paragraph added/name of responsible governor updated/minor updates*	Mar 2024
1.2	*18.3.24*	*FGB Mins 18.3.24*	*Update version number/date/responsible governor*	Mar 2025
1.3	*14.7.25*	*S&C 29.4.25* *FGB 19.5.25/14.7.25*	*Update version number and dates and updated named governor for LAC*	Mar 2026

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St John and St Nicolas Schools Federation
Looked After & previously Looked After Children Policy

At St John and St Nicolas Schools Federation, our vision is 'For the good of all – through curiosity, creativity and love.' This vision inspires everything that the federation does. It applies equally to all the federation's policies with the intention that our policies impact as fairly and positively as possible to meet the needs of all members of our schools' community.

1: Who are the Looked After Children ? - Children and young people become 'Looked After' either if they have been taken into Care by the local authority, either via a legal route under The Children's Act 1989 or where a voluntary agreement has been reached with the birth family. Most Looked After Children (LAC) will be living in foster homes but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even be placed back at home with their birth family.

2: Who are the Previously Looked After Children ? - Previously looked-after children are those who are no longer looked after by a local authority because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order.
The federation believes that in partnership with West Berkshire District Council as Corporate Parents they have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of looked after and previously looked after children.

3: Aims
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 looked after and previously looked after children and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential and enjoy learning.

To fulfil the federation's role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of looked after and previously looked after children, by asking the question, 'Would this be good enough for my child?'

4: In pursuit of this policy the federation will

- Nominate a Designated Teacher who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them
- Nominate a governor to ensure that the needs of looked after and previously looked after children in the school are taken into account 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 termly Designated Teacher Network meetings and any specific training on looked after children, which is required to ensure that they have the most up to date information
- Review all policies and procedures regularly to ensure that they adequately address the needs of looked after and previously looked after children 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/Head of school/class teacher)) to ensure coherence and efficiency in planning and attaining targets. The members of staff attending need to be free or made free from teaching commitments to attend PEP meetings
- Call PEP meetings every 6 months and more regularly if required
- Expect the child or young person to attend all or part of the meeting, unless otherwise agreed and to be released from lessons to do so
- Record targets and actions agreed during the PEP meeting on the electronic PEP platform. Copies of the PEP record will be sent to the carer(s) after the meeting
- Ensure that any vital information raised at PEP meetings that has an impact on learning is shared with teaching and support staff (and 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 or young person concerned
- Discuss issues relating to attendance and/or exclusions with the Virtual School Headteacher to ensure that there is as little disruption to a child's education as possible. When considering a permanent exclusion, a discussion will be held with the Corporate Director of Children and Young People

5: The Designated Teacher will:

- Be an advocate for any looked after and previously looked after children in the federation.
- Maintain an up-to-date record of all looked after and previously looked after children who are on the schools' rolls. This will include:
  - Status i.e., care order or Section 20 accommodation
  - Type of placement i.e., foster, respite, residential
  - Name of social worker, area office, telephone number
  - Daily contact and numbers e.g., name of parent and carer or key worker in children's home
  - SEN Code of Practice – Special educational needs where appropriate - Child Protection information when appropriate
  - Baseline information, including an assessment of preferred learning styles and all test results
  - Attendance figures
  - Exclusions
- Ensure that there is a PEP (Personal Education Plan) for each looked after child/young person to include appropriate targets and above information. This must be compatible with the child's/young person's Care Plan and where applicable include any other school plan, e.g. EHCP (Education Health Care Plan), and associated plans, Transition Plan, Pastoral Support Programme
- Ensure that someone attends Childrens' Services Reviews on each child/young person and/or always prepares a written report, which promotes the continuity and stability of their education
- Liaise with the Virtual School on a regular basis with regard to the performance, attendance and attainment of Looked After Children

- Provide the Virtual School with regular updates on attainment and progress by recording this in the child or young person's PEP, enabling the Virtual School Headteacher to have clear tracking data for all Looked After Children
- Ensure that if/when the child transfers school all relevant information is forwarded to the receiving school as a matter of priority
- Ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when looked after or previously looked after children are underachieving and have early interventions to improve this in line with existing school policy including access to 1:1 tuition
- Ensure that systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about looked after or previously looked after children where and when appropriate
- Ensure that looked after or previously looked after children, along with all children are listened to and have equal opportunity to pastoral support in school
- Ensure that they keep the school up to date with current legislation and its implication for the school in respect of looked after or previously looked after children
- Report to the governing board annually on the academic performance, attendance and exclusions of the looked after or previously looked after children who are on the roll of the school
- Ensure that the school evaluates the performance data for all looked after or previously looked after children and that it is recorded in the school's self - documentation

The designated teacher will work collaboratively with the federation's inclusion manager. PEP meetings where possible should be held jointly with any 'in school' target setting processes.

6: All staff will:

- As with all children, have high aspirations and celebrate the educational and personal achievement of looked after or previously looked after children
- Ensure entry to examinations for looked after or previously looked after children
- Be familiar with the guidance on looked after or previously looked after children and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings
- Liaise with the Designated Teacher where a looked after or previously looked after child is experiencing difficulty. These may be academic; pastoral; behaviour and/or attendance issues

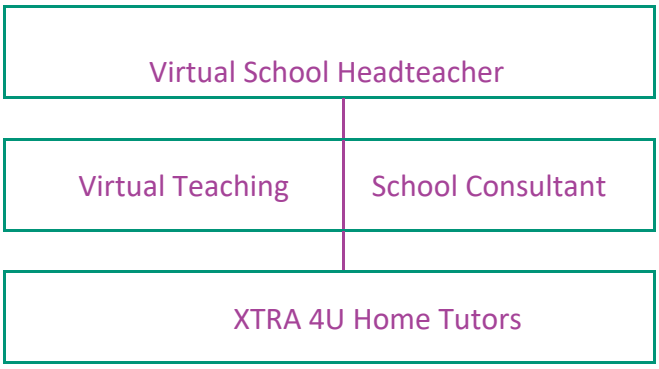
7: All governors will:

- Ensure that admission criteria (Aided and Foundation) prioritise looked after or previously looked after children, according to the Code of Practice on Admissions
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for looked after or previously looked after children
- Ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for looked after or previously looked after children
- Nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing board

- 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, preferably annually and at least every three years
- Ensure that the federation's other policies and procedures give looked after or previously looked after children equal access in respect of:
  - Admission to school
  - The National Curriculum and public examinations
  - Additional educational support where this is needed for example during extra-curricular activities
- Support the local authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of looked after or previously looked after children
- Ensure that appropriate systems and procedures are in place in the federation even if there are no looked after or previously looked after children 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

8: Structure of Educational Support for Looked After Children

West Berkshire Virtual School aims to support young people, schools, social workers and other key people in raising the attainment of children in care.



9: Virtual School Headteacher

The service is led by, the Virtual School Headteacher, who maintains an overview of the Virtual School and the local authority's strategic direction. Key responsibilities are:

- To support CYP (Children and Young People) in the care of WB District Council in educational and preschool settings within the district or outside of the area and to offer support to those in the care of other authorities but placed in West Berkshire schools or settings
- To raise the educational attainment and achievement of LAC (Looked After Children) and other previously looked after children'
- To ensure that LAC have equal access to educational, training and employment opportunities
- To ensure that LAC participate and progress within a wide range of educational and broader activity within and extending beyond schools
- To ensure that the services are responsive to and informed by the voice and needs of LAC and those from other vulnerable groups

10: Virtual School Consultants

Virtual School Consultants for looked after children support children and young people from preschool right through to the end of statutory education. Their aim is to support the academic outcomes of looked after children by:

- Chairing and minuting Personal Education Planning Meetings
- Participating in the Pre 16 Life Chances Team
- Contributing to the training programme for foster carers and social workers
- Providing guidance and training on issues relating to LAC, e.g., separation, trauma and loss, the significance of early attachments, etc
- Advising social workers on the education of looked after children
- Signposting services to other professionals

11: The Pupil Premium funding for Looked After Children

The PPP (Pupil Premium Plus) grant is to support Looked After Children (adopted children are also eligible for the Pupil Premium but this funding is not managed by the local authority). The PPP grant **MUST** be used to provide additional support for looked after children to reach their full potential. It can be used to support academic, social and emotional needs, as long as these are linked to the pupil's progress. The use of the Pupil Premium for Looked After Children will be discussed at the Personal Education Plan meetings where the support can be identified and evaluated for impact. The Virtual School team will provide advice and guidance on the use of the Pupil Premium. It is a requirement of the grant that the use of the funds is published on the school website with a commentary on the impact of the funding on a child's educational outcomes. The child **MUST NOT** be able to be identified, so schools should be careful about the information that is made available to meet this requirement.

We are committed to being accessible to everyone. If you require this document in an alternative format or translation, please call **Robin Douglas on telephone 07770 481 564**. **West Berkshire Council Children & Young People** Market Street, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 5LD T: 01635 551111

Contacts within the federation

Designated Teacher for the Federation:	**Katy Blakemore**
Named Governor for Looked After Children:	**Caroline Chichester**
Federation website:	www.stjohnandstnicolasschools.org.uk

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Board on an annual basis.