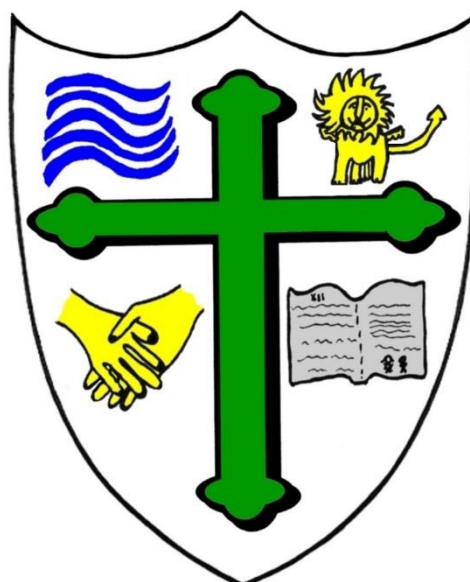


Highcliffe St Mark Primary & Fledglings Pre-School



Looked After and Post Looked After Children Policy (LAC/PLAC)

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Reviewed (date)	January 2026
Reviewed by (name)	Gemma Stiles
Approved by Governors (if applicable)	March 2026
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1. Introduction

Nationally, Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) face greater challenges in education, including higher risks of exclusion, disrupted schooling and barriers linked to trauma or pre-care experiences. Ensuring better outcomes for these children is a central element of national and local policy, reflecting the duties set out within the Children Act 2004 and subsequent statutory guidance.

Highcliffe St Mark Primary School is committed to enabling every Looked After Child to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy learning, achieve, make a positive contribution, and aspire to further or higher education. This policy reflects:

- Children Act 2004 – Section 52 duty to promote educational achievement of Looked After Children.
- Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006.
- DfE statutory guidance on Designated Teachers (2018) [\[gov.uk\]](https://www.gov.uk)
- DfE statutory guidance “Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children” (2018) [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk)
- BCP Virtual School guidance.

2. Key Principles

Highcliffe St Mark Primary operates according to the following principles:

- Early intervention and identification of barriers
- High aspirations and inclusive practice
- Stability, consistency, and strong pastoral support
- Listening to pupils and carers
- Promoting wellbeing and mental health
- Supporting attendance and reducing exclusions
- Strong partnership working with carers, social workers, Virtual School staff and other agencies

The school monitors progress, attainment and attendance to ensure each LAC/PLAC pupil can reach their potential.

3. Attendance and Looked After Children

Regular attendance underpins good educational progress and emotional stability. The school acknowledges that LAC may face additional challenges such as trauma, placement instability or emotional regulation difficulties.

Highcliffe St Mark Primary will:

- Prioritise early identification of attendance concerns
- Use a supportive, child-centred approach to exploring causes
- Work closely with carers, social workers, the Virtual School and relevant professionals
- Keep attendance as a standard agenda item within all Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings
- Implement interventions promptly where patterns emerge

3.1 Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher (DT) – Attendance

The Designated Teacher is responsible for:

- Regularly monitoring attendance of LAC/PLAC
- Ensuring attendance and punctuality are addressed in each PEP
- Implementing strategies to remove barriers to attendance

- Liaising with the school attendance lead, carers and the Virtual School
- Escalating concerns using a supportive, structured approach

3.2 Monitoring and Escalation

The Headteacher ensures robust attendance tracking systems for LAC/PLAC. Where patterns give concern, the school will:

- Work collaboratively with professionals to understand causes
- Implement targeted interventions through the PEP
- Liaise with the Virtual School before any formal attendance procedures
- Follow DfE statutory guidance and BCP local protocols

Legal intervention will only be considered as a last resort and always in consultation with the Local Authority.

4. Responsibilities of the Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure Looked After Children are prioritised in admissions, in accordance with statutory regulations (Education Regulations 2006)
- Appoint a Designated Teacher with appropriate seniority and training, as required by DfE statutory guidance (2018)
- Ensure every LAC/PLAC has an up-to-date Personal Education Plan (PEP) and, locally, a Pupil Passport
- Ensure pupils from other Local Authorities are supported with their respective LA's PEP process
- Monitor the educational progress and attendance of LAC/PLAC through an annual report
- Ensure all governors understand statutory duties for LAC/PLAC
- Respect and protect the identity and privacy of Looked After Children

5. The Role of the Designated Teacher

In alignment with statutory guidance (DfE, 2018), the Designated Teacher must:

5.1 Core Responsibilities

- Advocate for LAC/PLAC and uphold high expectations
- Ensure smooth induction for new LAC/PLAC pupils
- Lead on developing, reviewing and quality-assuring PEPs
- Ensure accurate record-keeping and timely transfer of information
- Liaise with carers, social workers, Virtual School staff and external agencies
- Support staff in understanding the needs of LAC/PLAC
- Attend relevant training and maintain up-to-date knowledge

5.2 Pupil Support

- Ensure each child has a trusted adult
- Promote access to extra-curricular activities
- Monitor academic progress closely and coordinate interventions
- Support transition planning between phases or schools
- Monitor risks related to bullying

6. Responsibilities of All Staff

All staff are expected to:

- Maintain high expectations for LAC/PLAC
- Protect confidentiality and handle information sensitively
- Respond quickly to concerns raised by the Designated Teacher
- Contribute to creating a stable, supportive school environment
- Understand the impact of trauma, attachment needs and disrupted schooling on learning
- Actively prevent bullying and uphold the Anti-Bullying Policy

7. Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Attendance Policy
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour / Relationships and Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Home-School Agreement

These reflect the statutory expectation that governing bodies ensure policies work cohesively to support LAC/PLAC.

8. Legislative and Statutory Framework

This policy aligns with:

- Children Act 2004
- Education Act 1996
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations
- DfE statutory guidance:
 - *Designated Teacher for LAC/PLAC (2018)* [[gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)]
 - *Promoting the Education of LAC/PLAC (2018)* [[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk)]

VERSION	DATE	REVIEWER	COMMENT
1	September 24	GW	Reference to Relationships and Behaviour Policy added
2	September 25	GW	Changes to school name and references to Charlotte Sampson removed.
3	January 26	GS	Designated teacher changed to Gemma Stiles from Gavin Withey. Reference to attendance and monitoring added Reference to PLAC /LAC pupil passport added for tracking alongside the PEP.

			Reference to PLAC/ LAC mentioned in the SEND Policy <i>Reordered to support understanding</i>