



Looked After Children's Policy (LAC)

St Mary's CVA aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in public care.

Designated Teacher for LAC: Mrs. L. Chapman (SENDCO) Governor with responsibility for LAC: Ms M Laverick

This policy has been developed in consultation with <https://schoolsnet.derbyshire.gov.uk/keeping-children-safe-in-education/safeguarding-policies-guidance-and-protocols/safeguarding-looked-after-children-children-in-care-cic.aspx>

The governing body is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes.

This policy includes requirements set out in "Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004" (Nov 2005) and associated guidance on the education of LAC.

We aim to contribute towards achieving the five outcomes of Every Child Matters, which is the Government's aim for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances:

- Stay safe
- Be healthy
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well being.

The aims of the academy are to:

- ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for LAC as for all children
- ensure that all LAC have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual's needs and ability
- ensure that LAC pupils take as full a part as possible in all school activities
- ensure that carers and social workers of LAC pupils are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment
- ensure that LAC pupils are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision.

Who are Looked After Children?

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority.

They fall into four main groups:

- children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
- children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21).



Review date – December 2026

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The term 'in care' refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 - they may live with foster carers, in a Children's home, in a residential school, with relatives or with parents under supervision.

Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are 'accommodated' by the local authority under section 20 of the Children Act – they may live in foster care, in a Children's home or in a residential school. All these groups are said to be 'Looked After Children' -LAC.

They may be looked after by our local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

Admissions

The Governing Body in accordance with guidance from the Nottingham Diocese of Catholic Schools endorses council policy.

The Council, as the Admission Authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools, believes that admissions criteria should not discriminate against LAC pupils.

This stance is also endorsed by the Derby City Admissions Forum.

Due to care placement changes, LAC may enter school mid-term.

It is vital that we give them a positive welcome. If necessary, we may offer additional support and pre-entry visits to help the new pupil settle.

Inclusion

This policy recognises that all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broadly based curriculum. Our LAC policy reinforces the need for teaching that is fully inclusive. The Governing Body will ensure the school makes appropriate provision for all LAC pupils.

Allocation of resources

The Governing Body will ensure that the school allocates resources to support appropriate provision for LAC, meeting the objectives set out in this policy.

Monitoring the progress of LAC

The social worker for the LAC should initiate a Personal Education Plan – PEP - within 20 days of joining the school, or of entering care, and ensure that the young person is actively involved.

It is vital that the school assesses each LAC's attainment on entry to ensure continuity of learning.

The school will monitor and track the achievement and attainment of all pupils at regular intervals.

LAC will require their PEP to be reviewed, according to their needs, as initiated by the reviewing office or social worker, and the young person's views should be sought by the Designated Teacher and noted on the PEP.

Record Keeping

The Designated Teacher will know who are all the LAC in school and will have access to their relevant contact details including parents, carers and social The Designated Teacher will also know about any LAC from other authorities.



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It is important that the school flags LAC status appropriately in the school's information systems so that information is readily available as required.

Staff Development

We encourage staff to attend courses that help them to acquire the skills needed to support LAC. Part of the Designated Teacher's role is to develop awareness of issues associated with LAC.

Partnership with parents/carers and care workers

At school we firmly believe in developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable LAC to achieve their potential.

Review meetings are an opportunity to further this partnership working. Links with external agencies/organisations

We also recognise the important contribution that external support services make in supporting LAC. Colleagues from the following support services may be involved with individual LAC:

- LAC teams
- educational psychologists and others from Local Authority SEN services
- medical officers
- school nurses
- CAMHS
- Education Welfare Officers
- Social care worker/ Community care worker/ Residential child care worker
- Youth Offending Service
- school age parents' officer.

LAC policy review and evaluation

We consider the LAC policy to be important and we undertake a thorough review of both policy and practice each year. The outcomes of this review inform the School Improvement Plan.