

The Designated Teacher for Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children

Policy document control box	
Policy title	Designated Teacher for LAC and PLAC
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Purpose

This policy sets out how RBET-Norfolk supports LAC children (LAC) and PLAC children (PLAC) and defines the role of the Designated Teacher for LAC. It demonstrates our implementation of the statutory guidance on the designated teacher (DT) for LAC and PLAC children (DfE 2018).

Scope

This policy is for all education staff, commissioners, LAs/LGBs/LABs, parents, guardians and young people.

Provision and safeguards

RBET-Norfolk undertakes to respect the views and wishes of and work with parents and guardians of LAC and PLAC on levels of communication and agreed sharing of information.

As part of their role, the Headteacher will ensure reports on the progress of all students are received and reviewed each half term as part of the self-evaluation process.

LAC and PLAC are monitored via the Virtual Schools Head (VSH), who works for the LA to promote the educational achievement of young people and also offers support and guidance to schools, academies, parents and carers.

The designated teachers (DT) who promote academic achievement of LAC at RBET - Norfolk people are:

Louise Fisher Headteacher

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The DT has lead responsibility for raising the attainment of LAC, and their specific roles are detailed below.

Roles

The designated teacher (DT) will:

- 1) act as a central point of initial contact within the Centre for any matters involving LAC and PLAC;
- 2) promote the educational achievement of every LAC and PLAC on roll by:
 - a) working with VSHs;
 - b) promoting a whole Centre culture where the needs of these learners' matter and are prioritised;
- 3) take lead responsibility for ensuring Centre staff understand:
 - a) the things which can affect how LAC and PLAC learn and achieve;
 - b) how the whole Centre supports the educational achievement of these students.
- 4) contribute to the development and review of whole Centre policies to ensure they consider the needs of LAC and PLAC;
- 5) promote a culture in which LAC and PLAC are encouraged and supported to engage with their education and other Centre activities;
- 6) act as a source of advice for teachers about working with LAC and PLAC children;
- 7) work directly with LAC and PLAC children and their carers, parents and guardians to promote good home-school links, support progress and encourage high aspiration;

- 8) take lead responsibility for the development and implementation of LAC's Personal Education Plans (PEP);
- 9) work closely with the DSL to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding LAC and PLAC children are quickly and effectively responded to;
- 10) involve parents and guardians of PLAC in decisions affecting their child's education.

Supporting LAC

The designated teacher will:

- 1) make sure LAC's PEPs meet their needs by working closely with other teachers to assess each child's specific educational needs;
- 2) have overall responsibility for leading the target-setting process in PEP;
- 3) monitor and track LAC's attainment under their PEPs;
- 4) if a child is not on track to meet their targets, take the lead in agreeing the best way to make progress and ensure that this is reflected in their PEP;
- 5) If a child is not on track to meet their targets, be instrumental in agreeing the best way forward with them in order to make progress and ensure that this is reflected in their PEP;
- 6) ensure the identified actions of PEPs are put in place;
- 7) during the development and review of PEPs, help the Centre and LA decide on the arrangements that are best for the students;
- 8) ensure that:
 - a) a LAC's PEP is reviewed before the statutory review of their care plan – this includes making sure the PEP is up-to-date and contains any new information since the last PEP review, including whether agreed provision is being delivered;
 - b) PEPs are clear about what has or has not been taken forward, noting what resources may be required to further support the child and from where these may be sourced;
 - c) the updated PEP is passed to the child's social worker and VSH ahead of the statutory review of their care plan;
 - d) transfer a LAC child's PEP to their next school, academy or college, making sure it is up to date and that the local authority responsible for looking after them has the most recent version.

Supporting both LAC and PLAC

The designated teacher will:

- 1) ensure the specific needs of LAC and PLAC are understood by staff and reflected in how the Centre uses pupil premium funding;
- 2) work with VSHs to agree how pupil premium funding for LAC can most effectively be used to improve their attainment;
- 3) help raise the awareness of parents and guardians of PLAC children about pupil premium funding and other support for these children;
- 4) play a key part in decisions on how pupil premium funding is used to support PLAC;
- 5) encourage parents' and guardians' involvement in deciding how pupil premium funding is used to support their child and be the main contact for queries about its use;
- 6) ensure teachers are aware of and understand the specific needs of LAC and PLAC in areas like attendance, homework, behaviour and future career planning;

- 7) be aware of the special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) of LAC and PLAC and make sure teachers are similarly aware and understand;
- 8) ensure the SEND code of practice, as it relates to LAC, is followed;
- 9) make sure PEPs work in harmony with any education, health and care plans (EHCP) that a LAC has;
- 10) ensure that, with the help of VSHs, they have the skills to identify signs of potential SEND issues in LAC and PLAC and know how to access further assessment and support where necessary;
- 11) ensure that they and other staff can identify signs of potential mental health issues in LAC and PLAC and understand where the Centre can draw on specialist services;
- 12) put in place robust arrangements to have strengths and difficulties questionnaires (SDQs) completed for LAC children and use the results of these SDQs to inform PEPs;
- 13) put in place mechanisms for understanding the emotional and behavioural needs of PLAC children.

Relationships beyond the Centre

The designated teacher will:

- 1) proactively engage with social workers and other professionals to enable the Centre to respond effectively to the needs of LAC and PLAC;
- 2) discuss with social workers how the Centre should engage with birth parents, and ensure it is clear about who has parental responsibility and what information can be shared with whom;
- 3) be open and accessible to parents and guardians of PLAC and encourage them to be actively involved in their children's education;
- 4) proactively build relationships with local authority professionals such as VSHs and SEND departments;
- 5) consider how the Centre works with others to maximise the stability of education for LAC by, for example,
 - a) finding ways to ensure the latest information about educational progress is available to contribute to the statutory review of care plans;
 - b) ensuring mechanisms are in place to inform VSHs when LAC children are absent without authorisation and work with the responsible authority to take appropriate safeguarding action;
 - c) talking to the child's social worker and/or other relevant parties in the local authority regarding any decisions about changes in care placements which will disrupt the child's education, providing advice about the likely impact and what the local authority should do to minimise disruption;
 - d) making sure that if a LAC moves school, their new designated teacher receives all information needed to help the transition process;
 - e) seek advice from VSHs about meeting the needs of individual PLAC, but only with the agreement of their parents or guardians.
- 6) make sure that for each LAC:
 - a) there's an agreed process for how the Centre works in partnership with the child's carer and other professionals, such as their social worker, in order to review and improve educational progress;
 - b) Centre policies are communicated to their carer and social worker and, where appropriate, birth parents

- c) teachers know the most appropriate person to contact when necessary, such as who has the authority to sign permission slips;
- 7) if a LAC is at risk of exclusion,
 - a) contact the VSH as soon as possible so they can help the Centre decide how to support the child;
 - b) Working with the VSH and child's carers, consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to address the causes of the child's behaviour;
- 8) If a PLAC is at risk of exclusion, talk to the child's parents or guardians before seeking advice from the VSH on avoiding exclusion.

Definitions

Looked after children (LAC) are defined as children who are:

- 1) In the care of the local authority (LA);
- 2) provided with accommodation by the LA for a continuous period of more than 24 hours.

Previously looked after children (PLAC) are children who:

- 1) were previously looked after by a LA, but that ended because of:
 - an adoption order;
 - a) a special guardianship order;
 - b) a child arrangements order, with arrangements for whom the child lives with and when.

Virtual School Head (VSH)

The Virtual School Head is a local authority officer responsible for:

- 1) promoting the educational achievement of their authority's LAC, monitoring and supporting these children as if they were in a single school;
- 2) providing information and advice to schools, academies, parents and guardians in respect of PLAC.

Designated Teacher (DT)

See above p.3.

Personal Education Plan (PEP)

The statutory care plan for LAC includes the PEP, which records how professionals around the child will support them in their educational outcomes and achievements.

SEND

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Other RBET Norfolk policies that should be read in conjunction with this one

- SEND policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions policy

- RBET Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour for Learning policy
- Exclusion policy

Legislation and guidance that inform this policy

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683561/The designated teacher for LAC and previously looked after children.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683561/The_designated_teacher_for_LAC_and_previously_looked_after_children.pdf)