



MET - Designated Teacher Policy

March 2025

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Children First

This policy applies to the following schools.

Ab Kettleby Primary School
Brownlow Primary School
Buckminster primary School
John Ferneley College
Sherard Primary School
Somerby Primary School
The Grove Primary School
Iveshead School
Oasis Pre School & The Retreat

And any school converting into the trust since the last review and approval of this policy.
Where this policy states 'school' this means any of our educational establishments and the wider Trust. Where this policy states 'Headteacher' this also includes 'Head of School' and 'Centre Manager'.
Mowbray Education Trust (MET).

Designated Teacher in each setting

School	Designated Teacher
Ab Kettleby Primary School	Andrea Brown
Brownlow Primary School	Sarah Child
Buckminster Primary School	Julia Orridge
John Ferneley College	Melissa Kettle
Sherard Primary School	Victoria Wood
Somerby Primary School	Andrea Brown
The Grove Primary School	Emma French
Iveshead School	Sophie McNally
Oasis and Retreat	Maria Twitney

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Aims

At Mowbray Education Trust we understand that the academic and social progress of Looked After Children is likely to be affected and disrupted by their experiences and compounded by instability in their personal circumstances and they are particularly vulnerable to underachievement. They may have missed extended periods of school, have special educational needs (SEN) and attainment data shows that previously looked- after children do not perform as well at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 when compared to non-looked-after children. The gaps in their learning and, in many cases, the emotional impact of their experiences, are likely to have become significant barriers to their progress. We are aware that these children may have suffered a fragmented educational experience, and we will work closely with partner agencies to carefully assess, plan and support them so that they can be successful at school and in the future. Our 'Children First' vision creates a culture where all children receive what they need to succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority in our schools. Each school fosters an inclusive educational experience of all children which should be positive and powerful and aim to provide a learning environment in which every Looked after Child can be successful.

The school will ensure that:

- A suitable member of staff is appointed as the designated teacher for looked- after and previously-look-after children.
- The designated teacher promotes the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked after children and supports other staff members to do this too.
- Staff, parents/carers and other partners are aware of the identity of the designated teacher, how to contact them and what they are responsible for.

Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance on the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children. It also takes into account section 20 and section 20A of the Child and Young Persons Act 2008. The Children and Families Act 2014 and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2024)

Definitions

Looked-after children are registered pupils that are:

- In the care of a local authority i.e., a child 'looked-after by a local authority' is one who is looked after within the meaning of section 22 of Children Act 1989 or Part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014; or
 - Provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services functions, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours
- Previously looked- after children are registered pupils that fall into either of these categories:
- They were looked after by a local authority but ceased to be as a result of any of the following:
 - A child arrangements order, which includes arrangements relating to who the child lives with and when they are to live with them.
 - A special guardianship order

An adoption order Personal Education Plan (PEP) is part of a looked-after child's care plan that is developed with the school. It forms a record of what needs to happen and who will make it happen to ensure the child reaches their full potential. Virtual school head (VSH) is a local authority officer responsible for promoting the educational achievement of their authority's looked-after children, working across schools to monitor and support these pupils as if they were in a single school. The VSH is also responsible for providing information and advice to schools, parents, and guardians in respect of previously looked- after children. All settings within the Trust work with Virtual Schools across the country.

The virtual school head for Leicestershire can be contacted using the below contact details:

0116 305 6097 virtualschool@leics.gov.uk

The designated teacher takes lead responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children in our schools. They are our initial point of contact for any of the matters set out in the section below. The Designated teacher works closely with the SEND team and Leicestershire County Council (LCC) to ensure that we best support the needs of the LAC students in our care.

Role of the Designated Teacher

The responsibilities of a Designated Teacher are outlined in the DfE's statutory guidance. The designated teacher has lead responsibility, but individual tasks may be appropriately delegated. The designated teacher will:

- Act as a central point of initial contact within the school for any matters involving looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- Promote high expectations of the educational achievement of every looked-after and previously looked-after child on roll.
- Work with social workers and other social care professionals and the Virtual School to promote the educational achievement of every looked-after and previously looked-after child on roll.
- Work with other services e.g., Early Help, CAFCASS, Health, Leicestershire Inclusion Service to ensure effective assessment and support for looked-after and previously looked-after children requiring additional support.
- Take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand the things which can affect how looked-after and previously looked-after children learn and achieve and how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils. This includes ensuring staff access to ongoing professional development and training regarding the trauma-informed approaches and practice which we implement within the Mowbray Education Trust.
- Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies to ensure they consider the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- Promote a culture in which looked-after and previously looked-after children are encouraged and supported to engage with their education and other school activities
- Act as a source of advice for teachers about working with looked-after and previously looked-after children including advising staff about specific teaching strategies, interventions and reasonable adjustments which can be implemented.
- Work directly with looked-after and previously looked-after children and their carers, parents, and guardians to promote good home-school links, support progress and encourage high aspirations.
- Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of looked-after children's PEPs.

- Work closely with the school's designated safeguarding lead to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to
- Work closely with the SENDCo to ensure that special educational needs are identified, and appropriate support is put in place
- Involve parents and guardians of previously looked-after children and parents of looked after children as agreed with social workers, in decisions affecting their child's education.
- Attend designated teacher training and access support through the virtual school.

Supporting looked-after children

The designated teacher will:

- Make sure looked-after children's PEPs meet their needs by working closely with other teachers to assess each child's specific educational needs.
- Have overall responsibility for leading the process of target-setting in PEPs and deciding, with partners, what provisions will best meet needs.
- Monitor and track the progress of looked after children and review as part of the PEP.
- If a child is not on track to meet their targets, plan intervention as part of the PEP.
- Ensure the identified actions of PEPs are put in place to ensure that:
 - A looked-after child's PEP is reviewed at least three times a year and kept up to date so that it informs review of their care plan.
 - PEPs are effectively completed so that they give clear information about a child's strengths and difficulties and give a clear plan for how needs will be met.
 - Make sure PEPs work in harmony with any education, health and care (EHC) plans that a looked after child may have.
 - The PEP process is used to agree how pupil premium funding for looked- after children can most effectively be used to improve their attainment.

- The updated PEP is passed to the child's social worker and VS representative within 2 weeks of the PEP meeting.
- PEPs are transferred to a child's next school or college, making sure it is up to date and that the local authority responsible for looking after the child has the most recent version.

Supporting both looked-after children and previously looked-after children.

The designated teacher will:

- Ensure the specific needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children are understood by staff and reflected in how the school uses pupil premium funding.
- Work with parents of previously looked-after children to provide support for these children.
- Work together with parents and others to decide on how pupil premium funding is used to support previously looked-after children.
- Ensure teachers have awareness and understanding of the specific emotional needs and potential triggers for looked-after and previously looked-after children and how these impact on all areas of school life e.g., behaviour, attendance, homework and future career planning. Ensure teachers have strategies to provide the appropriate support.
- Be aware of the special educational needs (SEN) of looked-after and previously looked-after children, and make sure teachers also have awareness and understanding of this and that they liaise effectively with SENCos and other specialist staff e.g., Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing co-ordinators.
- Each looked-after or previously looked-after child should receive tailored support, which recognises their unique trauma history and emotional needs. This will include personalised interventions and coping mechanisms which are integrated into their educational experience.
- Ensure the SEND code of practice, as it relates to looked-after children and previously-looked-after children, is followed.
- Ensure that they and other staff can identify signs of potential mental health issues in looked-after and previously looked-after children and understand where the school can draw on specialist services. Ensure strategies are implemented such as mindfulness, social-emotional learning and restorative practices, which foster resilience and support children to process their emotions constructively.

- Ensure the environment feels safe, predictable and supportive for looked-after and previously looked-after children. Help children to build trust with adults and peers, through clear boundaries, positive relationships and consistent routines.
- Put in place mechanisms for understanding the emotional and behavioural needs of looked after and previously looked-after children e.g., formal assessment, Boxall, SDQ alongside more informal information gathering.
- Ensure that teachers and staff have the understanding that looked-after or previously looked-after children may react to certain stimuli or situations in ways which are disproportionate or seem disconnected from context. Staff will be supported and trained to view and manage appropriately.

Relationships beyond the school

The designated teacher will:

- Proactively engage with social workers and other care professionals to enable the school to respond effectively to the needs of looked-after and previously looked- after children
- Work with local authority and external services to respond effectively to the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Discuss with social workers how the school should engage with birth parents, and ensure the school is clear about who has parental responsibility and what information can be shared with whom
- Be open and accessible to parents and guardians of previously looked-after children and encourage them to be actively involved in their children's education
- Consider how the schools work with others outside of the school to maximise the stability of education for looked-after children, such as;
 - Finding ways of making sure the latest information about educational progress is available to contribute to the statutory review of care plans.
 - Ensuring mechanisms are in place to inform Virtual School Headteachers when looked-after children are absent without authorisation and work with the responsible authority to take appropriate safeguarding action.
 - Talk 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.

- Making sure that, if a looked-after child moves school, their new designated teacher receives any information needed to help the transition process.
- Seek advice from Virtual School Headteachers about meeting the needs of individual previously looked-after children, but only with the agreement of their parents or guardians.
- Make sure that for each looked-after child:
 - There's an agreed process for how the school works in partnership with the child's carer and other professionals, such as their social worker, in order to review and develop educational progress.
 - School policies are communicated to their carer and social worker and, where appropriate, birth parents.
 - Teachers know the most appropriate person to contact where necessary, such as who has the authority to sign permission slips
- Where a looked-after child is at risk of exclusion:
 - Contact the Virtual School as soon as possible so they can help the school decide how to support the child to avoid exclusion becoming necessary.
 - Work with the Virtual School and child's carers, to consider what support/ strategies need to be put in place to support more positive behaviour.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually, and at every review, it will be approved by the Quality of Education Committee.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

Behaviour Policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding SEND Policy

Pupils with Medical Needs who cannot attend School Policy

Managing Medical Conditions and First Aid Policy

