# Greenford High School
## Policy Document

# Designated Teacher Policy (Children Looked-After and Previously Children Looked-After)

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## 1. Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

- A suitable member of staff is appointed as the designated teacher for Children Looked-After and Previously Children Looked-After ;
- The designated teacher promotes the educational achievement of Children Looked-After and Previously Children Looked-After, and supports other staff members to do this too;
- Staff, parents, carers and guardians are aware of the identity of the designated teacher, how to contact them and what they are responsible for.

## 2. 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 **Children and Young Persons Act 2008**.

## 3. Definitions

**Children Looked-After** are registered pupils that are:

- In the care of a local authority, 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 Children Looked-After** 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.

- They appear to the governing board to have:
  - Been in state care in a place outside of England and Wales because they would not have otherwise been cared for adequately, and;
  - Ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted.

**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 Children Looked-After, 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 Children Looked-After.

## 4. Identity of our designated teacher

Our designated teacher is Gurvinder Nayyar.

You can contact her by email at gnayyar@greenford.ealing.sch.uk.

Our designated teacher takes lead responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of Children Looked-After and Previously Children Looked-After at our school. They are your initial point of contact for any of the matters set out in the section below.

Our designated teacher is supported by the school's **Children Looked-After Co-ordinator**, Angela Thomas. You can contact her by email on athomas@greenford.ealing.sch.uk. Ms Thomas liaises with our CLA cohort, and those professionals involved with them, works closely with the respective foster families, and supports staff in their work with our CLA cohort.

## 5. Role of the designated teacher

### 5.1 Leadership responsibilities

The **designated teacher** and **CLA Co-ordinator** will:

- Act as a central point of initial contact within the school for any matters involving Children Looked-After and Previously Children Looked-After;

- Promote the educational achievement of every Child Looked-After and Previously Child Looked-After on roll by:
  - Working with VSHs;
  - Promoting a whole school culture where the needs of these pupils matter and are prioritised.
- Take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand:
  - The things which can affect how Children Looked-After and Previously Children Looked-After learn and achieve;
  - How the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils.
- Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies to ensure they consider the needs of Children Looked-After and Previously Children Looked-After;
- Promote a culture in which Children Looked-After and Previously Children Looked-After are encouraged and supported to engage with their education and other school activities;
- Act as a source of advice for teachers about working with Children Looked-After and Previously Children Looked-After;
- Work directly with Children Looked-After and Previously Children Looked-After 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 Children Looked-After's PEPs;
- Work closely with the school's designated safeguarding lead to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding Children Looked-After and Previously Children Looked-After are quickly and effectively responded to;
- Involve parents and guardians of Previously Children Looked-After in decisions affecting their child's education.
- The CLA Coordinator tracks daily attendance for Children Looked After (CLA), promptly notifies the child's social worker and Virtual School Head (VSH) of any non-attendance, and ensures reduced or part-time timetables are strictly controlled and never used informally or unlawfully for CLA or Previously Looked After Children (PLAC).

### 5.2 Supporting looked-after children

The **designated teacher** and **CLA Co-ordinator** will:

- Make sure Children Looked-After'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;
- Monitor and track how Children Looked-After's attainment progresses under their PEPs;
- 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;
- Ensure the identified actions of PEPs are put in place;
- During the development and review of PEPs, help the school and relevant local authority decide what arrangements work best for pupils;
- Ensure that:
  - A Child Looked-After'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;
  - 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;
  - The updated PEP is passed to the child's social worker and VSH ahead of the statutory review of their care plan.
- Transfer a Child Looked-After's PEP to their next school or college, making sure it is up to date and that the local authority responsible for looking after them has the most recent version.

### 5.3 Supporting both looked-after children and previously looked-after children

The **designated teacher** and **CLA Co-ordinator** will:

- Ensure the specific needs of Children Looked-After and Previously Children Looked-After are understood by staff and reflected in how the school uses pupil premium funding;
- Work with VSHs to agree how pupil premium funding for Children Looked-After can most effectively be used to improve their attainment;
- Help raise the awareness of parents and guardians of Previously Children Looked-After about pupil premium funding and other support for these children;
- Play a key part in decisions on how pupil premium funding is used to support Previously Children Looked-After;
- 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;
- Ensure teachers have awareness and understanding of the specific needs of Children Looked-After and Previously Children

Looked-After in areas like attendance, homework, behaviour and future career planning;

- Be aware of the special educational needs (SEN) of Children Looked-After and Previously IChildren Looked-After, and make sure teachers also have awareness and understanding of this;
- Ensure the SEND code of practice, as it relates to Children Looked-After, is followed;
- Make sure PEPs work in harmony with any education, health and care (EHC) plans that a Child Looked-After may have;
- Ensure that, with the help of VSHs, they have the skills to identify signs of potential SEN issues in Children Looked-After and Previously Children Looked-After, and know how to access further assessment and support where necessary;
- Ensure that they and other staff can identify signs of potential mental health issues in Children Looked-After and Previously Children Looked-After and understand where the school can draw on specialist services;
- Put in place robust arrangements to have strengths and difficulties questionnaires (SDQs) completed for Children Looked-After, and use the results of these SDQs to inform PEPs;
- Put in place mechanisms for understanding the emotional and behavioural needs of Previously Children Looked-After.
- The Designated Teacher (DT) collaborates closely with the Designated Mental Health Lead (DMHL) and Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) to deliver coordinated support, while ensuring relevant teaching staff receive trauma-informed and attachment-aware training.

### 5.4 Relationships beyond the school

The **designated teacher** and **CLA Co-ordinator** will:

- Proactively engage with social workers and other professionals to enable the school to respond effectively to the needs of Children Looked-After and Previously Children Looked-After;
- 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 Children Looked-After and encourage them to be actively involved in their children's education;
- Proactively build relationships with local authority professionals, such as VSHs and SEN departments;

- Consider how the school works with others outside of the school to maximise the stability of education for Children Looked-After 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 VSHs when Children Looked-After are absent without authorisation and work with the responsible authority to take appropriate safeguarding action;
  - 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;
  - Making sure that, if a Child Looked-After moves school, their new designated teacher receives any information needed to help the transition process.
- Seek advice from VSHs about meeting the needs of individual Previously Children Looked-After, but only with the agreement of their parents or guardians;
- Make sure that for each Child Looked-After:
  - 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 Child Looked-After is at risk of exclusion:
  - Contact the VSH and social workers as soon as possible so they can help the school decide how to support the child to improve their behaviour and avoid exclusion becoming necessary;
  - 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.
- Where a Previously Child Looked-After is at risk of exclusion, talk to the child's parents or guardians before seeking advice from the VSH on avoiding exclusion.

**6. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually by Gurvinder Nayyar, Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion and Child Protection. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

**7. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions Procedures and Policy SEN
- Supporting pupils with medical needs

**8. This section lists the key legislation the policy adheres to, including:**

- *The Children Act 1989*
- *The Children and Social Work Act 2017*
- Statutory Guidance: "The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children" (DfE 2018)
- Statutory Guidance: "Keeping children safe in education" (latest version)
- *The Equality Act 2010*
- *Children and Families Act 2014* (relating to SEN)