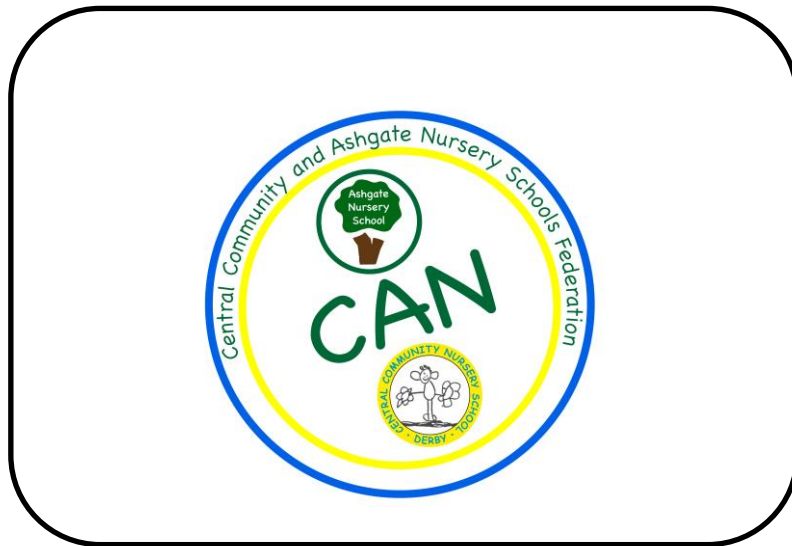


# Central Community and Ashgate Nursery Schools' Federation



## Looked After Children Policy (Early Years)

Signed by:

*[Handwritten signature]*

Head Teacher

Date: 19 September 2024

*[Handwritten signature]*

Chair of governors

Date: 19 September 2024

## Contents:

### Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Definitions
3. Roles and responsibilities
4. Individual education plan (IEP)
5. Working with agencies and the VSH
6. Training
7. Safeguarding
8. Supporting mental health
9. Children with SEND
10. Information sharing
11. Monitoring and review

## Statement of intent

Educational achievement and subsequent life chances for LAC and previously-LAC are of real concern. Children who are looked after require special treatment and additional attention in order to improve their situation.

In light of this, the setting has implemented this policy to ensure all children are properly supported and given the best chance to progress, both in their education and in their life outside of the setting.

Central and Ashgate Nursery Schools' Federation endeavours to provide positive experiences and offer stability, safety, and individual care and attention for all our children. With this in mind, we aim to:

- Encourage children to reach their potential and to make good progress in relation to their social and emotional development.
- Ensure that children enjoy high-quality teaching which meets their needs and the requirements of legislation.
- Plan support for LAC and previously-LAC realistically and use the setting's resources efficiently to ensure the setting meets their needs.
- Promote a positive culture in all aspects of the setting.
- Help children develop their cultural, moral and social understanding, and achieve the early learning goals as set out in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children Act 1989
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE (2018) 'Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2018) 'The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2018) 'Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2018) 'The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2023) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2017) 'Statutory for the early years foundation stage'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies and documents:

- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Records Management and Retention Policy
- Curriculum and Assessment

## 2. Definitions

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

- Children or young people who are the subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989.

- Children who are placed in foster care, children’s residential homes, with relatives or friends, in semi-independent or supported independent accommodation.
- Children subject to a Care or Interim Care Order whilst placed with a parent or carer, where the LA has parental responsibility.
- Children who are not subject to an order, but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents or carers.

**“Previously-LAC”** are defined as:

- Children who are no longer looked after by an LA in England and Wales because they have either been adopted or are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order.
- Children who were adopted outside England and Wales from ‘state care’ (care that is provided by a public authority, religious organisation, or other organisation whose main purpose is to benefit society).

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

The governing body is responsible for:

- Reviewing the annual report produced by the designated teacher to evaluate the progress of LAC in the setting.
- Ensuring they receive feedback from the SLT regarding the effectiveness of the policy on an annual basis.
- Ensuring the school has a coherent policy for LAC and PLAC.
- Reviewing the school’s policies and procedures in conjunction with legislation and statutory guidance.
- Ensuring the designated teacher for LAC and PLAC has received the appropriate training.
- Ensuring that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to each looked after child.
- Legal status (i.e. whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.
- Care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the LA.
- Ensuring that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep LAC and PLAC safe.
- Ensuring that there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying and reporting possible safeguarding or mental health concerns amongst LAC and PLAC.

- Ensuring that there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying and reporting possible safeguarding or mental health concerns amongst LAC and PLAC.
- Ensuring LAC and PLAC have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and that reasonable adjustments are made, if necessary.
- Reviewing the annual report produced by the designated teacher to evaluate the progress of LAC in the school.
- Ensuring they receive feedback from the headteacher regarding the effectiveness of the policy on an annual basis.

The head teacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring LAC and previously-LAC have equal access to all areas of learning and that reasonable adjustments are made if necessary.
- Appointing the designated teacher for LAC and previously-LAC.
- Allowing the designated teacher the time and facilities to succeed in carrying out their duties.
- Overseeing this policy and monitoring its implementation, feeding back to the governing body annually on the following:
  - The number of LAC and previously-LAC in the setting
  - The attendance of LAC and previously-LAC, compared to other groups
  - An analysis of assessment scores as a cohort, compared to other pupil groups.
- Ensuring all members of staff are aware that supporting LAC is a key priority.
- Ensuring any received EYPP for LAC and previously-LAC is managed effectively.
- Promoting the advantages of actively challenging negative stereotypes of LAC.

The designated teacher for LAC and previously-LAC is responsible for:

- Promoting the educational achievement of LAC and previously-LAC at the setting; this includes those that left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.
- Acting as the main contact for social services and the DfE.
- Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations.
- Advising staff on teaching strategies for LAC.

- Ensuring that LAC are prioritised for one-to-one tuition and support.
- Liaising with the SENCO to ensure all children's needs are met.
- Working with the child's social worker to develop and implement their PEP.
- Working with the head teacher to submit an annual report to the governing board, which details the progress of all LAC and previously-LAC.

The DSL is responsible for:

- Keeping up-to-date records of LAC's respective social workers.
- Promoting amongst staff the importance of recognising and reporting safeguarding concerns surrounding LAC and PLAC as soon as possible due to their increased vulnerability to harm.

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Ensuring they are involved in reviewing IEPs and EHCPs for LAC and previously-LAC.
- Liaising with the relevant practitioners, designated teacher, specialists and parents/carers when considering interventions to support the progress of previously-LAC.

Staff are responsible for:

- Being aware of LAC and previously-LAC and providing them with support and encouragement.
- Preserving confidentiality, where appropriate, and showing sensitivity and understanding.
- Being vigilant for any signs of bullying towards LAC and previously-LAC.
- Being vigilant for any signs of safeguarding concerns surrounding LAC and PLAC due to their increased vulnerability to harm, and reporting any concerns to the DSL as soon as possible.
- Promoting the self-esteem of LAC and previously-LAC.

#### **4. Individual Education Plan**

The IEP will reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning which meets the identified educational needs of the child.

Any interventions supported by PP+ will be evidence-based and in the best interests of the pupil.

#### **5. Working with agencies.**

The setting will ensure that copies of all relevant reports are forwarded to the LAC social workers, in addition to carers or residential social workers.

The setting will work with other agencies to exchange information, such as changes in circumstances, exclusions or attendance issues, taking prompt action, where necessary, to safeguard LAC and previously-LAC.

Behaviour management strategies will be agreed between the Headteacher and the setting, to ensure challenging behaviour is managed in the most effective way for that individual child.

If deemed necessary, the setting will allocate an amount of funding to an individual to support their needs.

The setting will share their expertise on what works in supporting the education of LAC and previously-LAC.

## **6. Training**

The designated teacher and other staff involved in the education of LAC and previously-LAC have received the appropriate training, this includes information about the following:

- Admissions arrangements
- SEND
- Attendance
- Managing challenging behaviour
- Promoting positive educational and recreational activities
- Supporting children to be aspirational for their future education
- Safeguarding
- Supporting mental health

## **7. Safeguarding**

- The school recognises that many LAC and previously-LAC have experienced trauma, abuse or complex family circumstances that have led to them being placed in care, and will ensure that all staff are aware that experiences of adversity such as these can leave pupils vulnerable to further harm or exploitation.
- All staff will be trained to recognise signs and indicators of safeguarding concerns and will ensure that extra vigilance is practiced in observing and identifying these indicators amongst LAC and previously-LAC as soon as possible.
- Where a LAC or previously-LAC has a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding, e.g. responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks.
- The headteacher will implement appropriate pastoral support services in place throughout the school to ensure that the welfare of LAC and previously-LAC can be adequately protected to the extent that reflects their increased vulnerability.
- Staff will be encouraged to report to the DSL any concerns they have over LAC or previously-LAC in line with the processes outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

When there is reasonable cause to suspect that a LAC or PLAC is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the school will collaborate in the multi-agency strategy discussion where appropriate to determine the pupil's welfare and plan rapid further action as necessary. The school's representative at any strategy discussions will be a member of the SLT and a DSL or deputy. Information and analysis about the pupil and their family will be provided as required.

Staff will be regularly encouraged to look for signs of bullying and report to the designated teacher if they believe a LAC or previously-LAC is being bullied, as this can have a particularly negative impact on pupils who have early experiences of rejection or abandonment

## **8. Supporting mental health**

LAC and previously-LAC are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues which can impact their behaviour and education. The designated teacher will have awareness, training and skills regarding a child's needs and how to support them in relation to behaviour management and mental health.

## **9. Children with SEND**

Support for LAC and previously-LAC with SEND, who do not need an EHC plan, will have an IEP where needed.

The SENCO, relevant practitioners, designated teacher and specialists will involve parents and carers when considering interventions to support their child's progress.

## **10. Information sharing**

Appropriate and specific arrangements for sharing reliable data are in place to ensure that the education needs of LAC and previously-LAC are understood and met.

The arrangements set out include:

- Who has access to information on LAC and previously LAC and how data will remain secure.
- How children and parents/carers are informed of, and allowed to challenge, information that is kept about them.
- How parents and carers contribute to and receive information.
- Mechanisms for sharing information between the setting and relevant LA departments.
- How relevant information about individual children is passed between authorities, departments and the setting when children move.

All staff will be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children. This will include sharing information about any adults with whom a pupil has contact, which may impact of the child's safety or welfare, where necessary.

Staff members will ensure that fear of sharing information does not stand in the way of their responsibility to promote the welfare and safety of LAC and PLAC. If staff members are in doubt about sharing information and data protection legislation, they will speak to the DSL.

The school will aim to be as transparent as possible as possible by telling families what information they are sharing and with whom, provided that it is safe to do so.

Information will only be shared when completely necessary and will be managed in accordance with the Data Protection Policy and Records Management and Retention Policy.

#### **11. Monitoring and review**

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the governing body, designated teacher and the head teacher.