

Looked After Children (LAC) Policy



Reviewed: October 2023
Next review: October 2024

The Christian Ethos of Immanuel College

Immanuel means 'God with us'

We believe at Immanuel that we are 'All God's Children'. This belief means we value, look after and support all students in our College whatever their background or circumstances and encourage them to access education in a positive way.

The designated teacher/s for Looked After Children - Mrs Emma Sey

Aims

The Governing Body of Immanuel College is committed to providing quality education for all its students, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. The policy outlines how we will seek to promote the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children.

Policy Statement

The National Context

Statutory Guidance for school governing bodies: Section 20 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 places a duty on the Governing Body of maintained schools to designate a member of staff (the 'designated person') as having responsibility to promote the educational achievement of looked after children (CLA) and previously looked after children (PLAC) who are registered students at the school.

This Governing Body recognises that, nationally and locally, there is considerable underachievement of children and young people in public care, when compared with their peers. The Governing Body will play its part in positively co-operating and supporting the local authority's duty to promote the education of children and young people in public care under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004. This will be achieved by having regard to statutory guidance and associated regulations relating to Every Child Matters and Care Matters.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2023 also recognises the safeguarding risks posed to looked after or previously looked after children. Para.187 of KCSIE 2023 states *"The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep looked after children safe."*

The Role of the Governing Body

Our Governing Body is committed to work in partnership with the head teacher in determining the key responsibilities of the designated teacher to promote the educational achievement and safeguarding of looked after, and previously looked after, children, including those aged between 16 and 18 who are registered at the school.

The Governing Body, in partnership with senior school staff, will ensure the focus of the designated teacher's role is on assessing and meeting the teaching and learning needs of the student and that administrative tasks supporting that role are undertaken by support staff.

The Governing Body will ensure that the designated teacher understands and helps others understand:

- that looked after, and previously looked after, children are not a homogenous group, but are individuals with many of the same needs as any other child;
- the broad framework of the care system and the way it impacts on the child's education;
- the reasons why many looked after, and previously looked after, children under-achieve such as the possible impact of loss and attachment and how the role of the designated teacher, in promoting high expectations of educational progress, can make a difference to a looked after child's achievement;
- their own role in contributing to the statutory review of the looked after child's personal education plan (PEP) which forms an integral part of the child's overall care plan.
- the emotional, psychological and social implications of separation from birth families and the reasons for that separation;

A previously looked after child potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously looked after children safe. When dealing with looked after children and previously looked after children, it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group. (KCSIE 2023, para.189)

The Governors will ensure the designated teacher is a member of the teaching staff with appropriate seniority and professional experience and status to provide leadership, training, information and advice to others to help ensure safeguarding and to improve educational outcomes for looked after, and previously looked after, children.

The Governors will receive and consider a regular report/update from the designated teacher in which the confidentiality of each looked after, and previously looked after, child will be respected. The report will allow the Governing Body to make judgements about the role of the designated teacher in relation to:

- any workload issues arising as a result of the number of looked after, and previously looked after, children on roll at the school and the number of local authorities which are involved;
- how looked after, and previously looked after, children are making progress in relation to other vulnerable groups and all students at the school (i.e. educational, social and emotional progress);
- the pattern of attendance and exclusions;
- any process or planning issues arising from personal education plans (PEPs);
- whether any are identified as gifted and talented and how those needs are being met;
- whether any have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) and whether those needs are being met through statements;

- how the teaching and learning needs of looked after, and previously looked after, children are reflected in school development plans and are being met in relation to interventions and resources;
- training undertaken by the designated teacher in order to impart knowledge and understanding about the education and wellbeing of looked after, and previously looked after, children to colleagues;
- links with local authority and Education Bradford staff supporting looked after children
- the impact of any of the school's policies, for example on charging for educational visits and extended school activities, on looked after, and previously looked after, children.

The report will allow Governors and the school Leadership Team to decide actions that are required to address any issues raised in the reports in relation to:

- whether the designated teacher has sufficient time and resources to carry out their role effectively;
- any training, support and development needs required to ensure the role can be carried out effectively;
- the extent to which college policies take account of the particular needs of looked after, and previously looked after, children

The designated governor will champion looked after, and previously looked after, children.

The Designated Teacher

The designated teacher is the member of staff responsible for our school cohort of looked after, and previously looked after, children. They will utilise the existing school management system to ensure progress for our looked after, and previously looked after, children and will report to the governing body via a monitoring process. This report will inform the school SEF.

They will understand and be conversant with all the relevant legislation and guidance around meeting the educational and learning needs of looked after, and previously looked after, children.

They will be proactive in keeping up to date with developments regarding guidance and regulation in relation to looked after, and previously looked after, children.

The designated teacher will ensure that support staff working with looked after, and previously looked after, children are suitably informed and trained carry out their roles in supporting looked after, and previously looked after, children in school.

Whenever a student at our school becomes looked after, or when a looked after/previously looked after child joins the school the designated teacher will ensure their educational needs are assessed and that appropriate teaching and learning provision is agreed and in place to meet their needs.

The role of the designated teacher

The designated teacher has key responsibilities for each looked after, previously looked after, child. Their role in school will include carrying out or arranging to be carried out the following key tasks:-

- ensuring that all staff understand and respond positively and with sensitivity to the individual needs of looked after, and previously looked after, children on roll.
- assessing and identifying the teaching and learning needs of looked after, and previously looked after, children on roll involving others as necessary and co-ordinating within the school the development and implementation of the child's PEP to reflect those needs.
- participating in the process of individual target setting and tracking of the progress made by looked after, and previously looked after, children.
- ensuring that systems are in place that enable looked after children to have an opportunity to contribute to their personal education plan and understand what the plan means for them.
- ensuring that the PEP is up-to-date and made available for the statutory care plan reviews.
- securing relevant interventions and services for the pupil where necessary.
- liaising with the social worker as necessary about the student's educational progress and needs, especially through contributing to the statutory review of the care plan.
- promoting good home-school links through contact with the student's carer about how they can support his/her progress by paying particular attention to effective communication with carers.
- promoting the students' inclusion in the school community and access to the school's curriculum, facilities and extra curricular activities.
- working with learning support assistants, class teachers and other school staff to support their understanding of issues which impact on the teaching and learning of looked after, and previously looked after, children, including in relation to how information is shared.
- ensure that appropriate staff have access to the information they need in relation to a child's looked after (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order) and the child's contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They should also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The designated safeguarding lead should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child. (KCSIE 2023, para.188)
- advising teachers at school about differentiated teaching methods appropriate for individual pupils who are looked after.
- assisting looked after, and previously looked after, children when they transfer to their next school and ensure the speedy transfer of school records to a new school and ensuring that the local authority responsible for looking after the student has the most up-to-date version of the PEP.

Glossary of terms

PEP – Personal Education Plan
Plan

ePEP – electronic Personal Education