

Pipworth Community Primary School



Children Looked After Policy

Established:	February 2010
Date Reviewed:	September 2024
Reviewed by:	Maria Jackson-Brown
Policy to be reviewed by:	September 2026

Pipworth Community Primary School aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in public care. This policy refers to children currently looked after and those previously looked after.

Designated Teacher for CLA and previously CLA.....Maria Jackson-Brown.....
Governor with responsibility for CLA and previously CLACraig Malkin.....

The governing body is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes. This policy includes requirements set out in "Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004" (Nov 2005) and associated guidance on the education of CLA.

Looked After Children and those previously CLA - are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational underachievement when compared to their peers.

We aim to contribute towards achieving the five outcomes of Every Child Matters, which is the Government's aim for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances:

- **Stay safe**
- **Be healthy**
- **Enjoy and achieve**
- **Make a positive contribution**
- **Achieve economic well being.**

Who are Children Looked After?

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority.

They fall into four main groups:

- Children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- Children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- Children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
- Children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21)

The term '**in care**' refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 - they may live with foster carers, in a Children's home, in a residential school, with relatives or with parents under supervision.

Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are '**accommodated**' by the local authority under section 20 of the Children Act – they may live in foster care, in a Children's home or in a residential school.

All these groups are said to be '**Children Looked After**' -CLA. They may be looked after by our local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

Who are children previously looked after?

Children previously looked after are those who have had their care provided by local authority for more than 24 hours and since been either returned home to parent care, been adopted or a supervision order has been awarded to a family member (they then have all parental rights).

Children leaving care

The Designated Teacher for children leaving care is Maria Jackson-Brown.

We recognise that children leaving care often continue to need additional support in school. The emotional well-being of these children remains an utmost priority and they will continue to receive a package of support appropriate to their needs. The Designated Teacher will work with the Pastoral Support Team, class teachers, parents and outside agencies to ensure that all children leaving care are supported to achieve their full potential in education.

The aims of the school are to:

- Ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for CLA and previously CLA as for all children.
- Ensure that all CLA and previously CLA have access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual's needs and ability.
- Ensure that CLA and previously CLA pupils take as full a part as possible in all school activities.
- Ensure that carers and social workers of CLA pupils are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment.
- Ensure that CLA and previously CLA pupils are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Designated Teacher will:

- Be an advocate for CLA and previously CLA within school.
- Give regard to the impact of relevant decisions for CLA and previously CLA on both the CLA / previously CLA and the rest of the school community.
- Know who the CLA and previously CLA are in school, including those in the care of other authorities, and ensure the availability of all relevant details from school record-keeping systems as required.
- Attend relevant training about CLA and previously CLA.
- Act as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to CLA and previously CLA, seeking advice from the CLA team when appropriate.
- Ensure that CLA and previously CLA receive a positive welcome on entering school, especially mid year and, if necessary, offer additional support and a pre-entry visit to help the new pupil settle.
- Ensure that all CLA have an appropriate PEP that is completed within 20 days of joining the school or of entering care (see guidance on PEPs in Appendix) and ensure that the young person contributes to the plan.

- Keep PEPs and other records up to date and review PEPs at transfer and at termly intervals.
- Convene an urgent multi-agency meeting if a CLA and previously CLA is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion.
- Ensure confidentiality on individual children, sharing confidential and personal information on a need to know basis, bearing in mind the wishes of the individual pupil.
- Act as the key adviser for staff and governors on issues relevant to CLA and previously CLA.
- Ensure that care and school liaison is effective including invitations to meetings and other school events.
- Actively encourage and promote out of hours learning and extra curricular activities for CLA and previously CLA.
- Ensure a speedy transfer of information, records and coursework, where appropriate, when a CLA and previously CLA transfers to another educational placement.
- Contribute information to CLA reviews when required.
- Report to the Governing body on CLA and previously CLA in the school and inform of relevant policy and practice development.
- Agree with the social worker the appropriate people to invite to parents' evenings etc
- Prepare reports for Governors' meetings to include:
 - The number of CLA and previously CLA on roll
 - Confirmation that CLA have a PEP.
 - Their attendance compared to other pupils.
 - Their attainment (SATs) and progress compared to other pupils.
 - The number, if any, of fixed term and permanent exclusions.
 - The destinations of pupils who leave the school.
- Attend governor meetings as appropriate – such as the admission, disciplinary and exclusion of CLA and previously CLA.
- Arrange a mentor or befriender (adult and /or pupil) to whom the young person can talk, possibly through the learning mentor scheme or through Connexions, particularly when the pupil is new to school.
- Ensure that any Special Educational Needs are addressed in conjunction with the SENCO and in accordance with the Code of Practice for SEND. CLA and previously CLA are six to eight times more likely to have a statement of Special Educational Needs than the general school population.

Good practice suggests that all school staff will:

- Follow school procedures.
- Keep the Designated Teacher informed about a CLA and previously CLA's progress.
- Have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of CLA and previously CLA.
- Positively promote the raising of a CLA and previously CLA's self-esteem.

- Ensure any CLA and previously CLA is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained.
- Be familiar with the school's policy and guidance on CLA and respond appropriately to requests for information to support PEPs and review meetings.
- Attend courses and school training that help them to acquire the skills needed to support CLA and previously CLA.
- Liaise with the Designated Teachers where a CLA and previously CLA is experiencing difficulties.
- Give only official exclusions and only use exclusions in line with the school's exclusion policy, and relevant national guidance, being mindful to the difficulties this may create in the care placement.
- Contribute to regular liaison with social care colleagues and other appropriate professionals and keep carers fully informed at all times.
- Keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to other professionals/ parents/carers/pupil as appropriate.
- Make extra copies of reports available when required.

Good practice suggests that the Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritises CLA according to the DfES Admissions Code of Practice.
- Ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for CLA and previously CLA.
- Ensure there is a Designated Teacher for CLA and previously CLA.
- Liaise with the head teacher, Designated Teacher and all other staff to ensure the needs of CLA and previously CLA are met.
- Nominate a governor with responsibility for CLA and previously CLA who links with the Designated Teacher.
- Receive regular reports from the Designated Teacher.
- Ensure that the school's policies and procedures give CLA and previously CLA equal access in respect of:
 - Admission to school
 - National Curriculum and examinations, both academic and vocational
 - Out of school learning and extra curricular activities
- Annually review the effective implementation of the school policy for CLA and previously CLA.
- Ensure that the Designated Teacher is invited to the exclusion meetings of CLA and previously CLA.

Admissions

The Governing Body believes that admissions criteria should not discriminate against CLA pupils. Due to care placement changes, CLA may enter school mid-term and if necessary may be offered additional support and pre-entry visits to help the new pupil to settle.

Inclusion

This policy recognises that all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broadly based curriculum. Our CLA and previously CLA policy reinforces the need for teaching that is fully inclusive. The Governing Body will ensure the school makes appropriate provision for all CLA and previously CLA pupils.

Allocation of resources

The Governing Body will ensure that the school allocates resources to support appropriate provision for CLA and previously CLA, meeting the objectives set out in this policy.

Monitoring the progress of CLA

The social worker for the CLA should initiate a Personal Education Plan – PEP - within 20 days of joining the school, or of entering care, and ensure that the young person is actively involved. The school will assess each CLA's attainment on entry to ensure continuity of learning.

The school will monitor and track the achievement and attainment of all pupils at regular intervals. CLA will require their PEP to be reviewed, according to their needs, as initiated by the reviewing office or social worker, and the young person's views should be sought by the Designated Teacher and noted on the PEP.

The progress of children previously looked after will be monitored as part of whole school pupil progress meetings and SEND reviews (if required). School staff will raise concerns in a timely manner to ensure that previously CLA are supported to make at least expected progress.

Record Keeping

The Designated Teacher will know who the CLA are in school and will have access to their relevant contact details including parents, carers and social worker. The Designated Teacher will also know about any CLA from other authorities. The school will flag CLA status appropriately in the school's information systems so that information is readily available as required.

Staff Development

Partnership with parents/carers and care workers

At school we firmly believe in developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable CLA and previously CLA to achieve their potential. Review meetings are an opportunity to further this partnership working.

Links with external agencies/organisations

We also recognise the important contribution that external support services make in supporting CLA and previously CLA. Colleagues from the following support services may be involved with individual CLA and previously CLA:

- CLA teams
- Educational psychologists and others from Local Authority SEN services
- Medical officers
- School nurses
- CAMHS
- Education Welfare Officers
- Social care worker/ Community care worker/ Residential child care worker
- Youth Offending Service
- School age parents' officer.