



Carlton VC Church of England Primary School

Looked after Child Policy 2026

'I am the vine, you are the branches; those that abide in me and I in them will bear much fruit' (John 15:5)

Approved by: Jo Bevis
Governors

Date:

Written by: Jo Bevis

Date: 18/3/24

Last reviewed on: 18/3/2026

Next review: March 28

Carlton C of E Primary School Looked After Children Policy

Rationale

Who are Looked After Children (LAC)?

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 'Looked After Children' -LAC. They may be looked after by our local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

Admissions

The Governing Body endorses council policy. The Council, as the Admission Authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools, believes that admissions criteria should not discriminate against LAC pupils. Due to care placement changes, LAC may enter school mid-term. It is vital that we give them a positive welcome. If necessary we may offer additional support and pre-entry visits to help the new pupil settle. 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 Children Looked After under section 52 of the Children Act 2004" (Nov 2005) and associated guidance on the education of LAC. 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.

The aims of the school are to:

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

Carlton recognises that excellent lines of communication are vital to the LAC making optimum progress socially, emotionally and educationally, and will work tirelessly to maintain these lines of communication.

This policy will be updated when necessary or every two years.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The Head Teacher will always be the first point of contact for social services and be responsible for all systems to support LAC.
- Designated LAC lead – will act in collaboration with the Head and act as the named point of contact with outside agencies.
- LAC designated Governor – Emma Simpson will oversee the policy and practice relating to LAC matters.
- It is the legal responsibility of the Social worker to initiate the PEP however the Designated LAC lead will ensure all information is collected as soon as possible and that the PEP is completed for the LAC within 20 days.

Record Keeping

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

Staff Development

We enable and encourage staff to attend courses that help them to acquire the skills needed to support LAC. Part of the Designated LAC lead's role is to develop awareness of issues associated with LAC. CPD will be sought from the Virtual School to help teachers with developing their skills enabling them to give their best to LAC children.

Partnership with parents/carers and care workers

We firmly believe in developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable LAC 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 LAC. Colleagues from the following support services may be involved with individual LAC:

- LAC teams
- Virtual Schools
- 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

LAC policy review and evaluation

We consider the LAC policy to be important and we undertake a thorough review of both policy and practice each year. The outcomes of this review inform the School Development Plan.

The roles and responsibilities of the whole school can be seen in more detail in Attachment 3.

Confidentiality

The Head Teacher and designated LAC lead will handle all information and documentation sensitively. The designated LAC lead will ensure information is shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis as laid out in the Role of the Designated Teacher (Attachment 3).

The staff will respect the LAC's wishes in how much information is to be shared with other adults and peers.

Complaints Procedure

In the event of a complaint against the school with regard to LAC or any related issues, the school's general complaints procedure policy will be followed.

Linked Policies

Safeguarding

Admissions

Equality

Special Educational Needs

Behaviour and Attendance

PSHE

Local Contacts

Carlton School acknowledges the importance of good lines of communication between all the 'corporate parents' and carers when looking after LAC.

- Alison Pullen (Personal Education Plans)

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https://localoffer.bedford.gov.uk/kb5/bedford/directory/service.page?id=K8mQEE6_pt4&localofferchannel=0

- Milton Keynes Virtual School Information <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/virtual-school>

APPENDIX A

Through a Pupil Voice discussion LAC children have said...

"I love being in Carlton. It makes me feel safe."

"I would like to be really good in subjects and the teachers here help me."

"Money should not be important, when I need things to learn in school."

"I want to be treated as normal. I don't want to be treated differently."

"I know I can talk to all the teachers and they will help me."