



LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

September 2025

Review: September 2026

Designated Teacher: James Smith
Designated Governor for LAC/PLAC: Andrew Roberts

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1. Introduction

Nationally, children who are looked after (LAC) or previously looked after (PLAC) often underachieve compared with their peers and may be at greater risk of exclusion. Schools play a key role in ensuring they are enabled to:

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

At Thames View Junior, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the education and welfare of all LAC and PLAC. We work in partnership with the Virtual School, social workers, carers, and parents to ensure that every child receives the best possible support.

2. Definitions

Looked After Children (LAC): Children who are in the care of the local authority under the Children Act 1989, including:

- Accommodated under Section 20 (voluntary agreement with parents)
- Subject to a Care Order (Section 31) or Interim Care Order (Section 38)
- The subject of Emergency Protection Orders (Sections 44, 46)
- Remanded or detained under youth justice provisions

Previously Looked After Children (PLAC): Children who are no longer looked after because they are:

- Adopted (including from outside England—subject to evidence)
- Subject to a Special Guardianship Order (SGO)
- Subject to a Child Arrangements Order (CAO)

Eligibility for PLAC pupil premium may require evidence, such as an adoption certificate. See DfE guidance.

3. Aims

Thames View Junior School will:

- Provide a safe and secure environment where education is valued.
- Promote high aspirations, resilience, and achievement.
- Ensure that LAC/PLAC are supported to access all areas of school life and enrichment.
- Work proactively with the Virtual School, social workers, carers, and parents.
- Centralise the child's voice in planning and decision-making.
- Listen to the views of children and ensure their voice is central to planning.
- Use Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) funding strategically to improve outcomes.

4. Statutory Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children (DfE Statutory Guidance, 2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE, 2025 update)

5. The Role of the Designated Teacher (DT)

The DT must be a qualified teacher and senior leader with the authority to make strategic decisions. Responsibilities include:

- Acting as advocate for LAC/PLAC within school.
 - Monitoring academic progress, attendance, exclusions, and well-being.
 - Coordinate and review Personal Education Plans (PEPs) termly, ensuring the child's voice is heard and acted upon.
 - Oversee the strategic and effective use of PP+ funding, evaluating impact.
 - Liaising with the Virtual School Head, social workers, carers, and parents.
 - Support smooth transitions (e.g., to secondary school, between classes).
 - Provide staff training on attachment, trauma, statutory duties, and best practice.
 - Reporting annually to the Governing Body (without naming individual children).
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6. Role of the Governing Body

Governors will:

- Appoint a named governor to oversee provision for LAC/PLAC.
 - Ensure the DT is supported and trained to fulfil their role.
 - Monitor and challenge school leaders on outcomes for LAC/PLAC.
 - Review the annual report from the DT on progress, attainment, attendance, exclusions, use of PP+ funding, and staff training.
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7. Partnership Working

We will:

- Work collaboratively with the Virtual School and attend training/briefings.
 - Engage fully with social workers, carers, parents (for PLAC), and other agencies.
 - Share information lawfully and confidentially, in line with GDPR and safeguarding protocols.
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8. Supporting the Needs of LAC/PLAC

We recognise that many LAC/PLAC may have experienced trauma, loss, or attachment difficulties. We will:

- Prioritise emotional well-being and academic progress equally.
 - Provide targeted interventions, including mentoring and counselling.
 - Reduce the risk of exclusion through early and flexible support.
 - Ensure all staff are attachment-aware and use trauma-informed approaches.
 - Regularly seek and respond to the views of children.
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9. Monitoring and Review

The DT will provide an annual report to governors which will include:

- Numbers of LAC/PLAC on roll
- Attendance and exclusion data
- Academic progress and attainment
- Use and impact of PP+
- Training undertaken by staff
- Identified priorities for the next year

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body.

10. Links with Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour & Engagement Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- SEND Policy

11. Complaints

Concerns or complaints regarding provision for LAC/PLAC should be raised following the school's Complaints Policy.