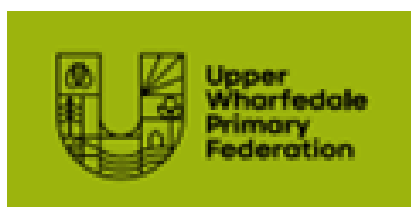


The Upper Wharfedale

Primary Federation



LAC and PLAC Policy

Signed by:

Wendy Thompson

Claire Greenwood

Richard Ingram

Headteacher

Chair of governors

September 2026

Date:

September 2026

Date:

Date policy last reviewed:

September 2026

Changes made to reflect KCSIE 2026

Statement of intent

Educational achievement and subsequent life chances for LAC and PLAC are of real concern. Pupils who are looked after often require additional support and attention in order to improve their situation.

The Upper Wharfedale Primary Federation endeavours to provide positive experiences and offer stability, safety, and individual care and attention for all our pupils. With this in mind, we aim to:

- Encourage pupils to reach their potential and to make good progress in relation to their professional, social and emotional development.
- Ensure that pupils enjoy high quality teaching and a curriculum which meets their needs and the requirements of legislation.
- Plan support for LAC realistically and use the school's resources efficiently to ensure the school meets their needs.
- Promote a positive culture in all aspects of school life.
- Help pupils develop their cultural, moral and social understanding.

1. Legal framework [Updated]

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

- Children Act 1989
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- 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 (2023) *Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement*
- DfE (2023) *Keeping children safe in education*
- DfE (2023) *Working together to safeguard children*
- [Updated] DfE (2026) *Keeping children safe in education*

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

- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Home-School Agreement
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- SEMH Policy

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.
- Placed in foster care, children’s residential homes, kinship placements, semi-independent or supported accommodation.
- Subject to a Care or Interim Care Order whilst placed with a parent, where the local authority (LA) has parental responsibility.
- Accommodated by the LA under voluntary arrangements with parental consent.

“Previously Looked-After Children (PLAC)” are defined as children who are no longer looked after in England and Wales because they:

- Are adopted (including those adopted from state care outside England and Wales).

- Are subject to a Special Guardianship Order (SGO).
- Are subject to a Child Arrangements Order.

3. Roles and responsibilities

• **Governing Board**

The governing board is responsible for:

- Ensuring the school has a clear and effective policy for LAC and PLAC.
- Appointing a **named governor** for LAC and PLAC.
- Reviewing the school's practice against statutory requirements.
- Ensuring the **designated teacher** has appropriate seniority, training, authority and time to carry out their role.
- Scrutinising the annual designated teacher safeguarding and educational outcomes report
- **t**, which will include:
 - The number of LAC and PLAC on roll.
 - Their academic progress and attainment compared with peers.
 - Attendance rates compared with peers.
 - Suspensions and exclusions compared with peers.
 - The impact of PP+ funding.
 - Support for SEMH needs.
- Challenging the headteacher and SLT where outcomes for LAC/PLAC fall below expectations.
- Ensuring staff training is up to date and compliant with **KCSIE 2026**

Commented [KM1]: typo?

• **Virtual School Head (VSH)**

The VSH is responsible for:

- Monitoring the educational progress and attendance of LAC, and some PLAC.
- Ensuring effective systems are in place for PEPs/EPEPs.
- Building relationships with social care, health and education partners.
- Providing advice to schools, parents and carers.
- Managing PP+ funding for LAC and supporting schools to use it effectively.
- Avoiding delays in educational provision.
- Reporting regularly on LAC outcomes to corporate parenting structures.

• **Headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Appointing a designated teacher for LAC and PLAC.
- Ensuring the designated teacher is supported and resourced.
- Promoting a whole-school ethos of high expectations and inclusion for LAC/PLAC.
- Reporting annually to governors on:

- LAC/PLAC numbers
 - Attainment and progress data
 - Attendance rates
 - Exclusion data
 - Use of PP+
- Ensuring all staff understand their responsibilities for LAC and PLAC.

- **Designated Teacher for LAC and PLAC**

The designated teacher is responsible for:

- Promoting the educational achievement of LAC and PLAC.
- Acting as the central point of contact for social workers, the VSH and carers.
- Leading on the completion and review of **PEPs/EPEPs**.
- Ensuring LAC have opportunities to set their own academic and personal targets.
- Advising staff on teaching strategies to support LAC and PLAC.
- Monitoring the impact of interventions and support.
- Ensuring the voice of the child is central to planning.
- Liaising with the SENCO to ensure SEND needs are met.
- Being vigilant for safeguarding concerns and reporting to the DSL.
- Preparing the annual report to governors.

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

The DSL is responsible for:

- Holding up-to-date records of social workers and VSH contacts.
- Promoting staff vigilance to the heightened safeguarding risks for LAC/PLAC.
- Liaising with personal advisers for care leavers.
- Ensuring safeguarding actions are recorded in PEPs where appropriate.

- **SENCO**

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Reviewing SEND provision for LAC and PLAC.
- Ensuring SEND interventions are included in PEPs/EPEPs.
- Liaising with external specialists, the VSH and parents/carers.

- **All Staff**

Staff are responsible for:

- Being aware of which pupils are LAC/PLAC.
- Promoting inclusion, equality and self-esteem.
- Preserving confidentiality, where appropriate.
- Being vigilant for signs of safeguarding or bullying concerns.

- Reporting concerns to the DSL without delay.

4. Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and Electronic PEPs (EPEPs) [Updated]

- All LAC must have a **PEP**, reviewed termly.
- PEPs are completed on the **EPEP platform** to provide a secure, collaborative record.
- The PEP/EPEP will:
 - Record attainment, progress, attendance and behaviour.
 - Set measurable academic and personal development targets.
 - Include details of SEMH and SEND support.
 - Document use of PP+ and evidence of impact.
 - Cover enrichment, careers guidance and aspirations.
- The designated teacher will ensure that:
 - PEPs are of high quality and child-centred.
 - The child contributes their views and targets.
 - All professionals, carers and the child are actively engaged in the process.
- Where the pupil has an **EHCP**, the PEP/EPEP will complement SEND planning.

5. Working with agencies and the VSH

The school will:

- Share relevant reports with social workers and carers.
- Coordinate statutory reviews with annual school reviews.
- Collaborate with agencies on exclusions, attendance and safeguarding.
- Ensure behaviour strategies are consistent across school, LA and carers.
- Use the EPEP to facilitate real-time updates between agencies.
- Work with the VSH on PP+ spending to maximise impact.
- Maintain close communication with the VSH when pupils are absent without authorisation.
- The school recognises that some children living in kinship care may experience vulnerabilities similar to those experienced by looked-after children and will work with families, the Virtual School and relevant agencies to support educational achievement and wellbeing.

6. Safeguarding

- The school recognises LAC/PLAC may have experienced trauma, abuse or neglect.
- Staff will receive enhanced training on safeguarding risks specific to LAC/PLAC.
- Absence from education will be treated as a safeguarding trigger. Persistent absence, repeated patterns of absence and unexplained absence will be considered potential indicators of safeguarding concerns, including neglect, exploitation, abuse, mental health concerns and child criminal exploitation.

- Staff will share safeguarding information proactively, including concerns about adults in contact with the child.
- The school will engage fully in **multi-agency strategy discussions** where significant harm is suspected.
- Pastoral and SEMH support will be embedded to reduce vulnerabilities.
- Bullying of LAC/PLAC will be monitored closely due to its disproportionate impact.

7. Pupil Mental Health

- Staff should be alert to changes in behaviour, withdrawal from social interaction, persistent anxiety, sleep difficulties, self-neglect and other indicators that a child may require mental health support. Concerns should be shared with the DSL in accordance with safeguarding procedures.
- The designated teacher and senior mental health lead will monitor SEMH needs.
- Mental health concerns will be carefully monitored for safeguarding implications.
- Support may include: pastoral support, mentoring, targeted interventions, or CAMHS referral.
- The SEMH Policy will be applied consistently for LAC/PLAC.

8. Suspension and exclusion

- LAC/PLAC are at higher risk of suspension/exclusion; therefore, exclusion is a **last resort**.
- The headteacher will consider the impact of exclusion on safeguarding and wellbeing.
- The VSH and carers will be notified immediately if exclusion is considered.
- Behaviour concerns will be recorded in PEPs/EPEPs with planned support strategies.
- Permanent exclusion will only occur in cases of serious or persistent breaches where the safety of others is at risk.

9. Pupils with SEND

- Support for LAC/PLAC with SEND will be recorded in the PEP/EPEP and reviewed regularly.
- The SENCO, designated teacher, class teachers and carers will work collaboratively.
- If the child has an EHCP, coordination with the LA will ensure provision is delivered.
- The VSH will be consulted about proposed SEND interventions for PLAC.

10. Information sharing

- Information will be shared securely, with clear protocols for access.
- Information shared will include:
 - Attendance and attainment data
 - Safeguarding and welfare concerns
 - Carer contributions and feedback
 - Reports for statutory reviews

- Staff will share information proactively to identify and respond to risks.
- Fear of breaching data protection will never prevent safeguarding action.
- Families will be kept informed of data-sharing where safe to do so
- The school will follow current DfE data protection guidance and ensure that data protection concerns do not become a barrier to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

11. Accountability, Monitoring and Ofsted Reporting

- The governing board will monitor outcomes through the annual designated teacher report.
- The headteacher will ensure governors receive sufficient information to evaluate:
 - Attainment and progress
 - Attendance and exclusions
 - SEMH and SEND support
 - PP+ spending and impact
- Ofsted will assess:
 - Leadership and management responsibility
 - Effectiveness of the designated teacher role
 - Quality of PEPs/EPEPs
 - Safeguarding practice
- The school will ensure all evidence required by Ofsted is available and demonstrates that LAC/PLAC are given high priority.

12. Training

- The designated teacher will undertake regular training on LAC/PLAC issues.
- Staff will receive training on:
 - Admissions arrangements
 - SEND and SEMH
 - Attendance and exclusions
 - Behaviour management strategies
 - Supporting positive aspirations and enrichment
 - Safeguarding risks for LAC/PLAC (per KCSIE 2026)
- Training will be regularly refreshed and recorded.

13. Monitoring and review

- This policy will be reviewed annually by the designated teacher and headteacher.
- The next review is scheduled for **September 2027**
- Updates will be shared with all staff, governors and stakeholders.