



LOOKED AFTER AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

Rodmarton Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share the same commitment. All staff and volunteers are subject to an enhanced DBS check.

Please refer to the school's Child Protection Policy for more information.

'We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.'

Agreed: February 2021
Next review: Spring 2022

Definitions: ‘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
- children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order
- children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection
- 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.

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.

Definitions: ‘Previously looked after children’ (PLAC)

The February 2018 guidance stated that: ‘a previously looked after child is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person, or has been adopted from ‘state care’ outside England and Wales’.

Named teacher for looked after and previously looked after children

Following amendments made by the 2017 Act, section 20A of the 2008 Act and Section 2E of the Academies Act 2010, various duties were placed on the governing body of schools in England to ensure a member staff has responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of looked after and previously looked after children who are no longer looked after.

We recognise that the most effective designated teachers have a leadership role in promoting the educational achievement of every looked after and previously looked after child on the school’s roll.

Currently, therefore, the designated member of staff at Rodmarton School is the headteacher, Mrs. Caroline Musty.

Mrs. Musty has responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of looked after, and previously looked after children who are no longer looked after in England and Wales, because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order, or were adopted from ‘state care’ outside England and Wales;

The governing body will:

- ensure the designated person undertakes appropriate training; and
- ensure they and the designated teacher has regard any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

We understand that the Secretary of State has the power to make regulations to prescribe the necessary qualifications or experience of the designated member of staff for previously looked after children.

Eligibility

The Designated Teacher will satisfy themselves that a child is eligible for support by asking the child's parents for evidence of their previously looked after status. For children adopted outside England and Wales, the child must have been looked after by a public authority, a religious organisation or other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society. Where parents are unable to provide clear evidence of their child's status, designated teachers will need to use their discretion. I

The Role of the Designated Teacher:

The headteacher, Mrs. Musty, will be a central point of initial contact within the school.

She will take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand the things which can affect how looked after and previously looked after children learn and achieve and how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these children.

Why do looked after children need the support of a designated teacher?

We recognise that, nationally, there is educational underachievement of looked after children, when compared with others.

Many looked after children and those who have been previously looked after, have suffered disrupted learning, may have missed extended periods of school, and many of them have special educational needs (SEN). The gaps in their learning and, in many cases the emotional impact of their experiences, are likely to have become significant barriers to their progress. The complexity of this fragmented educational experience with high incidence of SEN, needs careful assessment and planning. This means that it is important that the support that our school gives to children who are looked after or been looked after previously, is not be seen in isolation. We will work as closely as possible with all other involved agencies to support children fully.