
**LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN
(LAC), ADOPTED CHILDREN &
CHILDREN UNDER SPECIAL
GUARDIANSHIP (SGO) POLICY**



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**RATIFIED BY THE TRUST BOARD:
6TH OCTOBER 2021**

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LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC), ADOPTED CHILDREN & CHILDREN UNDER SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP (SGO) POLICY

Person responsible for this policy:	Angela Ransby
Policy author:	Angela Ransby
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CEO Signature:	Angela Ransby
Trust Board Signature:	Alan Whittaker

Updates made:	Date:
Designated teacher updated p. 5	3 rd December 2020
p. 3 updated bullet points on what does a looked after child mean	23 rd September 2021
p.4 updates to objectives of RT stakeholders	10 th January 2022
p.5 updates to reporting structures to Trustees	10 th January 2022
p.5-6 section added for Outreach Teaching Service	10 th January 2022

1. What does being a ‘Looked After Child’ mean?

For the purpose of school admission, a looked after child is (a) in the care of an English local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by such a local authority in the exercise of its social services functions (see section 22(1) of the Children’s Act 1989) DfE, Feb 2018.

Looked after children are also often referred to as children in care, a term which many children and young people prefer.

The child could be an unaccompanied asylum seeker, with no responsible adult to care for them

They might be living:

- with foster parents
- at home with their parents under the supervision of social services
- in residential children's homes
- other residential settings like schools or secure units

They might have been placed in care voluntarily by parents struggling to cope. Or, children's services may have intervened because a child was at significant risk of harm.

A child will stop being ‘looked after’ when they are either adopted, returned home or turn 18. The local authority will continue to support children leaving care at 18 until they reach 21.

2. What is adoption?

Adoption is a permanent, legal arrangement in which parental responsibility for a child passes to their adoptive parents. It provides children who cannot be brought up by their birth family with a new home and family.

3. What is the definition of a previously looked after child?

A previously looked after child is a child adopted from the care of an English local authority under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children’s Act 2002 or who, immediately after being looked after by an English local authority, became the subject of a special guardianship or child arrangements order and are still subject to such orders (DfE Feb 2018).

4. What is a special guardianship order (SGO)?

The Adoption and Children Act 2002 introduced Special Guardianship as a means of providing children and young people with a permanent placement that does not end the legal relationship between the child and his/her birth parents. If appropriate, children under a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) may continue to have links with their birth parents. Special Guardians can be members of the extended family or someone else deemed appropriate by the local authority. SGO is not as secure as adoption, but is intended to be a permanent placement.

These children and young people may struggle with:

SEN

Looked after children and previously looked after children are significantly more likely to have SEN than their peers. Of those with SEN, a significant proportion will have EHC Plans.

Mental Ill Health

Looked after children and previously looked after children are more likely to experience the challenge of SEMH than their peers. For example, they may struggle with executive functioning skills, forming trusting relationships, social skills, managing strong feelings, sensory processing difficulties, foetal alcohol syndrome and coping with transition or change. This can impact on their behaviour and education. (DfE Feb 2018)

They may also struggle with:

- Emotion regulation
- Peer relationships
- Speech and language delay
- Difficulties with executive function
- Managing the developmental tasks and transitions of childhood

(Syne, Green & Dyer, 2012)

5. Aim

The aim of this policy is to promote educational inclusion for these children and young people to enable them to access the full range of educational opportunities available to them and to reach their potential, both academically and personally.

6. Objectives

Looked After Children, Adopted Children and Children under a Special Guardianship Order at Raedwald Trust will:

- receive a level of monitoring and support that is facilitated through joint working with the Virtual School (Suffolk County Council).
- have access to the full range of educational opportunities available to all children who attend the Raedwald Trust.

Teachers and other staff at the Raedwald Trust will:

- receive training on the issues affecting the educational achievement and psychological well-being of these children and young people and use this to guide their interactions with them.
- plan for, and meet, individual needs.

The Looked After, Adopted Children and Children under Special Guardianship Order Designated Teacher and Senior Management will:

- identify, arrange and/or deliver training to staff to enable the above to take place
- ensure the development of effective and inclusive strategies to address the needs of these children and young people
- ensure the smooth transfer of information within school, with the home school, carers and other external agencies

- liaise effectively with key stakeholders involved with the child or young person
- work in partnership with carers, parents and others with parental responsibility to ensure that these children and young people receive their educational entitlement.
- ensure that records and plans are kept and maintained appropriately
- provide information to Trustees, Virtual School (Suffolk County Council) and mainstream school about the progress and outcomes of looked after pupils, adopted pupils and pupils under a Special Guardianship Order on the school roll

7. Participation in and co-ordination of review and planning meetings for Looked After Children, Adopted Children and Children under a Special Guardianship Order

The senior leadership team will do everything possible to enable appropriate and relevant staff to attend meetings where this would be in the interests of the child or young person.

8. Reporting to Trustees

The CEO will report to the Trust Board through monthly metrics as part of the CEO report:

- The number of Looked After and Special Guardianship Order pupils in each school
- The attendance of pupils as a discrete group, compared to other pupils

Within the termly SEND report to SEND Trustee:

- A comparison of progress for these children and young people as a group, compared to those of other pupils (pupil indicators)

The Trustees must be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that Looked After Children, Adopted Children and Children under a Special Guardianship Order have equal access to the curriculum, statutory assessments, additional educational support, appropriate pastoral support and extra-curricular/curriculum enrichment activities.

Academy/Site	Designated Teacher	Named Committee Member
Alderwood Academy	Tom Baker	Stephen Skeet
First Base Bury St Edmunds Academy	Sonia Myhill	Stephen Skeet
First Base Ipswich Academy	Stacey Laws	Stephen Skeet
Ipswich Hospital School	Kate Kingsford-Bere	Stephen Skeet
Parkside Academy KS3	Sian Sherman	Stephen Skeet
Parkside Academy KS4	Nick Stevens	Stephen Skeet
St. Christopher's Academy	Cath Sparrow	Stephen Skeet
Westbridge Academy	David Adum-Yeboah	Stephen Skeet

9. Raedwald Trust Outreach Teaching Service (OTS)

All children within the OTS are on roll at a mainstream school with a Designated Teacher. Staff within OTS liaise with the mainstream school as applicable. Mainstream schools are responsible for the provision for children in care, however OTS termly reports are often included as part of the Personal Education Plan (PEP) for LAC pupils, coordinated by the mainstream school.

In the very rare circumstances that a pupil is not on roll at a mainstream school, OTS will work with the Suffolk Virtual School to complete certain aspects of the PEP. As part of their role OTS will work closely with mainstream schools, carers and social workers to ensure the best outcomes for LAC pupils.

This policy should be read in conjunction with 'The designated Teacher for looked after and previously looked after children statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities' DfE February 2018.