



# Oakfield Short Stay Primary Looked After Children Policy

January 2026

## 1. Overview and definition

Nationally, Looked After Children significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Schools have a major part to play in ensuring Looked After Children are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic wellbeing. Helping Looked After Children succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority for Oakfield Short Stay School.

This policy takes account of:

- Oakfield Short Stays duty under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children (LAC);
- The Education (Admission of Looked After Children) (England) Regulations 2006;
- Relevant DfES guidance to Governing Bodies (*Supporting Looked After Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors*).

Oakfield's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education
- Promoting attendance
- Targeting support
- Having high expectations
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes
- Early intervention and priority action
- Listening to children
- Promoting health and wellbeing
- Reducing exclusions and promoting stability
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals such as the Virtual School

## 2. Implications

As for all our pupils, Oakfield is committed to helping every Looked After Child to achieve the highest standards they can, including supporting aspirations to achieve their goals in their next educational setting. This can be measured by improvement in their achievements and attendance.

The Management Committee, senior leaders and teaching staff are committed to providing quality education for all pupils and will:

- Ensure a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children is identified and enabled to carry out the responsibilities set out below
- Ensure a Personal Education Plan is put in place, implemented and regularly reviewed for every Looked After Child
- Identify a management committee member as Designated lead for Looked After Children

This policy links with a number of other school policies and it is important that the management committee have regard to the needs of Looked After Children when reviewing them:

- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Equality Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy

The school will champion the needs of Looked After Children, raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes to ensure they achieve the highest level possible.

### 3. Responsibility of the Headteacher

- Identify a Designated Teacher (DT) for Looked After Children, whose role is set out below. It is essential that another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take sick leave. The DT for Oakfield Short Stay School is Rachel Fisher
- Ensure procedures are in place to monitor the progress and attendance of Looked After Children and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of Looked After Children. OFSTED now select a number of Looked After Children, tracking their results and the support they have received
- Ensure school staff receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

### 4. Procedures: The Management Committee's responsibility

- Appoint a member with responsibility for Looked After Children – this will usually be the member who is responsible for safeguarding
- Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school, by ensuring the school implements policies and procedures to ensure Looked After Children achieve and enjoy their time at the school, by recognising the extra problems caused by excluding them and by not excluding them except as a last resort
- Ensure the School has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below
- Support the Headteacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of Looked After Children are recognised and met

### 5. The Role of the Designated Teacher

Government Guidance says the Designated Teacher should be *“someone with sufficient authority to make things happen [who] should be an advocate for Looked After Children, assessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them.”*

The management committee should be aware all schools are already required to have a designated teacher for LAC. It is strongly recommended this person should be a member of the Senior Management Team. Training for Designated Teachers has been and will continue to be available through our Looked After Children Education Adviser Team (Leicestershire Virtual Schools). The management committee should be aware that OFSTED will focus on Looked After Children, monitoring how the school has promoted their inclusion and attainment and the effectiveness of joint working with other services involved with them.

**The designated teacher (DT) for LAC at Oakfield is Rachel Fisher**

Our Designated Teacher will:

- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan to plan for that transition in consultation with the child's social worker
- Ensure a Personal Education Plan is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people, at least two weeks before the Care Plan reviews
- Ensure each Looked After Child has an identified member of staff they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher but should be based on the child's own wishes
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately
- Co-ordinate any support for the Looked After Children that is necessary the within school
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis
- Act as an advisor to staff and the Management Committee, raising their awareness of the needs of Looked After Children
- Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and when pupils transfer to their new schools
- Be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately

- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life;
- Work in partnership with the Virtual School and promote associated initiatives
- Support staff teams to access related training, e.g. trauma informed practice.

## **7. The Responsibilities of All Staff**

All our staff will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children, as for all pupils
- Maintain Looked After Children's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information
- Work to enable Looked After Children to achieve stability and success the within school
- Promote the self-esteem of all Looked After Children
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of Looked After Children

**8.** This policy will be reviewed every two years