



**OAKTREE**  
EDUCATION SERVICES  
— O E S —

## **Looked After Children Policy**



Document History

Version	Comments/Amendments	Name	Date
1	First Issue	Chris Kelly	24/04/2025

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### 1. Policy Statement

Oaktree Education is committed to supporting the educational achievement and wellbeing of looked-after and previously looked-after children. We acknowledge the significant barriers these learners face and are determined to provide the highest levels of care, academic support and opportunity to promote positive outcomes.

This policy is guided by the DfE's statutory guidance "Promoting the Education of Looked-After Children and Previously Looked-After Children" (2018), alongside the Children Act 1989 and Children and Social Work Act 2017.

### 2. Definition of Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children

- **Looked-after children** are those who are under the care of a local authority, whether through a care order or voluntary agreement (Section 20 Children Act 1989).
- **Previously looked-after children** are those no longer looked after due to being adopted, placed under a special guardianship or child arrangements order, or adopted from 'state care' outside the UK.

### 3. Designated Teacher Role

We appoint a senior member of staff as the Designated Teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children. This role includes:

- Acting as an advocate for the learner's education within the school
- Leading on the development and implementation of the Personal Education Plan (PEP)
- Liaising with carers, social workers, the Virtual School Head (VSH) and other professionals
- Monitoring progress, attendance and engagement
- Ensuring staff understand the specific needs of looked-after learners

### 4. Admission and Placement

- Looked-after and previously looked-after children are given priority in admissions in line with the School Admissions Code.
- Placement decisions are made in consultation with the VSH, the Designated Teacher, social workers and carers, ensuring the provision best suits the learner's needs.
- Where a change of placement is necessary, we work to ensure education continuity and reduce disruption.

### 5. The Personal Education Plan (PEP)

Every looked-after child will have a robust and current PEP that:

- Is initiated within 10 working days of becoming looked-after
- Is updated termly and reviewed as part of the care planning process
- Details current attainment, targets, interventions and use of Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)
- Is developed collaboratively with the learner, Designated Teacher, carers, social workers and the VSH

### 6. Use of Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)

PP+ funding will be used strategically to support the individual learning needs of looked-after children. Use of funds will be:

- Evidence-based
- Aligned with PEP targets
- Regularly reviewed for impact
- Transparent and accountable through reporting to the Virtual School

### 7. Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

We understand the complex emotional needs of looked-after learners and work to ensure:

- All staff are trained in trauma-informed and attachment-aware approaches
- Referrals to mental health support services are made when needed
- SDQs or similar tools are used to assess and monitor emotional wellbeing

### 8. Attendance and Exclusions

- Attendance is monitored rigorously. Absence is followed up promptly with carers and social workers.
- Exclusion is only considered as a last resort. Prior to any exclusion, the VSH and carers are consulted and alternative strategies are explored.

### 9. Supporting Transitions

- We ensure robust support for transitions, including between Key Stages, into Post-16 provision, apprenticeships or employment.
- We provide careers guidance, access to further education options.

### 10. Policy Review

- This policy will be reviewed **annually** (or sooner, if required by legislative changes or significant developments in best practice).
- The review process will involve **teaching staff, support staff, senior leaders, and governors**, alongside student representatives (where appropriate).

### Approval and Signature

- **Principle of Head of College:**  
*Chris Kelly, 22/04/2025*
- **Chair of Governors/Trust Board:**

*Name, Signature, Date*