DESIGNATED TEACHER POLICY: CHILDREN LOOKED-AFTER AND CHILDREN PREVIOUSLY LOOKED-AFTER

Equal opportunities lie at the heart of all that we do at Silverwood School. We are committed to ensuring that every member of the school community is given the same chance as any other to access the services and support of the school

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 (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

This policy is designed to meet the needs of all pupils, working through pre-formal, semi-formal and formal curricula. It is inclusive of students who function at early/preverbal levels of language and communication, through to those who express themselves verbally and in writing. The policy is designed to be child-centered and to make sure as far as is possible that pupils understand what is happening in their lives, why, and what options are available to them

Approved by:	**Standards Committee**	**Date: June 2026**
Last reviewed on:	**June 2026 (ratified by Full Governing Body July 2026)**	
Next review by:	**May 2027**	

1. Aims

The school will ensure that:

- A suitable member of staff is appointed as the designated teacher for children looked-after (CLA) and previously looked-after children PLAC)
- The designated teacher promotes the educational achievement of CLA and PLAC, and supports other staff members to do this across the whole of Silverwood School.
- Staff, parents, carers and guardians are aware of the identity of the designated teacher, how to contact them and what they are responsible for.

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance on the designated teacher for CLA and PLAC.
It also takes into account section 20 and section 20A of the Child and Young Persons Act 2008.

3. Definitions

Children looked-after are registered pupils that are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services functions, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours

Previously looked after children are registered pupils that fall into either of these categories:

- They were looked after by a local authority but ceased to be as a result of any of the following:
  - A child arrangements order, which includes arrangements relating to who the child lives with and when they are to live with them
  - A special guardianship order An adoption order

- They appear to the governing board to have:
  - Been in state care in a place outside of England and Wales because they would not have otherwise been cared for adequately,
  - Ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted order

Personal education plan (PEP) is part of a care plan for a child looked after that is developed with the school. It forms a record of what needs to happen and who will make it happen to ensure the child reaches their full potential.

Virtual school head (VSH) is a local authority officer responsible for promoting the educational achievement of their authority's children looked-after, working across schools to monitor and support these pupils as if they were in a single school. The VSH is also responsible for providing information and advice to schools, parents and guardians in respect of children previously looked-after.

4. Identity of our designated teacher

Our designated teacher at Silverwood School is one of the school Assistant Heads of Learning and is a member of the Senior Leadership Team
NickiCaslin@silverwood.wilts.sch.uk 01380 850309
Our designated teacher takes lead responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children looked-after and previously looked after children at our school. They are the initial point of contact for any of the matters set out in the section below.

The Designated teacher liaises with the Virtual School Officer
For Wiltshire – Rebecca Green

5. Role of the designated teacher

5.1 Leadership responsibilities

The designated teacher will:

- Act as a central point of initial contact within the school for any matters involving children looked-after and previously looked after children.
- Report twice a year to the Governing board
- Promote the educational achievement of every child looked-after and child previously looked-after on roll by:
  - Working with Virtual School Headteacher's and the Virtual School Officers, to establish good working relationships with all professionals.
  - Promoting a whole school culture where the needs of these pupils matter and are prioritised
  - Take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand:
  - The things which can affect how children looked-after and previously looked after children learn and achieve
  - How the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils
  - Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies to ensure they consider the needs of children looked-after and previously looked after children.
  - Promote a culture in which children looked-after and previously looked after children are encouraged and supported to engage with their education and other school activities

- Act as a source of advice for teachers about working with children looked-after and previously looked after children.

- Work directly with children looked-after and previously looked after children and their carers, parents and guardians to promote good home-school links, support progress and encourage high aspirations

- Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of children looked-after's PEPs

- Work closely with the school's designated safeguarding lead to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding children looked-after and children previously looked-after are quickly and effectively responded to

- Involve parents and guardians of children previously looked-after in decisions affecting their child's education

5.2 Supporting children looked-after

The designated teacher will:

- Make sure PEPs for CLA pupils meet their needs by working closely with other teachers to assess each child's specific educational needs

- Have overall responsibility for leading the process of target-setting in PEPs

- Monitor and track how the attainment of children looked-after progresses under their PEPs

- If a child is not on track to meet their targets, be instrumental in agreeing the best way forward with them to ensure they make progress, and that this is reflected in their PEP

- Ensure the identified actions of PEPs are put in place

- During the development and review of PEPs, help the school and relevant local authority decide what arrangements work best for pupils

- Ensure that:

- A PEP for a Child Looked after is reviewed before the statutory review of their care plan – this includes making sure the PEP is up to date and contains any new information since the last PEP review, including whether agreed provision is being delivered
- PEPs are clear about what has or has not been taken forward, noting what resources may be required to further support the child and from where these may be sourced
- The updated PEP is passed to the child's social worker and VSH ahead of the statutory review of their care plan

- Ensure PEP's for any CLA pupils are transferred to their next school or college, making sure they are up to date and that the local authority responsible for looking after them has the most recent version

- Be an advocate at all times for children looked after.

5.3 Supporting both children looked-after and children previously looked-after

The designated teacher will:

- Ensure the specific needs of children looked-after and previously looked-after children are understood by staff and reflected in how the school uses pupil premium funding

- Work with VSHs to agree how pupil premium funding for children looked-after can most effectively be used to improve their attainment

- Help raise the awareness of parents and guardians of children previously looked-after about pupil premium funding and other support for these children

- Play a key part in decisions on how pupil premium funding is used to support children previously looked-after

- Encourage parents' and guardians' involvement in deciding how pupil premium funding is used to support their child, and be the main contact for queries about its use

- Ensure teachers have awareness and understanding of the specific needs of children looked-after and children previously looked-after in areas like attendance, homework, behaviour and future career planning

- Be aware of the special educational needs (SEN) of children looked-after and children previously looked-after, and make sure teachers also have awareness and understanding of this

- Ensure the SEND code of practice, as it relates to children looked-after, is followed

- Make sure PEPs work in harmony with the pupil's education, health and care plan (EHCPs)

- Ensure that, with the help of VSHs, they have the skills to identify SEN issues in children looked-after and previously looked-after children, and know how to access further assessment and support where necessary

- Ensure that they and other staff can identify signs of potential mental health issues in children looked-after and previously looked-after children and understand where the school can draw on specialist services

- Put in place robust arrangements to capture the strengths and difficulties for children looked-after, this may take the format of SDQs or other appropriate capturing tools and use the results to inform PEPs

- Put in place mechanisms for understanding the emotional and behavioural needs of children previously looked-after

5.4 Relationships beyond the school

The designated teacher will:

- Proactively engage with social workers and other professionals to enable the school to respond effectively to the needs of children looked-after and previously looked-after children.

- Discuss with social workers how the school should engage with birth parents, and ensure the school is clear about who has parental responsibility and what information can be shared with whom

- Be open and accessible to parents and guardians of children previously looked-after and encourage them to be actively involved in their children's education

- Proactively build relationships with local authority professionals, such as VSHs/VSOs and SEN departments
  Consider how the school works with others outside of the school to maximise the stability of education for children looked-after, such as:

    - Finding ways of making sure the latest information about educational progress is available to contribute to the statutory review of care plans

    - Ensuring mechanisms are in place to inform VSHs when children looked-after are absent without authorisation and work with the responsible authority to take appropriate safeguarding action

    - Talking to the child's social worker and/or other relevant parties in the local authority regarding any decisions about changes in care placements which will disrupt the child's education, providing advice about the likely impact and what the local authority should do to minimise disruption

    - Making sure that, if a child looked-after moves school, their new designated teacher receives any information needed to help the transition process

- Seek advice from VSHs about meeting the needs of individual children previously looked-after, but only with the agreement of their parents or guardians

- Make sure that for each child looked-after:
    - There's an agreed process for how the school works in partnership with the child's carer and other professionals, such as their social worker, to review and develop educational progress

    - School policies are communicated to their carer and social worker and, where appropriate, birth parents

    - Teachers know the most appropriate person to contact where necessary, such as who has the authority to sign permission slips

- Where a child looked-after is at risk of exclusion:

    - Contact the VSH as soon as possible so they can help the school decide how to support the child to improve their behaviour and avoid exclusion becoming necessary

    - Working with the VSH and child's carers, consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to address the causes of the child's behaviour

- Where a child previously looked-after is at risk of exclusion, talk to the child's parents or guardians before seeking advice from the VSH on avoiding exclusion

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Designated Safeguarding lead. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board. The Designated teacher will report to Governors twice yearly.

7. Links with other Silverwood School policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

Wiltshire Virtual School PP policy
Behavior for Learning
Child protection and safeguarding
Exclusions
SEND
Inclusion Policy
Equal opportunities
Attendance
Supporting pupils with medical needs
Admissions

8. Links with National Guidance

Link to use of Reasonable Force – advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools

Link to Screening, Searching and Confiscation – advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation

Link to Exclusions Guidance
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion

Link to Safeguarding
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf

9. Social Care Standards and Guidance

- The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children 2018
- Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities - 2018
- Keeping Children safe in education 2025
- Working together to safeguard children2018
- Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners
- Children Act 1989: care planning, placement and case review
- Children Act 1989: court orders
- National minimum standards for the welfare of children
- Children's social care: getting the best from complaints
- Children's Social Care Innovation programme