



Children Looked After Policy

Approved by:	Becky Wood	Date: 1 September 2025
Last reviewed on:	1 September 2025	
Next review due by:	1 September 2026	

Introduction

Wingate Community Nursery School is committed to providing quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. All staff in our provision are committed to doing all they can to enable 'children looked after' in our care to achieve and reach their full potential.

Under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004, our school understands and supports its role in working with children, parents and carers and the local authority to ensure underachievement is challenged and high aspirations are encouraged amongst looked after children attending our school.

Our school is committed to supporting the role of the Local Authority Virtual School Head in promoting the education and achievement of children looked after, as outlined in the Children and Families Act 2014.

Children become 'looked after' if they have either been taken into care by the local authority or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most 'children looked after' will be living in foster homes, but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even placed back home with their natural parent(s).

We recognise that children who are being looked after, have often experienced traumatic situations; physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. However, we also recognise that not all looked after children have experienced abuse and that there are a range of reasons for children to be taken into the care of the local authority. Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that has an impact on their emotional well-being. Most local authorities do not place children under five with foster carers who work outside the home, however, there are instances when this does occur or where the child has been placed with another family member who works. It is not appropriate for a looked after child who is under two years to be placed in a day care setting in addition to a foster placement.

We place emphasis on promoting children's rights to be strong, resilient and listened to. Our policy and practice guidelines for looked after children are based on two important concepts: attachment and resilience. The basis of this is to promote secure attachments in children's lives, as the foundation for resilience. These aspects of well-being underpin the child's responsiveness to learning and enable the development of positive dispositions for learning. For young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled enough with their carer to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them.

Commitment

The Governing Body and school staff are committed to improving the life chances for looked after children by ensuring that:

- The Governing Body and school staff are fully aware of the issues affecting looked after children and the legislation and statutory guidance underpinning the work to improve academic achievement.
- Our school adopts a Policy for the Education of Children Looked After which is disseminated to all staff and regularly reviewed.
- The Governing Body ensures that all staff within the school have received training on the needs of 'children looked after'.
- A Designated Teacher for 'children looked after' is identified within the school and is provided with the resources and time to ensure each looked after child achieves stability and success in accordance with the duties specified in statutory guidance.
- A Designated Governor is nominated to monitor the work of the school in supporting its 'children looked after' as part of a larger group of vulnerable children.
- The confidentiality policy of the school protects 'children looked after' and ensures that there is controlled and appropriate sharing of information.
- Our school ensures inclusion of 'children looked after' by ensuring its policies are non-discriminatory and take into account the additional issues affecting 'children looked after' and other vulnerable groups.
- The school recognises the benefit that a stable education placement brings for each looked after child and will:
 - prioritise school places for 'children looked after'
 - consider alternatives to fixed term exclusion
 - not permanently exclude a looked after child
- Our school will facilitate the Personal Education Plan (PEP) processes for each looked after child and put in place a PEP that:
 - is completed and reviewed within statutory timescales
 - is child-centred
 - allows the child to contribute to the planning of their education and support required
 - considers the views of each child are heard and used to inform further development of school practice
 - identifies academic targets in line with the child's abilities and interests
 - monitors ongoing progress and additional support required
 - identifies the use of Early Years Pupil Premium and how it will be used to support the educational attainment of the child
- Outlines how the school will deploy its resources appropriately to support targets being achieved.
- 'Children Looked After' will pursue accredited curriculum pathways that are appropriate to their ability and interest.
- Our school will liaise closely with parents/carers and colleagues from the County Durham Children's Services, or any other Local Authority Children's services that are involved, to celebrate achievement and discuss concerns.

- The school will liaise closely with the County Durham Virtual School, or any other Local Authorities' Virtual School, to ensure the child receives further educational support as appropriate.
- The school will contribute to reports and provide representation to any reviews held for each looked after child.
- The school will develop strong methods of communication with parents and carers and ensure all appropriate people with parental responsibility receive invitations to school activities and events.

Monitoring

The day-to-day monitoring of the implementation of the Policy will be undertaken by the Designated Teacher for 'children looked after'.

Dissemination of the Policy

The Headteacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlines in this policy.

Designated Teacher for Looked After Children is Becky Wood (Headteacher)

Designated Governor for Children Looked After is Ruth Williamson