

Governor Briefing: Looked-After and Previously Looked-After Children

Purpose of this Briefing

This briefing provides governing boards with a concise overview of their statutory responsibilities regarding looked-after children (LAC) and previously looked-after children (PLAC), and the role of the designated teacher in promoting educational achievement and wellbeing.

Statutory Duties

Governing bodies and academy trusts must have regard to Department for Education statutory guidance when carrying out their duties. Every school must appoint a designated teacher for LAC and PLAC and ensure effective leadership and accountability arrangements are in place.

Why This Matters

Looked-after and previously looked-after children often face disrupted education, trauma, and higher levels of special educational needs and mental health difficulties. Strong governance oversight is essential to ensure these pupils experience inclusive, high-expectation education.

Role of the Designated Teacher

The designated teacher (or DT) provides strategic leadership within the school, promotes high expectations, monitors progress, coordinates Personal Education Plans (PEPs) for looked-after children, supports transitions, and advises staff on trauma-informed and inclusive practice.

Personal Education Plans (PEPs)

PEPs are a statutory requirement for all looked-after children. Governors should be assured that PEPs are high-quality, outcome-focused, reviewed regularly, and used to inform the effective use of Pupil Premium Plus funding.

Pupil Premium Plus

Pupil Premium Plus funding must be used strategically to improve educational outcomes and wellbeing. Governors should expect clear reporting on spending decisions and measurable impact.

Governor Assurance

Governors should receive regular reports on attainment, attendance, exclusions, wellbeing, and the impact of support for LAC and PLAC. Effective oversight helps ensure statutory compliance and positive outcomes.

Questions for Governors to Ask

- Who is our DT and how is their role supported?
- How do we know PEPs are high quality and making a measurable difference?
- How is Pupil Premium Plus used and what impact is evidenced?
- How do we reduce the risk of exclusion and promote inclusion?
- What training do staff receive to support these pupils?

Evidence Governors Should Expect to See

- Confirmation of the named DT, their role description, training record, and protected time allocation.
- Termly or annual reports summarising attainment, progress, attendance, exclusions, and wellbeing for looked-after and previously looked-after pupils (appropriately anonymised).

- Examples of high-quality Personal Education Plans (PEPs), including clear targets, review notes, and impact of interventions.
- Pupil Premium Plus spending plans showing strategic use of funding and evaluation of impact.
- Evidence of staff training on attachment, trauma-informed practice, SEND, and inclusion.
- Records demonstrating effective transition support, including timely transfer of PEPs and liaison with Virtual School Heads.
- Policies and case-level evidence showing a proactive approach to inclusion and the avoidance of unnecessary exclusions.