



Guidance

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# Supporting Looked After Learners

A practical guide for school governors



department for  
**education and skills**  
creating opportunity, releasing potential, achieving excellence

Every Child Matters

Change for Children

# FOREWORD

As a governor you make a real difference in helping your school provide the best possible education for all its pupils, whatever their background. That's true for a looked after child as much as any other. Some young people in care may need to be given more help, encouragement and support to access education, to turn up to school and to stay on into the sixth form and beyond. It is the responsibility of all of us who work with these young people to do all we can to make this a reality.

There are many reasons why children may be looked after by a local authority. In some cases it will be as a result of family breakdown, in others because of neglect and abuse. These experiences – together with being separated from friends and family and adapting to changing neighbourhoods – can make it much harder to learn. Although some do well, many looked after children underachieve. There is a special responsibility on us all to change that.

The Government is committed to giving all looked after children the same life chances as any other child – to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being. That is why the Children Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities as corporate parents to promote the educational achievement of looked after children. However, local authorities and social workers can't do this alone and will need to work with others. Schools in particular are at the very heart of providing looked after children with the good education that will unlock a brighter future.

This guide has been produced in partnership with The Who Cares? Trust and the Advisory

Centre for Education. It is designed to help governors gain an understanding of the experiences of looked after children in schools and the challenges they need to overcome if they are to succeed. Each section deals with a key issue, offers practical advice and poses a set of questions to help governing bodies and their schools develop and implement the policies and procedures to ensure that their looked after children achieve and enjoy their time at school.



**MARIA EAGLE MP**

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children & Families

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maria Eagle".



**THE RT HON JACQUI SMITH MP**

Minister of State for Schools & 14-19 Learners

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jacqui Smith".

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## **Definitions of “Looked After” children**

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They fall into 4 main groups:

- (i) children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)**
  
- (ii) children who are the subject of a care order (Section 31) or interim care order (Section 38)**
  
- (iii) children who are the subject of emergency orders for their protection (Section 44 and 46)**
  
- (iv) children who are compulsorily accommodated. This includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement. (Section 21)**

# Introduction

**There may already be looked after children on roll in your school, but even if your school includes no looked after children today, it could well include them in the future. This publication is designed to help school governing bodies ensure that their schools' policies and practices are fully inclusive of the needs of looked after children.**

**Under section 52 of the Children Act 2004, local authorities have a duty to promote the educational achievement of the children in their care. In order for them to implement this duty successfully, they will need the active co-operation of schools. School governing bodies have a major responsibility for helping children to succeed: they can champion their needs, raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes.**

Statutory guidance describes what local authorities need to do to comply with the duty in relation to strategic planning and day-to-day activities.

**“There's nothing more important than your education.”**

## Who is “looked after” and why?

At any one time around 39,000 children of school age are in the care system. For most children, care is intended to be time limited with the aim of returning home as soon as possible. Although there are many reasons why children are looked after by local authorities, they are all likely to have undergone distressing experiences. Some are children who enter the country as unaccompanied minors and who are seeking asylum. All children who are looked

after have distinct backgrounds, identities, aspirations and particular needs. Only a very small percentage of children enter care because of their own behaviour.

**“There's a myth out there that you're in care because you're bad...”**

## What does being “in care” mean?

Many looked after children are subject to care orders. This means that the local authority has gone to court to assume parental responsibility because the child has suffered or is likely to suffer ‘significant harm’. Although children on care orders can live with a parent, most are cared for away from their families. Even then contact with their families can be frequent. Schools should note that contact sessions with parents can sometimes be traumatic for children, and their behaviour may be adversely affected the next day. A child's Care Plan will detail the way roles and tasks concerning their education and other aspects of a child's life will be shared between carers, parents, and school. Some children who are not subject to care orders are accommodated by councils with the agreement of their parents. In such cases parents retain full parental responsibility.

Some children are placed many miles from their family environment. This may be to protect them from harm in their home area, the need for special health or educational provision, or because of the shortage of appropriate local foster care placements. This can leave a child feeling vulnerable and isolated through loss of friendships and receiving less support because of communication difficulties between the placing and receiving local authorities.

### Why do looked after children often underachieve?

Looked after children as a group are no less able than their peers, but they often underachieve. Sometimes they fall behind through missing school. This can occur on entry into the care system, when placements in foster care or children's homes break down, or because of difficulties in obtaining a school place. They are also more likely to be excluded from school. Other reasons for underachievement include the damaging experiences they may have undergone prior to entering care, the lack of co-ordinated educational support or inadequate facilities for study in their care placement – perhaps because carers and others have low expectations for them. Sometimes there can be difficulties accessing Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) – even though this support can be critical in enabling looked after children to benefit from learning opportunities.

“I moved placements three times but managed to stay with the same school.”

### The role of schools in promoting well-being

The Government's vision for children's services first described in the 2003 Green Paper *Every Child Matters* recognises that schools have a vital role to play in promoting all children's and young people's social and emotional development – helping to develop talent and equip them with the skills they need to thrive and to achieve at school and in later life. This is particularly important in relation to looked after children. Whatever the reasons that have brought them into care, most children

“They don't understand that just because you are in care, it doesn't mean that no-one loves you.”

want to be with their families, and they want to be like everyone else. School is a prime place where looked after children meet other children, make friendships, and can join in and be appreciated. Looked after children often report that school is a place of consistency and continuity for them, providing routine in what can be otherwise very turbulent lives. This has implications for the way schools work with looked after children. Staff will need to be aware of children's emotional vulnerability while at the same time working to keep them firmly focused on their educational progress.

### Well-being and inspection criteria

The Children Act 2004 provides for joint inspection of all children's services in an area. The joint area review (JAR) will report on how far services, including education, are working together effectively to secure positive outcomes for all children and, in particular, vulnerable groups such as looked after children. Schools are inspected on the outcomes required by the Government for all children, including being healthy, staying safe and enjoying and achieving. If schools can meet these outcomes successfully for vulnerable children, such as those who are in care, they will be able to meet them for all children. As part of the process of self evaluation under the new inspection framework, governing bodies will need to seek evidence of action taken to achieve these outcomes. They should also consider whether school policies give sufficient emphasis to children's well-being and

ensure that looked after children are explicitly included in school policies.

### **The role of school governors in promoting the interests of looked after children**

Increasingly schools are working with other partners including health and social care services to determine how best to meet the needs of children as part of the *Every Child Matters* agenda. Effective collaboration between schools and partners means the leadership role of governors in partnership with the head teacher and senior management team is vital – and especially in relation to looked after children.

Governing bodies have a legal duty to promote high standards for all children and it is essential to cultivate an atmosphere of high expectations for looked after children, rather than to assume that they are less able to succeed because of their “looked after” status. Looked after children may require greater support or more formal planning processes than their peers, but they do not want to be treated differently – they want to appear, and to be treated, like other children, and not to be stigmatised as different.

There are many ways in which school governing bodies can champion and promote the needs of looked after children. In particular, governing bodies should be aware of the duty on local authorities, under section 52 of the Children Act 2004, to promote the educational achievement of looked after children. Governing bodies should ensure that designated teachers for looked after children and other relevant staff have access to the statutory guidance on the duty, and be aware that as part of the duty

“Education matters. You learn. It’s the key to freedom in what you want.”

local authorities should provide training for designated teachers and governors.

Schools and their governing bodies play a key role in supporting local authorities in discharging their duty. In some schools, governing bodies have nominated one particular governor or a pupil welfare committee to champion and promote the needs of looked after children. It is up to individual governing bodies to consider the most effective means to support looked after children within their school.

### **How to use this guide**

This guidance is set out in sections. Each section deals with a phase or area in a child’s life where being looked after may require the school’s governing body to consider what action it may need to take. Each section sets out the key problems and challenges that the governing body may face when considering looked after children and offers some practical information. Besides the governing body, this information will be of use to the head teacher, the school’s senior management team, designated teachers, and to local authorities, in particular staff with a specific remit for looked after children.

### **Terms used**

In this guide we use the term ‘carer’ to include foster carers, social workers and residential social workers. A full glossary of terms is provided on page 32. All documents/resources referred to are referenced in the Further Information section.

# Supporting Looked After Learners

# Planning for looked after children

**School governors can make a significant difference to how looked after children experience school. They can ensure that their needs are considered at the planning and policy level through to monitoring and evaluation. The priorities for looked after children identified in the local authority's Children and Young People's Plan should inform the school's development plan. In addition, governing bodies will need to examine a wide range of school data to see how looked after pupils are progressing and identify any barriers to their learning. This process should help identify issues for school improvement and feed into the self evaluation of the school, which is a key element of the new inspection regime.**

Schools have an important contribution to make in helping all children to achieve the five *Every Child Matters* outcomes – being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution to society and achieving economic well-being.

In future, school inspectors will specifically consider and report on how far the education provided contributes to pupils' well-being. Vulnerable children, including those who are looked after, will be given specific attention within inspections. Provision for these children will be assessed across a wide range of criteria including attainment, personal development, well-being, care and support. The inspection will be looking specifically for evidence that all looked after children have an effective Personal Education Plan; that action is taken to maximise attendance and avoid exclusions; and that the experiences of looked after children are monitored on an individual basis.

In some cases, inspectors will test the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for looked after children using a case study approach – examining records and talking to staff. Particular children may be interviewed but, to avoid them being singled out, this would normally be as part of a wider group discussion.

“On occasions when I didn't attend my review, really important decisions about me and my future were made and no one asked or told me.”

### **The governing body should ensure that:**

- the school has an overview of the educational needs and progress of looked after children;
- school policies are reviewed from the point of view of looked after children;
- resources are allocated to match priorities for looked after children.

### **Information you should know or your school should be able to give you quickly:**

- the numbers of children in the school who are in care;
- how looked after children are performing compared to their peers.

### **Questions that should be considered by the school's senior management team:**

- how will the school include raising the attainment of looked after children in the school improvement plan?
- what policies have the school developed that encourage collaboration with other agencies and services e.g. health professionals, CAMHS, school attendance services?
- what is the policy on professional development for all staff in contact with vulnerable children?
- how does the school assist local authorities with requests to provide data on attendance, attainment and exclusions?

#### **Case study**

After a school inspection our school was reported as having weaknesses relating planning to pupil outcomes. It highlighted the unsatisfactory improvement in attainment for looked after children. The governing body undertook to look at monitoring and evaluation systems to improve the way plans were revised in the light of experience.

The governing body set up a small committee that asked for a termly progress report for all the school's vulnerable children, including looked after children, in order to identify whether there continued to be barriers to learning not taken into account in the school planning process.

*(Head Teacher, secondary school)*

# Designated Teachers: Raising staff awareness

**The joint DfES/DH guidance *Education of Children and Young People in Public Care* (May 2000) recommended that schools assign a senior member of staff as designated teacher to act as a champion for looked after children. Under the duty to promote the educational achievement of looked after children, local authorities should also keep an up to date list of designated teachers to help facilitate communication with schools.**

The role of designated teacher for looked after children sits alongside that of the designated teacher for child protection and the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). For all these roles it is vital that sufficient time is made available in the timetable to ensure these staff can undertake their duties properly. Note: It should not be assumed that the SENCO is the right person for the role of designated teacher for looked after children.

The specific duties of the designated teacher will vary depending on the number of looked after children in the school and the circumstances and needs of each individual child. All designated teachers for looked after children are responsible for:

- receiving Personal Education Plans from social workers and co-ordinating the development of the plan;
- providing a central point of contact for all professionals working with each looked after child.

Governors should encourage designated teachers to attend training, which is normally organised by local authorities. Training should

cover all aspects of the care system and the impact of care upon education, responsibilities under the Children Act and associated Regulations. It should also include the role of the school in relation to care planning and statutory reviews.

Governors should be aware that designated teachers should decide, in conjunction with relevant local authority staff, their approach to sharing sensitive information about an individual child. This is not just about record keeping, but about a child's identity in the school. Some children are happy for the fact that they are "in care" to be known by staff and other pupils, while others do not want to be stigmatised as different because they do not live with their families. For other children there will be official requirements that their status is not identified.

Other key duties are listed opposite:

“As long as you've got one person who you can turn to to talk to... that's all you need because then that person speaks to the other people on the team and then they have a better understanding of what is going on...”

### **The governing body should ensure that:**

- the designated teacher for looked after children has the opportunity to attend training offered by the local authority;
- there is a clear policy on professional development for all staff in contact with looked after children and other vulnerable children;
- the designated teacher is sufficiently resourced to carry out the role effectively.

### **Information you should know or your school should be able to give you quickly:**

- the name of the designated teacher for looked after children.

### **Questions that should be considered by the school's senior management team:**

- what safeguards does the school have in place for sharing sensitive information about individual looked after children with relevant staff members?
- what is the procedure for liaising with carers/residential children's homes and social services to ensure that the school has relevant information about a child's care history?
- how are the child's achievements communicated to the carer?

#### **Case study**

Our governing body were concerned about the increasing volume of work undertaken by the school's designated teacher, especially after a children's home had opened locally.

After discussing the situation with the school's senior management team, we agreed that the role of designated teacher should become a full-time dedicated post. A member of our governing body and the school's designated teacher for looked after children attended a training course run by the local education authority on the needs of looked after children.

*(Head Teacher, inner city secondary school)*

#### **Other Key Duties:**

- acting as a champion for looked after children;
- informing other staff about looked after pupils sensitively;
- maintaining a list of all pupils who are looked after;
- induction – settling new pupils into school;
- ensuring all looked after pupils have an up to date Personal Education Plan;
- promoting good home school links;
- liaising with the SENCO if the child has special educational needs;
- helping pupils contribute to their Personal Education Plan;
- helping looked after pupils transfer to the next school or college;
- maintaining an overview of the changing needs and progress of looked after children;
- contributing to school planning for looked after children; and
- ensuring speedy transfer of record.

# Admissions

**If your governing body is the admissions authority for your school you have a role of key importance for looked after children when setting admission criteria. The Government has expected schools and LEAs to give top priority to looked after children in allocating places when schools are oversubscribed since 2003, and under Section 106 of the Education Act 2005 has made this a legal requirement for admissions from September 2007.**

As a minimum, faith schools should give priority to looked after children of their faith over other children of their faith and looked after children of other faiths. However, schools are encouraged to go further than this and to give looked after children priority, regardless of faith, over all other children.

One of the reasons why looked after children underachieve is that they spend too much time out of school. To comply with statutory guidance, local authorities should ensure that disruption to education is minimised when arranging a care placement and should not arrange a care placement without arranging provision of an appropriate level of education – unless the placement is made in an emergency for the child's immediate protection. Where a child has been placed in an emergency, or where educational provision breaks down, an educational placement should be secured within 20 school days. However, some looked after children, especially those who experience many moves, still miss a great deal of school. They also have to adjust to a lot of changes: new carers, surroundings and rules, so well-thought out and supportive induction policies will be critical.

“Looked after young people should be encouraged to come and visit the school. It's about giving children and young people a choice.”

The Government expects all schools, local authorities and Admission Forums to have agreed local protocols for the admission of hard to place pupils arriving outside the normal admission round. Among other things, these protocols ensure that looked after children in need of a school place are admitted to a suitable school as quickly as possible. In some cases this might mean a school admitting over its admission number.

### **The governing body should ensure that:**

- over-subscription criteria meet statutory requirements, i.e. that looked after children are at the head of the over-subscription criteria;
- the protocol for hard to place pupils in their area provides for looked after children, and that they admit, without delay, any child they are asked to under the protocol.

### **Information you should know or your school should be able to give you quickly:**

- the number of looked after children on the school roll.

### **Questions that should be considered by the school's senior management team:**

- how are applications handled after the normal admission round?
- what are the arrangements for welcoming new looked after pupils and do they take into account that looked after children (perhaps arriving mid-term) may have additional support needs?
- what does the school do to ensure that new admissions are well supported by their peers?
- how does the school provide information to carers and social workers about the school's admission and appeal process?
- who liaises with other agencies to ensure that an educational placement works?

#### **Case study**

As a governing body, we were having difficulties due to the large numbers of looked after and traveller children coming into the area and being placed in our school. Consequently, we contacted the Local Admission Forum with a view to developing and agreeing a protocol to apply to all schools in the area, to manage better the large numbers of hard to place children arriving in the area outside the normal admission round.

After discussion with a number of school admissions authorities, under the aegis of the Admission Forum, we established a placement panel, which included members of Social Services, head teachers and governors. A local protocol was set up whereby all schools agreed the procedure for taking hard to place children arriving in the area outside the normal transfer time. In some cases it was accepted that this could involve some schools exceeding their admission number by one or two pupils.

*(Governing body, undersubscribed school in an area of social deprivation)*

# Record keeping and transfer: Personal Education Plans

**In addition to the usual school records for all children, every child in care must have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) which forms part of their school record. PEPs are also part of the wider care planning for looked after children. Care plans are reviewed at minimum statutory intervals and progress in education is considered at these reviews. Local authorities have a duty to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under section 52 of the Children Act 2004 and must ensure that all looked after children have a PEP.**

The PEP sets clear objectives for a young person relating to academic achievement, as well as personal and behavioural targets both in and out of school. It identifies who will be responsible for carrying out the actions agreed in the plan, with timescales for action and review, covers the child's achievement record (academic and otherwise), identifies development needs and sets short and long term targets. The school's designated teacher should be involved in agreeing and reviewing a PEP along with the child (according to understanding and ability), the child's parent and/or relevant family member or carer, and the social worker. If a looked after child joins the school without a PEP, the designated teacher should pursue the matter with the child's social worker who is responsible for initiating it.

A child's PEP is particularly useful at times of transition, whether from primary to secondary or from one educational placement to another. It enables information to move quickly with the child, so that they can be placed appropriately and provided with the support and services they need. The designated teacher should

ensure that the PEP is passed on to the next designated teacher as quickly as possible so that support can be put in place without delay.

The wishes of the child are important when identifying which members of staff and other adults should know that they are in care. This needs to be balanced with practical considerations such as teaching staff being aware of the likely effects of a child's contact times with their parents or the approach of a PEP review. The Personal Education Planning process could provide an opportunity for a child to discuss their preference, and to have that preference recorded.

“People are doing loads of work that all gets thrown away, good work should be kept and handed to the next school, kept on file so it can be sent on to college.”

Looked after young people aged 16+ are frequently referred to as “care leavers” and from the age of 16 their Care Plan will be known as their Pathway Plan. This plan is maintained until the young person reaches the age of 21, or longer if they remain in a programme of education or training. The Pathway Plan must set out the services and support that the young person requires so that they can move to a more independent lifestyle. Given the importance of a sound educational experience to achieving a successful adulthood; planning for education, training and employment will be an important feature of pathway planning. Maintaining a PEP throughout a young person's period in education will be a key element of the planning process.

### **The governing body should ensure that:**

- procedures are in place to ensure all looked after children and care leavers have up-to-date PEPs;
- the school's confidentiality policy covers the needs of looked after children and care leavers;
- procedures are in place to ensure where a child/young person in care transfers to a new school their PEP is transferred with them. A child's PEP is part of their educational record which must, by law, be sent to any new school to which they move.

### **Information you should know or your school should be able to give you quickly :**

- the number of looked after children with up to date PEPs.

### **Questions that should be considered by the school's senior management team:**

- who reviews and keeps the child's PEP up-to-date?
- who updates school records with current addresses of carers, birth parents, social worker etc?
- what is the procedure to prepare information for transfer if a looked after child changes school?

#### **Case study**

After receiving a complaint from a designated teacher from another school regarding the difficulties of obtaining a Personal Education Plan for a looked after child, we felt it was necessary to re-examine the school procedures for record transfer. We found that the PEP was sent to the child's social worker for onward transmission to the child's new school – inevitably incurring delays.

As part of the school's programme to review its record keeping processes we proposed to change the school policy so that in addition to sending the PEP to the child's social worker, a copy would also be sent to the child's new school with the educational record and would be marked for the attention of the designated teacher.

*(Governing body, inner city primary school)*

# Taking part in school life: Inclusive schooling and home school communication

**School life is more than classroom learning. For looked after children, school can represent normality, somewhere they can enjoy friendships, learn about themselves and take part in everyday activities.**

Governors have a vital task in making sure schools develop an inclusive ethos which enables all children, including the vulnerable, to thrive in an atmosphere of mutual respect, in an environment where pupils feel safe and included, and where their individual needs are understood. Governors have a key role in communicating this vision to pupils, parents, carers and staff alike. They can, for example, encourage an inclusive ethos, especially for looked after children, through the National Healthy Schools Programme. All schools should be working towards achieving the National Healthy School Standard (NHSS).

## Home school communication

School staff will need to have accurate up to date information about who should receive communications between school and home. Some information is legally required, for example school reports, but there is also a whole range of day-to-day communication about what is happening in school such as projects the children may be involved in and how parents can help at home or get involved that will need to be communicated to a child's carers. Schools will need to be clear who can give permission for looked after children to take part in activities like school trips and who pays for these. It should be remembered that many birth parents are still in contact with their

children and will continue to have a say about their education. This will vary with each child and schools will need to clarify roles with the child's social worker. The DfES document *Who Does What: how social workers and carers can support the education of looked after children* gives guidance on this.

Parents and schools know that good communication is essential to support children's learning. Schools may find the home-school agreement is a useful mechanism for welcoming carers and promoting partnerships with a pupil's children's home. Under Section 23 of the Care Standards Act (2000) children's homes must support a child's education including facilitating their prompt arrival at school with the necessary school equipment. The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services (2002) also require foster carers to support the education of the children in their care, in particular by attending parents' evenings, open days and discussions with teachers and providing an environment in which education and learning is valued. Taking a carer carefully through the home-school agreement helps ensure information is shared about the school's aims, identifies what parents/carers can expect from the school and what the school expects of pupils and parents/carers. Discussing the agreement with a carer before they are asked to sign is a useful way of sharing these mutual expectations. It is important that carers know how they can support the child's learning; who to approach with any questions and concerns; and what opportunities they have to discuss the child's progress.

### **The governing body should ensure that:**

- the school's ethos, aims and policies are embedded in school life and communication to staff, parents, carers and pupils is regularly reviewed;
- the home school agreement and homework policy take into account the home circumstances of looked after children;
- the school openly addresses issues of emotional health and well-being by enabling pupils, including those who are looked after, to understand what they are feeling and build their confidence to learn.

### **Information you should know or your school should be able to give you quickly:**

- the take-up of out of school activities by looked after children;
- those looked after children that the school has difficulties obtaining relevant information;
- who in the school has responsibility for the Healthy Schools Programme.

### **Questions that should be considered by the school's senior management team:**

- how does the school record who is entitled to a child's report, receives an invitation to parents' evenings and other school events?
- are carers given a named person such as the designated teacher to contact if they have concerns?
- are carers asked to sign the home school agreement even when their child may be placed temporarily in the school?
- what steps have been taken to ensure that carers have understood and signed the home school agreement?
- does the school charging policy need to be changed to ensure better take-up of trips among groups of children such as those who are looked after?

#### **Case study**

It was reported to us by the designated teacher that looked after children were very rarely represented at school parents' evenings. We therefore asked what the school policy was regarding notification of parents' evenings and noted letters were sent home via the pupil. We also asked the school's senior management team to consider ways to improve the communication between school and home for looked after children.

A policy was drawn up so that where a child was identified as looked after, notification was *additionally* posted to the home address for the attention of the carers. Where there was continued non-attendance at parents' evenings this was a matter that would be raised at the next PEP review meeting.

*(Governing body, inner city Community Comprehensive School)*

# Taking part in school life: Curriculum & Options

**Governing bodies have an important role in ensuring that all pupils enjoy a broad and balanced curriculum at school and for most looked after children this will include the full school curriculum, comprising the National Curriculum, religious education, sex education and careers advice. However, it may be appropriate for some children, including those who are looked after, to follow a more flexible curriculum of personalised learning in order to have the opportunity to catch up on missed schooling.**

School staff should decide this in consultation with the pupil and his or her parent or carer. Curriculum decisions should be clearly defined in the Personal Education Plan (PEP).

All children need help in choosing their options for study at Key Stage 4. Parents and family friends are often good sources of support for children making these important decisions. Looked after children who have changed care placements or moved school placements frequently may have missed out on such opportunities, and may have received little or no advice when choosing options. Most schools will offer general advice via subject teachers and one to one support from tutors, learning mentors, careers advisers or Connexions personal advisers and it is important that looked after children do not miss out on these opportunities. Choices for Key Stage 4 should be recorded in the PEP and the young person should be supported to choose appropriate subjects that will interest and challenge them.

“As soon as I entered school I was put in a class called ‘inclusion’ with all the bad kids so I was picked out before I had even done anything...”

### **The governing body should ensure that:**

- the curriculum is sufficiently flexible to increase accessibility for vulnerable pupils;
- students arriving part way through Key Stage 4 (KS4) can continue with existing specification or adapt work to fit new specifications.

### **Information you should know or your school should be able to give you quickly:**

- the name of the person whose role it is to support looked after children choosing options for study at KS4.

### **Questions that should be considered by the school's senior management team:**

- have the needs of looked after children been considered in the context of the school's curriculum policy?
- what is the process when making a decision to place a young person on an alternative curriculum at KS4? Does the school always consult relevant professionals, the young person and their carers?
- is flexible personalised learning available to looked after children?
- does the school have a good baseline of information – informed by transfer of school records and thorough assessments – so that barriers to learning are quickly identified and pupils placed in appropriate groups and sets?
- is the school timetable flexible with regard to outside fixed activities?
- do the citizenship and PHSE curricula take full account of including children whose experiences and understanding of 'family' may be different?

### **Case study**

A number of our teachers noted that when looked after children arrived mid-term they had missed a lot of school and required a great deal of catching up. This was brought to the attention of our governing body.

The decision was made to make extra resources available so that all pupils arriving mid-term would be quickly assessed and appropriate "catch-up" support put in place. Mid-term arrivals were also allocated an induction mentor to ensure that appropriate links were made with carers and any agencies that may be associated with the pupil.

*(Head Teacher, large 11-16 secondary school)*

# Raising achievement and expectations

**Low expectations by adults have been identified as one of the key reasons that looked after children fail to achieve. Sometimes assumptions are made that limit young people's achievement rather than encourage them to do well.**

Governing bodies can support an ambitious agenda for looked after children by combining high expectations and standards with inclusion. This will mean analysis of pupil performance data, setting targets for achievement and promoting teaching strategies aimed at raising attainment through personalised learning and addressing barriers to learning.

Governors should expect an annual update on the progress of looked after children in their schools. Details of their attainment levels including the results of national tests and assessments and public examinations should be provided along with details of individual targets agreed for each child.

“I’m Head Girl so I have responsibilities. I like that.”

## Qualifications

Looked after children, like many young people, will often need additional support during the 11-16 phase in order to progress. They should be given every opportunity to learn and achieve in ways best suited to their individual needs, including being offered a flexible curriculum. Looked after children are sometimes not entered for qualifications because they have missed too much time or changed syllabuses between school

placements. There should be strong reasons for not entering a looked after child for qualifications. In such cases the designated teacher should inform the carers, social workers and governing body, and record the reasons for non-entry on the PEP.

## Further and higher education

Looked after children will need encouragement to consider opportunities for further education and training. They are extremely under-represented in higher education. Personal Education Plans and Pathway Plans provide practical tools for focusing on educational development, including the opportunity for young people to explore their potential for higher education.

The focus for a looked after young person moving on to further or higher education should begin early, in order to build up a good record of achievement. Young people in care should be encouraged to take part in taster courses offered by colleges and universities to provide opportunities to experience for themselves the potential of further and higher education.

“Being in care doesn’t mean that we can’t learn as much or get as many GCSEs.”

### **The governing body should ensure that:**

- the school sets challenging targets for looked after children;
- additional support is offered to meet the needs of looked after children who are at risk of underachieving;
- there are established benchmarks for exam attainment of all vulnerable children.

### **Information you should know or your school should be able to give you quickly:**

- the overall attainment levels of looked after children in the school;
- how your local authority is supporting the educational achievement of the children they look after as set out in their Children and Young People's Plan (although you will need to be aware that some looked after children are the responsibility of a different local authority);
- the figures for examination entries and non-entries for looked after children.

### **Questions that should be considered by the school's senior management team:**

- what targets are there for looked after children in the school?
- does the school include 'value-added' measures of individual children's progress?
- what are the specific barriers to achievement facing looked after children and can the school take action to remove them?
- is there good liaison with foster carers and children's homes to support children's learning?
- if looked after children get behind, how is this identified and help provided?
- how does the school celebrate the educational successes of looked after children?
- is there anything in the school's qualifications policy that works against the achievement of looked after children?
- would 'examination mentors' help vulnerable children to succeed?
- what revision support is available for examinations for children at risk of underachieving?
- do looked after children access taster activities for further and higher education?
- are looked after children engaged in the gifted and talented programme?

**Case study**

I arrived at my school in year 11 and found out that I wasn't going to be entered for qualifications. Apparently this was because I was taking different qualifications in my old school and it was too late to change things.

I told my teacher I wasn't happy about this and she arranged to try and sort things out with the governing body. Apparently, I wasn't the only one unhappy.

She has told me that the senior management team have looked at the learning options of all pupils not entered for examinations. As a result my school decided it would be a great idea to develop vocational routes and work related programmes to provide opportunities for people like me to continue courses not provided by the school but already being followed elsewhere. This is great news – now I can do what I really want to do!

*(Young person, year 11, secondary school)*

**Case study**

As the governing body of a sixth form college we use data to identify how many students go on to higher education and what courses are followed. Data reveals that relatively few students who have gone through the care system apply to university. We agreed that the college should approach the local university to identify ways of encouraging vulnerable students to apply to university.

As a result the university have agreed to encourage students undertaking a course in teacher training to offer support for young people in care and careleavers at the college. This includes visits to university and participation in university events. We estimate that in the first year of operation the scheme will result in more pupils deciding to go to university.

*(Governing body, sixth form college)*

# Exclusions

**Continuity is vital for children already suffering disruption in their family life but looked after children are ten times more likely to be permanently excluded than their peers (1% of looked after children but 0.1% of entire school population). Exclusion from school can place great strain on care placements, sometimes resulting in more disruption in the young people's lives if these break down. Those schools that are most successful in preventing exclusion have policies which tackle underlying causes of poor behaviour with strategies such as pastoral support programmes, intervention from behaviour support specialists and purposeful help under the SEN framework.**

If exclusion does happen Improving Behaviour and Attendance: Guidance on Exclusion from Schools and Pupil Referral Units (DfES 2003) recommends that governing bodies allow excluded young people to speak at the exclusion hearing. There is a particular emphasis on support for looked after children who want to put their side of the case. Anyone who is legally defined as a parent will have the right to make representations to the governing body and to appeal to an independent appeal panel. The definition of "parent" for the purposes of the Education Acts includes any person who has parental responsibility (which includes the local authority where they have a care order in respect of the child) and any person (e.g. a foster parent) with whom the child lives.

The governing body should ensure that the school has effective support in place for young people returning to school following

fixed period exclusions or joining the school in managed moves from other schools. Reintegration following permanent exclusion from other schools including Pupil Referral Units should be focused on the pupil. An assessment of their needs, involving discussions with carers and social workers, would be an early part of the reintegration process.

Following permanent exclusion, an individual reintegration plan should be drawn up by the LEA within one month of the exclusion being confirmed by the governing body. The plan should be agreed by all relevant parties and cover pastoral and educational objectives for reintegration, with appropriate targets. Governors should monitor the outcomes of reintegration and whether resources are available to match the plans.

“They expel you too quick – I kicked off because I could not do my maths work... the teacher expelled me straight away.”

### **The governing body should ensure that:**

- there is a thorough understanding of the extra problems caused by excluding looked after children and consider adopting a policy of not excluding looked after children except as a last resort;
- governors reviewing exclusions consider the following in relation to a looked after child:
  - has the child recently changed home placement?
  - has the child recently experienced any trauma?
  - does the child have unmet special educational needs?
  - has the school provided appropriate support for the child e.g. mentors, counselling, access to a learning support unit?
- exclusion hearings listen to children and young people and provide an atmosphere where they feel comfortable and able to speak openly; and
- after consultation with the child's social worker, all persons with parental responsibility and the child's carers are told of their right to make representations to the governing body and, where a permanent exclusion is upheld by the governing body, are informed of their right to appeal to an independent appeal panel.

### **Information you should know or your school should be able to give you quickly:**

- the number of looked after children who have been excluded from the school in the previous 12 months.

### **Questions that should be considered by the school's senior management team:**

- when considering exclusion, does the head teacher and the governing body have regard to the Secretary of State's guidance on exclusion? *Improving Behaviour and Attendance: Guidance on Exclusion from School and Pupil Referral Units* (DfES 2004 paragraphs 51-53 refer specifically to children in public care)
- is there any trend in exclusion rates of looked after children?
- what strategies does the school use to avoid exclusion of vulnerable children including looked after children?
- is the appeal process fully explained to social workers and foster carers when a looked after child is excluded?
- are young people in care encouraged to attend governors' hearings which are reviewing their exclusion?
- does the head teacher's letter of exclusion always signpost carers to the Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) exclusion helpline?
- has the appropriate person/team in the LEA with responsibility for children missing education been notified of the child's exclusion?

### Questions that should be considered by the school's senior management team continued:

- does the school take vulnerable children, such as looked after children, excluded from other schools?
- what are the reintegration arrangements for looked after children who have been excluded?
- what other agencies are working with the child and have they delivered the necessary support e.g. clinical psychology/CAMHS?
- has every looked after child at risk of exclusion got a Pastoral Support Plan?

#### Case study

Our school had a particularly traumatic exclusion case where the foster carer of a looked after child was making a representation against a permanent exclusion. The governing body decided not to uphold the exclusion after hearing of the sad series of events that caused the behaviour that led to the exclusion. Subsequently our governing body asked the senior management team to review the discipline policy particularly whether appropriate pastoral support was being given to especially vulnerable children such as those who were in care.

As a matter of routine, our designated teacher now asks the social worker of existing or new looked after children about any issues which may lead to erratic or deteriorating behaviour. This new proactive policy allows for greater awareness of the need for planning appropriate pastoral care.

Where there was an imminent risk of exclusion of a looked after child, then an emergency review of the PEP would be initiated. High on the agenda of the review would be that the young person concerned and their foster carer would be made fully aware of the expected standards of behaviour. If circumstances were such that a stressful situation was developing within school, the young person could hand a "red card" to the teacher which allowed them to immediately go to a cooling off point, usually with the designated teacher or in the learning support unit.

*(Head teacher – large county town secondary school)*

# Special Educational Needs

**Over a quarter of looked after children have a statement of special educational needs (SEN) and many more are likely to need extra help at school to meet special educational needs and to catch up for lost school time.**

Sometimes the special educational needs of a looked after child are overlooked or support is delayed. This can be:

- because learning difficulties are attributed to their social and emotional circumstances;
- when frequent moves disrupt assessments and provision of support;
- if looked after children are placed in another authority.

When looked after children's difficulties are picked up late the problems can worsen.

An important element of the SEN framework is regular involvement with parents. Active parents alert the school to problems, help set and review targets and back up school support at home. Carers may need extra information and support, especially if their own children are grown up or if they have no experience of the SEN process. When governors review the school's SEN policy they should ensure that carers and social workers are routinely involved and engaged with the process, particularly during statutory assessment, reviews of Individual Education Plans and annual reviews of statements.

“I don't think I need extra help because I am in care. I think I should be treated the same as other pupils in school.”

### **The governing body should ensure that:**

- the school's SEN policy acknowledges the needs of looked after children;
- looked after children who have missed schooling receive support under the SEN framework where appropriate.

### **Information you should know or your school should be able to give you quickly:**

- number of looked after children in the school with
  - SEN but no statement;
  - a statement of SEN.

### **Questions that should be considered by the school's senior management team:**

- how does the school ensure prompt identification of special educational needs of looked after children?
- are carers informed that the child has special educational needs and that they can get help from the Parent Partnership Service?
- how are carers/social workers involved in assessments and reviews?
- how are young people involved in reviews and target setting?
- is the level of support given to looked after children with special educational needs sufficient?
- are there particular staff training needs in connection with meeting the needs of looked after children?

#### **Case study**

After conducting a regular review of the school's SEN policies, it was revealed that there were difficulties in engaging some parents and carers in the SEN process. This led to problems in delivering effective SEN support for pupils. I asked the governing body to raise the matter with the LEA and examine how to improve arrangements for meeting the needs of vulnerable pupils. The aim was to raise the awareness of the importance of the SEN process with Social Services departments through training programmes for social workers and foster carers.

As a result the LEA arranged for our school to twin with a partner school with known good practice in this area, so that specialist teaching, curricular strengths and other resources could be shared. In addition an advanced skills teacher with knowledge and experience in emotional and behavioural difficulties worked with staff at the school. We also arranged to hold a regular forum involving the Education Welfare Service, Social Services, Pupil Support Service, Connexions and the Youth Offending Team to encourage effective multi-agency planning for children. In addition the LEA undertook to review its programme of on going SEN training for foster carers.

*(SENCO, inner city school in a disadvantaged area with a diverse pupil population)*

# Pastoral support, behaviour and bullying

**Many looked after children show remarkable resilience despite experiencing the trauma of loss and separation. However some will need help with their emotional well-being and may express their pain and anger through difficult behaviour at school. Behaviour policies need to be reviewed to take account of how the school will respond to challenging behaviour in such circumstances, and also how the school can actively promote positive behaviour in all children.**

The whole-curriculum resource for primary schools launched in June 2005 (*Excellence and Enjoyment: the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning* (SEAL)) provides guidance and curriculum materials for developing children's social, emotional and behavioural skills.

“It's about taking an interest, if someone takes an interest it will make us more motivated... without this you have no one to prove it to...”

Young people in public care usually prefer not to be treated differently from others but sensitive support, such as that recommended as part of Pastoral Support Programmes (PSP) or Individual Education Plans (IEPs), could prevent problems as well as deal with any emerging or existing behavioural problems. Pastoral support can include providing a 'buddy' for a child new to the school or the help of a learning mentor or counsellor. A PSP should involve all the agencies who can

support the child and should be included in the young person's Personal Education Plan. Inclusion guidance (Inclusive Schooling: Children with Special Educational Needs DfES 2001) gives many practical steps that teachers could adopt to successfully include children with behavioural difficulties in mainstream classes. Governors should look at whether the school's behaviour policy includes any of the strategies suggested by the guidance and check if the policy has been revised to take account of the guidance.

## Bullying

Anyone can experience bullying but there is evidence that some groups including disabled children and looked after children are more likely to be bullied than others. Your school's anti-bullying policy needs to recognise the particular vulnerability of looked after children. Monitoring this policy is an important way of showing that the governing body is concerned about pupils' health and safety and that bullying does not prevent looked after children enjoying school and achieving.

As a result of their experiences prior to coming into care, looked after children can also display bullying behaviour, as opposed to being bullied. The school's anti-bullying and behaviour policies should recognise that support may be necessary for children who show such behaviour as a result of difficult life experiences.

“When I got bullied I told the teachers – they said they would sort it out...they never did.”

### **The governing body should ensure that:**

- the school's anti-bullying and behaviour policies are flexible in their understanding of care issues and support early intervention;
- looked after children understand the process for making complaints.

### **Information you should know or your school should be able to give you quickly:**

- the authorised and unauthorised absence levels of looked after pupils in the school.

### **Questions that should be considered by the school's senior management team:**

- what targeted interventions can the school initiate that focus on groups of children who have known risk factors, such as being in care?
- how does the school behaviour policy pre-empt escalating behavioural problems?
- how does the school ensure that initiatives such as lunchtime clubs and anti-bullying work include specific vulnerable groups such as looked after children?
- does the school have procedures for contacting relevant professional help for specific problems e.g. LEA Behavioural Support Team, CAMHS, educational psychologist?
- are carers contacted on the first day of any unexplained absence?
- are carers aware of the school's anti-bullying policies?

#### **Case study**

Apparently, my school has an anti-bullying policy made up by staff and pupils and it was supposed to be working. Well – not for me. I was still being bullied 'cause of being in care and so were some of my friends, also in care. The thing was, we were scared to tell a teacher about it.

Anyway, the designated teacher has obviously noticed it because things are getting better.

I think the governing body got involved and now if anyone new comes to the school in the middle of a term, they get 'buddied' by a peer (someone who can be trusted) and you get given a teacher to discuss your problems with. For looked after children this is the designated teacher and she is really good. We get encouraged to take part in school activities like drama and stuff and it really helps with your confidence. The school feels a much better place and we all filled out a survey to say what we think. It's good to know the school is doing something about the problem.

*(Young person, year 10, large secondary school)*

# Study Support (out of school hours learning)

**Study support describes the wide variety of informal learning activities that young people voluntarily take part in outside normal school hours and/or during school holiday periods. It can also take place at breaks and lunchtimes and include breakfast and homework clubs. Participation in out of school hours activities is linked to building self confidence and self esteem, improved relationships and raised aspirations. For looked after children these benefits often influence positively their attitudes to school and learning as a whole.**

In order to meet fully the *Every Child Matters* outcome of enjoying and achieving, all children, including those in care, should have opportunities to develop interests and improve their skills and experiences through a range of out of school activities. For looked after children, the intention to pursue these activities, and the support they might need to do so, such as special equipment or revised transport arrangements, should be identified in their PEP.

For study support policies to be inclusive, the activities must be accessible to looked after children, who often experience difficulties in staying behind after school because of transport arrangements, or because they have contact time with their birth families. Issues such as these should be addressed in the child's PEP; the designated teacher should be aware of them, and take whatever steps possible to support the child in accessing the activities.

Where activities are organised for which payment is required, such as residential field trips or non-educational visits, the designated teacher should be clear about the local authority's arrangements for funding these for looked after children.

More information can be obtained from the *Taking Part* pack, produced by the national charity ContinYou on behalf of the DfES. Based on the experiences of three local authorities involved in the recent Taking Part project, the pack is designed to assist LAs in making study support/out of school hours learning an integral part of raising the achievement of looked after children.

“I was never allowed to go on school trips because there was no money.”

### **The governing body should ensure that:**

- the study support policy is fully embedded in overall primary and secondary education strategies, incorporating the aspirations of *Every Child Matters*. Where appropriate, it should also be compatible with the Healthy Schools Standard.

### **Information you should know or your school should be able to give you quickly:**

- the number of looked after children who actively participate in study support;
- the number of looked after children representing the school e.g. in school sports teams, choirs etc.

### **Questions that should be considered by the school's senior management team:**

- could the study support programme be more flexible to cater for the needs of looked after children?
- does the school regularly consult with carers and looked after children about study support activities?
- is the school in contact with the local authority study support co-ordinator to discuss ideas?

#### **Case study**

As the designated teacher of a large primary school I became concerned that generally there was poor uptake on school visits by looked after children. I reported this to our governing body who decided that the school would engage with relevant social workers and/or local authority social services departments on what would need to be done to ensure that looked after children had the same access to such activities as other children.

In the meantime the governing body approved a decision to set aside a small amount of money whereby looked after children could be supported to go on school trips. In order to ensure confidentiality, teachers arranging trips were asked to inform me so I could then check whether this would affect any looked after children, and if so whether they would require support from the fund.

*(Designated Teacher, large primary school)*

# Glossary

**Admission authority:** the body responsible for a school's admission arrangements. For community and voluntary controlled schools this is the LEA; for foundation, voluntary aided schools, academies and city technology colleges, it is the governing body.

**Admissions forum:** a local body made up of representatives of the LEA, churches and each category of maintained school plus academies. They advise admission authorities on admission arrangements and agree arrangements between admission authorities on issues such as applications for places outside the normal time of entry.

**Care orders:** made by the courts in respect of a child who has suffered or is likely to suffer "significant harm". A care order results in the local authority assuming parental responsibility for a child. A child's Care Plan will detail the way roles and tasks concerning their education will be shared.

**Connexions personal adviser:** provides advice and guidance for all young people aged 13 – 19 especially those who may experience difficulty making the transition to adult life.

**Designated teacher:** a teacher with responsibility for looked after children in the school. They are expected to be an advocate for looked after children and young people and ensure that each child has a PEP.

**Every Child Matters:** the Green Paper (2004) which set out the Government's vision for children's services and identifies five outcomes it wants for all children: that they should be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well-being.

**Individual education plan (IEP):** a planning document for pupils with special educational needs. It should include three or four short-term targets for the child; teaching strategies to be used; the help to be put in place; and how the school will decide if the help has been successful.

**Looked after children:** these are children who are the subject of an interim or full care order or a protection order and those who are accommodated by local authorities with the agreement of their parents.

**Pastoral support programme:** a short practical intervention to provide support when a young person is at risk of disaffection or permanent exclusion. Initiated by the school but should be agreed with parents/carers and involve the LEA and other agencies such as social services.

**Pathway plan:** sets out the services and support that young care leavers of 16+ require to successfully move to adulthood.

**Personal Education Plan (PEP):** every child and young person in care should have a PEP which sets out academic achievement; identifies developmental and educational needs; and sets out short and long-term targets and plans. The PEP should be part of the child's Care Plan. It also forms part of a pupil's curricular record which the governing body has a duty to keep in respect of each registered pupil.

**Pupil referral unit:** a school which provides for children who have been excluded from school or who are at risk of exclusion, or who cannot attend school for other reasons such as ill health, pregnancy or school phobia.

**Statement of special educational needs (SEN):** a document in six parts which sets out a child's needs, provision to meet those needs and where the child will be educated.

# Further information

## Introduction and background to looked after children

- *A Better Education for Children in Care* (SEU September 2003). Social Exclusion Unit Report which examines the barriers that prevent children in care of local authorities achieving their full potential and provides recommendations for action.  
<http://www.socialexclusionunit.gov.uk>
- *Education of children and young people in public care* (DfES/DH May 2000) Guidance for local authorities on how to support the education of children in care. Some sections of the guidance were issued under section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 and are statutory.  
<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/educationprotects/>
- The Who Cares? Trust. Education publications cover planning, moving school, bullying, staying in school and going to university. These resources offer practical tools to improve literacy, promote the enjoyment of reading and writing, and develop self-esteem and decision-making skills.  
  
The Who Cares? Trust  
Kemp House  
152-160 City Road,  
London  
EC1V 2NP  
Tel: 020 7251 3117  
E-mail: [sales@thewhocarestrust.org.uk](mailto:sales@thewhocarestrust.org.uk)  
<http://www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk>
- *Every Child Matters Change for Children in Schools* (DfES January 2005) sets out the implications of Every Child Matters for schools.  
<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/publications/>
- *Safeguarding children in education* (DfES September 2004). This guidance relates to the statutory duty on local authorities, schools and further education institutions to have arrangements for carrying out their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.  
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/familyandcommunity/childprotection/guidance/>

## Planning for looked after children

- *Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children* (DfES 2005). Guidance describes the essential actions which local authorities are expected to take in order to comply with their duty.  
<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/educationprotects/>
- *New Relationship with Schools* (NRwS) (DfES 2005). The development of a new relationship with schools is a key part of the Government's agenda to reform the education system to focus more keenly on raising standards for all through personalised learning.  
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/newrelationship>

- *Conducting the Inspection: guidance for inspectors of schools* (OfSTED July 2005 ref: HMI 2502) describes how inspectors will specifically report on how far the education provided contributes to pupil well-being. <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/>

### **Designated teachers: raising staff awareness**

- *The Role of the School in Supporting the Education of Children in Public Care* (Felicity Fletcher-Campbell, Tamsin Archer and Kathryn Tomlinson, National Foundation of Educational Research, 2003). The Role of the School research report and training material for designated teachers can be found on the Education Protects website <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/educationprotects/>

### **Admissions**

- General information for parents and governors may be provided by the DfES School Admissions Team: [school.admissions@dfes.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:school.admissions@dfes.gsi.gov.uk)
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and Education Act 2002: <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/>
- *School Admissions and School Admission Appeals Codes of Practice* (DfES February 2003): <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/sacode/>
- *Hard to Place Children – Developing and Agreeing a Protocol* (DfES 2004) <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/sacode/>

### **Record keeping and transfer: Personal Education Plans**

- *The personal educational plan* (PEP) is a record of what needs to happen for looked after children to fulfil their potential. The Education Protects website contains tutorials on what makes for an effective PEP. <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/educationprotects/>

### **Taking part in school life: Inclusive schooling and home school communication**

- Home-school agreements can raise standards and contribute to school effectiveness by enhancing partnerships between parents and teachers. <http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/parentalinvolvement/hsa/>
- The Healthy Living Blueprint website. Designed to support schools in leading healthy lifestyles. <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk//healthyliving/>
- Healthy Care Programme Handbook (DfES/NCB 2005). This handbook provides a set of tools and resources to assist partnerships carry out audits of services, devise action plans and monitor progress. <http://www.ncb.org.uk/healthycare/>
- Who does what. How social workers and carers can support the education of children in care. <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/educationprotects>
- National Healthy Schools Standard <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management>

## Taking part in school life: Curriculum & Options

- Schools may offer to those under the age of 19 approved courses leading to an external qualification which is funded either by a Local Education Authority or Learning Skills Council.  
<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/section96/>

## Raising achievement and expectations

- *The Role of the School in Supporting the Education of Children in Public Care* (Felicity Fletcher-Campbell, Tamsin Archer and Kathryn Tomlinson National Foundation of Educational Research 2003).  
<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/educationprotects/>

## Exclusions

- Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)  
<http://www.ace-ed.org.uk/>
- For exclusion guidance which covers when it is appropriate to exclude a pupil from school, what the procedures are for dealing with appeals, and other matters.  
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/exclusion/>
- *Improving Behaviour and Attendance: Guidance on Exclusion from Schools and Pupil Referral Units*, (Crown Copyright October 2004)  
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/exclusion/guidance/>

## Special Educational Needs

- *Removing Barriers to Achievement the Government's Strategy for SEN* (Crown Copyright 2004) sets out the Government's vision for giving children with special educational needs and disabilities the opportunity to succeed.  
[www.teachernet.gov.uk/sen](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/sen)
- *SEN Code of Practice and SEN Toolkit* (Crown Copyright 2001) provides practical advice to Local Authorities maintained schools, early education settings on carrying out their statutory duties to identify, assess and make provision for children's special educational needs.  
[www.teachernet.gov.uk/sen](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/sen)
- SEN and Disability Act 2001:  
[www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts2001/20010010.htm](http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts2001/20010010.htm)
- *Inclusive Schooling Governors Information Sheet* (DfES November 2001)  
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=4622>

## Pastoral support behaviour and bullying

- SEAL Curriculum Resource: SEAL offers a whole-curriculum framework for teaching social, emotional and behavioural skills to all children.  
[www.teachernet.gov.uk/seal](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/seal)
- Behaviour Improvement Programme: programme aims to improve pupil behaviour and attendance, supporting practitioners

through developing a consistent approach building on the best current practice.  
[www.dfes.gov.uk/behaviourimprovement](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/behaviourimprovement)

- Behaviour and Attendance guidance:  
<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/behaviourandattendance>
- *Don't suffer in silence* – DfES anti-bullying website:  
<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying/>
- *Managing Pupil Mobility: On the move* (Crown Copyright 2003) suggests approaches to managing pupil mobility within schools effectively.  
<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/>

### **Study Support (out of school hours learning)**

- The study support website:  
<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/studysupport/>
- *Excellence and Enjoyment: A Strategy for Primary Schools* (DfES May 2003)  
<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/primarydocument/>
- Taking Part – Making out-of-school-hours learning happen for children in care (March 2005) aims to assist local authorities and schools working in partnership with others in making study support/OSHL an integral part of raising the achievement of looked after children.  
<http://www.continyou.org.uk/>

### **Training and Helplines**

- If you want to know more about supporting the education of looked after children contact your education of looked after children service. Details of local authority lead officers for looked after children can be found on the Education Protects website at:  
[www.dfes.gov.uk/educationprotects](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/educationprotects)
- Help on school issues, including SEN and exclusions, is available from The Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) an independent charity providing advice, information and support about children's education in maintained schools.  
ACE's website [www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk)  
Exclusion information line 020 7704 9822 (for a free exclusion pack and details of ACE freephone exclusion helpline)  
Advice on all other issues freephone 0808 800 5793
- GovernorLine is a key resource for practical help and advice on governance. It is a telephone and email-based advisory service funded by DfES and staffed by experienced governors, with legal support. To contact GovernorLine call 0800 072 2181  
GovernorLine website  
[www.governorline.info/](http://www.governorline.info/)
- Your local authority Governor Services will be able to offer your governing body advice, information and training on the education of looked after children. Details from your Coordinator of Governor Services and local authority website, or via your head teacher and Governor Association.

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