

Designated Person for Children Previously in Care

Governing bodies of maintained schools and academies must designate a member of staff as having responsibility to promote the educational achievement of looked after and previously looked after children. The designated person must attend appropriate training, and the governing body and designated person must have due regard to the following guidance:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683561/The_designated_teacher_for_looked-after_and_previously_looked-after_children.pdf

This Statutory guidance came into effect from September 2018 and provides the following information on the role and responsibilities of the designated person:

36. When children cease to be looked-after, their educational needs are unlikely to have changed significantly simply because their care status has changed. Although they will no longer be required to have a PEP, designated teachers will wish to consider what is best for continuity and meeting the child's educational needs. This will particularly apply to those who leave care through adoption, Special Guardianship or a Child Arrangements Order, where the designated teacher has a duty to promote their educational attainment. As part of this, designated teachers should maintain links with VSHs who must make advice and information available to them for the purposes of promoting the educational achievement of this group of previously looked-after children.

40. All pupil premium spending should take account of the specific needs of eligible pupils. Whilst there will be some overlap with needs of economically disadvantaged children who attract the pupil premium, looked-after and previously looked-after children's needs can be very different to others eligible for Pupil Premium. The extra funding provided by the PP+ reflects the significant additional barriers faced by looked-after and previously looked-after children (see *Special educational needs and mental health*). The designated teacher has an important role in ensuring the specific needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children are understood by the school's staff and reflected in how the school uses PP+ to support these children.

42. For previously looked-after children, PP+ funding is managed by the child's school. The amount a school receives is based on the number of eligible children recorded in the school's annual October School Census return to the Department for Education.

43. For both looked-after and previously looked-after children PP+ is not a personal budget for individual children. The VSH and school manage their PP+ allocation for the benefit of their cohort of looked-after or previously looked-after children and according to children's needs.

44. The designated teacher should:

- For looked-after children, liaise with the VSH so that the designated teacher can contribute to decisions about how PP+ will support improving the child's educational outcomes;
- Help raise previously looked-after children's parents' and guardians' awareness of the PP+ and other support for previously looked-after children - this includes encouraging parents of eligible previously looked-after children to tell the school if their child is eligible to attract PP+ funding;

Play a key part in decisions on how the PP+ is used to support previously looked-after children; and

- encourage parents and guardians' involvement in deciding how the PP+ is used to support their child and be the main contact for queries about its use.

59. For previously looked-after children, designated teachers should work with senior leaders in the school, the officer responsible for links with mental health services where the school has one, and parents and carers to put in place mechanisms for understanding the emotional and behavioural needs of this group of children. The SDQ could be applied to previously looked-after children and their parents where the child's parents or guardian supports its use.

64. Previously looked-after children have parents or guardians with parental responsibility. It is important for designated teachers to get to know those who have parental responsibility and encourage them to be actively involved in their child's education. They should be open and accessible so that those with parental responsibility feel able to approach the designated teacher to discuss the support needs of their child.

71. For previously looked-after children, the VSHs are no longer acting as the part of their corporate parent: their role is limited to providing information and advice to parents and schools, including training to raise awareness and understanding of their needs. The designated teacher may, however, seek the advice of the VSH about meeting the needs of individual children with the agreement of the child's parents or guardians. It is, therefore, important that the designated teacher establishes a good working relationship with the VSH for their area.

75. For previously looked-after children, the designated teacher should work closely with their parents and guardians as they will understand their child's needs better than anyone else. The designated teacher should make themselves known to parents and guardians as someone they can talk to about issues affecting their child's education. They should be encouraged to participate in discussions about their child's support needs and strategies to meet identified needs, including how PP+ should be used to support their child. The views and wishes of parents and guardians should be respected at all times.

79. When a child leaves care, their past experiences may continue to impact on their behaviour. As with looked-after children, the school should look to support the child to improve their behaviour to avoid exclusion becoming necessary. Where a previously looked-after child is at risk of exclusion, the designated teacher should talk to the child's parents or guardians before seeking the advice of the VSH on avoiding exclusion

- play a key part in decisions on how the PP+ is used to support previously looked-after children; and
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