



LAC Policy

School: Jigsaw Pupil Referral Unit

Date Approved by Management Committee: 22 June 26

Chair: Mr D. Hains

Headteacher: Ms E. Rothlisberger

Review: June 28

Looked-after Children (LAC) and Previously Looked-after Children (PLAC) Policy — Jigsaw PRU (updated June 2026)

Purpose and scope

This policy sets out Jigsaw PRU's approach to promoting the educational achievement, welfare and safeguarding of looked-after children (LAC) and previously looked-after children (PLAC). It applies to all staff, management committee members and volunteers and reflects statutory duties and best practice under the OFSTED inspection framework (safeguarding; curriculum and teaching; personal development and wellbeing; behaviour and attendance; leadership and governance).

Context — Jigsaw PRU

All pupils at Jigsaw have SEND including SEMH. We prioritise trauma and attachment-informed practice as a high proportion of our pupils have experienced some form of trauma. We are aware that all school transitions can be challenging for pupils, but even more so for LAC and PLAC pupils. We are therefore extremely careful about how transition is managed and the message it sends to pupils. We emphasise a placement at Jigsaw as being a positive intervention.

Definitions

- Looked-after child (LAC): a child who is in the care of a local authority (for example subject to a care order, accommodated under s.20, placed in foster care or residential provision).
- Previously looked-after child (PLAC): a child who is no longer looked after because they have been adopted or are subject to an adoption order, special guardianship order or child arrangement order, including those adopted from state care outside England and Wales.

Principles and aims

1. Core priority — secure attachment and relational safety: reduce barriers from trauma/SEMH by ensuring relationships, predictability and restorative approaches are in place before further interventions.
2. Educational entitlement — every LAC/PLAC receives a high-quality, broad curriculum with targeted use of PEP and any Pupil Premium Plus funding to close specific gaps.

3. Partnership and permanence — active multi-agency working (home school, social care, Virtual School, health, CAMHS) and clear transitions planning to achieve stability and continuity.

Statutory and guidance framework (key documents we follow)

- Children Act 1989 and subsequent relevant legislation.
- Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children (DfE, Feb 2018) and related guidance on the Designated Teacher.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (statutory) — most recent update (2025).
- Children and Social Work Act 2017; SEND Code of Practice (0–25).
(See Sources section for full references.)

Roles and responsibilities

Headteacher (Erika Rothlisberger)

- Ensure an appropriately trained Designated Teacher (DT) is appointed and that immediate cover is in place if the DT is absent.
- Ensure school procedures monitor admission, progress, attendance and behaviour/exclusions for LAC/PLAC and that leaders intervene where required.
- Ensure DT and staff receive training on trauma-informed practice consistent with our improvement priorities.
- Report termly to the Management Committee on LAC/PLAC outcomes and resource allocation (see management committee section).

Management Committee

- Maintain oversight of LAC/PLAC numbers, outcomes and the use of resources (including Pupil Premium Plus where relevant).
- Ensure the school's admissions and safeguarding policies support LAC/PLAC and that responsibilities under the Admissions Code are implemented.
- Receive a termly anonymised report covering: number on roll, attendance (as a discrete group), progress/teacher assessment, fixed-term and permanent exclusions, and destinations for leavers. Reports must preserve child confidentiality.
- Ensure that all members are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Looked After Children.

Designated Teacher (DT) (Erika Rothlisberger is the named DT)

- Provide a prompt, welcoming induction for every LAC/PLAC
- Use the PEP to plan needs and transitions (academic, pastoral, welfare) in consultation with the child, carer and social worker where possible. (Where a child is dual registered with a "home school" jigsaw will support the home school in this role)

- Ensure a PEP is initiated within 20 school days (10 in Sefton) of a child starting or becoming looked after and that PEP reviews align with statutory care plan reviews. Where Jigsaw is not the main school, Jigsaw will support the “home school” in creating the PEP
- Maintain an up-to-date record of LAC/PLAC and ensure appropriate, proportionate information sharing on a need-to-know basis. Use CPOMS for specialist notes and record keeping.
- Track attainment and progress; coordinate inschool support; identify and act on underachievement quickly using evidence-informed approaches (see Pupil Premium Plus guidance).
- Liaise with the Virtual School Head (VSH) to agree use of Pupil Premium Plus and strategic support. (Where Jigsaw is not the main school they will liaise with the “home school”)
- Ensure each child has an identified trusted member of staff they can speak to (may not be the DT if the child prefers someone else).
- Lead multi-agency meetings where a child is at risk of exclusion and coordinate alternatives (adjusted curriculum, therapeutic input, bespoke timetable) to maintain placement. Where Jigsaw is not the main school, they will provide expert advice and act as an advocate for the pupil
- Support transitions (into, between and leaving Jigsaw) with clear plans and transfer of records.
- Promote inclusion, monitor bullying and ensure anti-bullying measures respond to trauma/SEMH needs.
- Attend regular training to keep practice current (trauma-informed, attachment aware, PEP quality).

All staff

- Hold high aspirations for LAC/PLAC and maintain confidentiality and sensitivity.
- Respond promptly to DT requests for information and implement agreed strategies in class (differentiation, scaffolding, consistent routines).
- Use the school’s trauma/attachment strategies in daily practice (consistent language, predictability, de-escalation).

Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and assessment of need

- PEPs are the primary planning and monitoring tool for LAC education. A PEP must be started within 20 school days (10 in Sefton) of a child becoming LAC or joining the school (this does not include when a child becomes dual registered with Jigsaw) and reviewed at least at every statutory review or sooner if needs change.
- PEPs must be child-centred, include SMART targets aligned to the school improvement priorities (e.g., speaking and listening targets where relevant), record use of Pupil Premium Plus and measure impact. Each PEP must identify: baseline, specific barriers (including SEMH/trauma), planned in-school provision,

external support, lead staff, and success indicators. (Jigsaw will share information and attend the PEP where they are not the “home school”).

- Because every pupil at Jigsaw has SEND and SEMH needs, PEPs will prioritise therapeutic and relational goals alongside academic targets. Our emphasis on trauma-informed practice alongside academic progress is embedded into how the DT constructs targets and selects interventions.
- The school will actively listen to, record, and—wherever possible—act upon the voice of looked-after children(LAC.) This will usually be captured through 1-1 conversations where appropriate. We recognise that the pupil is the central expert in their own life and education.

Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) and resource use

- Jigsaw will work with the VSH to identify and allocate PP+ (where available) in line with the DfE menu of approaches and Virtual School guidance. The DT is responsible for advising how PP+ should be spent at school level and for evidencing impact in the child’s PEP. (Note: local arrangements for PP+ allocation and eligibility are managed by the local authority/Virtual School — the DT will liaise with the VSH.) Where Jigsaw is not the “home school” they will advise and support the school with use of PP+).

Attendance, behaviour and exclusions

- Attendance will be monitored daily and reported termly for LAC/PLAC as a discrete group. Barriers such as transport, appointments, or placement changes must be recorded and addressed in PEPs. Attendance will be shared weekly with any “home schools”.
- Exclusion is a last resort. Where a LAC/PLAC is at risk of exclusion the DT will convene a multi-professional meeting immediately to agree preventative measures and alternatives such as tailored timetable, in-school therapeutic support or managed moves. The child’s PEP and Care Plan must be used to inform strategies. See Relationships and Behaviour Management Policy for operational detail.

Confidentiality and information sharing

- Information is shared on a need-to-know basis. The DT will agree what is shared at the PEP meeting with the social worker, home school, carer and child. The child should be aware of what is recorded, to the extent appropriate for their age and comprehension.

Record keeping and transfer of records

- The DT will keep an up-to-date register of LAC/PLAC. Relevant records (PEPs, attainment, behaviour, safeguarding) should be kept in CPOMS and in the child’s

school file. At transfer, records are sent promptly to the receiving school and the VSH is notified.

Multi-agency working and SEND (given Jigsaw's context)

- Many of our pupils have EHC plans and complex SEMH needs. The DT will work closely with the SENCo, VSH, social workers, home school, health professionals (including CAMHS) and the local authority's Designated Social Care Officer for SEND to ensure EHC plans, care plans and PEPs are aligned and do not duplicate.
- Universal classroom strategies (attachment-aware routines, predictable curriculum sequences, language scaffolds to improve speaking and listening) must be in place before specialist provision is added.

Training and staff development

- The school will ensure DT, SENCo and pastoral leads receive regular training on PEP quality and legal duties). All staff will receive regular training on trauma and attachment, the needs of LAC/PLAC and on Jigsaw's therapeutic approaches.

Admissions and transitions

- Pupils are admitted to Jigsaw via either monitoring and placement, fair access or by direct referral from schools. LAC are an 'excepted group' for admissions and will be prioritised in line with the Admissions Code. Jigsaw will provide a welcoming, planned induction (including pre-entry visits) and rapid PEP initiation where necessary.

Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

Each term the DT will provide an anonymised information to the Management Committee as part of the SLT report, including: number on roll, attendance, attainment/progress (teacher assessment and other measures), exclusions, PEP quality checks and destinations for leavers. The report will also summarise use and impact of PP+ and identify any resource needs (where under Jigsaw's control).

Equality and anti-discrimination

Jigsaw ensures LAC/PLAC have equal access to the curriculum and activities. Staff will challenge stigma and ensure reasonable adjustments and support for transport, uniform or equipment where necessary.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months or sooner if statutory guidance changes. Next scheduled review: June 2027 (or earlier if DfE/LA guidance is updated).

Sources

- DfE, Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children (Feb 2018).
- DfE, The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children (Feb 2018).
- Keeping Children Safe in Education — statutory guidance (most recent update 2025).
- Children and Social Work Act 2017; SEND Code of Practice (0–25).
- Local Virtual School guidance on Pupil Premium Plus (local VSH guidance; arrangements vary by authority).