

Inclusion Plan guidance for Previously Looked After Children

Purpose of an Inclusion Plan

- To ensure that all education professionals are fully aware of the needs and challenges faced by previously looked after children and their parents/carers.
- To promote positive collaboration between home, school, and early years settings.

An Inclusion Plan for Previously Looked After Children will only be initiated when parents/carers choose to identify their child's status. Confidentiality must always be maintained. Please note: this is a good practice document, not a statutory requirement.

Rationale

Many previously looked after children and young people have experienced neglect and/or trauma in their early lives, leading to periods in care before joining carers or adoptive families.

Parents and carers highlight the importance of schools and early years settings recognising that these children continue to have similar needs to those they had while in care. In some cases, these needs may be heightened, as adoption or a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) represents another significant transition in their journey.

Children may also face challenges in forming lasting relationships within their new families, which can create anxieties—particularly for those who have struggled with attachments and relationships in the past.

To address these needs, Worcestershire Virtual School has introduced the Inclusion Plan for Previously Looked After Children.

Purpose and Function

The Inclusion Plan aims to:

- Raise awareness of a child or young person's needs.
- Ensure relevant information is shared appropriately with those who need to know.
- Establish clear and effective communication routes between home, school, and other agencies.

The plan builds on the proactive nature of the Children in Care Personal Education Plan (PEP), which promotes collaborative planning and support across home, school/early years provision, and external organisations.

It is important to note that the Inclusion Plan does not replace other education-based plans such as Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or Pastoral Support Programmes (PSPs). Instead, it complements them by providing evidence of how schools and early years settings meet the needs of vulnerable pupils—supporting requirements for OFSTED inspections and Governor reports.

Initiation and Review

Inclusion Plans can be initiated by either the school/early years setting or parents/carers. Once established, the plan will be subject to ongoing review, with review dates agreed by those attending the initial meeting. These may be set at intervals such as three months, six months, or annually, depending on the child's circumstances.

The Inclusion Plan process is typically initiated when:

- A school-aged child becomes adopted, at the final Children in Care PEP meeting before an Adoption Order or SGO is confirmed.
- A child starts at a new school or early years setting.

However, the process can be initiated at any point if these circumstances have not occurred.

Partnership and Participation

Supporting previously looked after children requires strong partnership working. Meetings should include representatives from:

- The school or early years setting
- Parents/carers
- Any external organisations whose input would be beneficial

Targets will be agreed collaboratively and monitored by the school.

It is essential to capture the child or young person's voice—their thoughts, feelings, and views. This information can be recorded within the Inclusion Plan.

The Virtual School is available to provide advice and guidance on completing the Inclusion Plan if required.

For further support, please contact: Jade Busby

Previously Looked After Children Advisor

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