



Looked After Children

At all York Childcare nurseries we are committed to providing a welcoming and inclusive quality environment for all children and families.

Definition and legal framework

A child who has been in the care of their local authority for more than 24 hours is known as a looked-after child (LAC). Looked-after children are also often referred to as children in care (CIC), a term which many children and young people prefer.

The term 'looked after child' denotes a child's current legal status. The nursery never uses this term to categorise a child as standing out from others or refers to a child using acronyms such as LAC/CIC.

The legal framework for this policy is underpinned by or supported through:

- Childcare Act (2006)
- Children Act (2004)
- Adoption and Children Act (2002)
- Children and Young Persons Act (2008)
- Children and Families Act (2014).

Our policy

We are aware that there are a number of reasons why a child may go into care and these reasons may or may not include traumatic experiences or abuse. The nursery staff team are all trained to understand our safeguarding policy and procedures. Additional training to support children's individual needs will be planned for where appropriate.

Our nursery treats each child as an individual. We recognise that for young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled appropriately with their carer. We will discuss with the child's carer, and social worker where applicable, the length of time the child has been with the carer before they start nursery to establish how secure the child feels and whether they are ready to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them.

Where applicable, we contribute to any assessment about the child, such as those carried out under local authorities' assessment frameworks or Early Help Assessment (EHA) and to any multi-agency meetings, case conferences or strategy meetings in relation to the child's learning and development. The designated person for LAC and/or the child's key person will attend meetings as appropriate.

The designated person for LAC is displayed on the notice board in or near the corresponding room of each nursery.



Each child is allocated a key person. The key person will support the child initially with transition and settling in and then continue to support and build up a relationship with the child, carers and any other agencies involved. Regular contact will be maintained with the carers throughout the child's time at the nursery and with the social worker or other professionals (where applicable).

The key person will carry out regular ongoing practice such as observations to build up a picture of the child's interests, and plan activities accordingly to support the child's stage of learning and development and interests. This information will be shared with carers and other professionals as appropriate as well as any concerns surrounding their developmental stages.

Where applicable, we will complete a Personal Education Plan (PEP) for any children aged three to five in partnership with the social worker and/or care manager and carers. We will also attend all appropriate meetings and contribute to reviews. The key person and designated LAC practitioner will work together to ensure any onward transition to school, or another nursery is handled sensitively to ensure that this is as smooth as possible and all necessary information is shared.

Key contact details:

Local Authority Designated Officer	01904 551783
Children's social care team	01904 551900