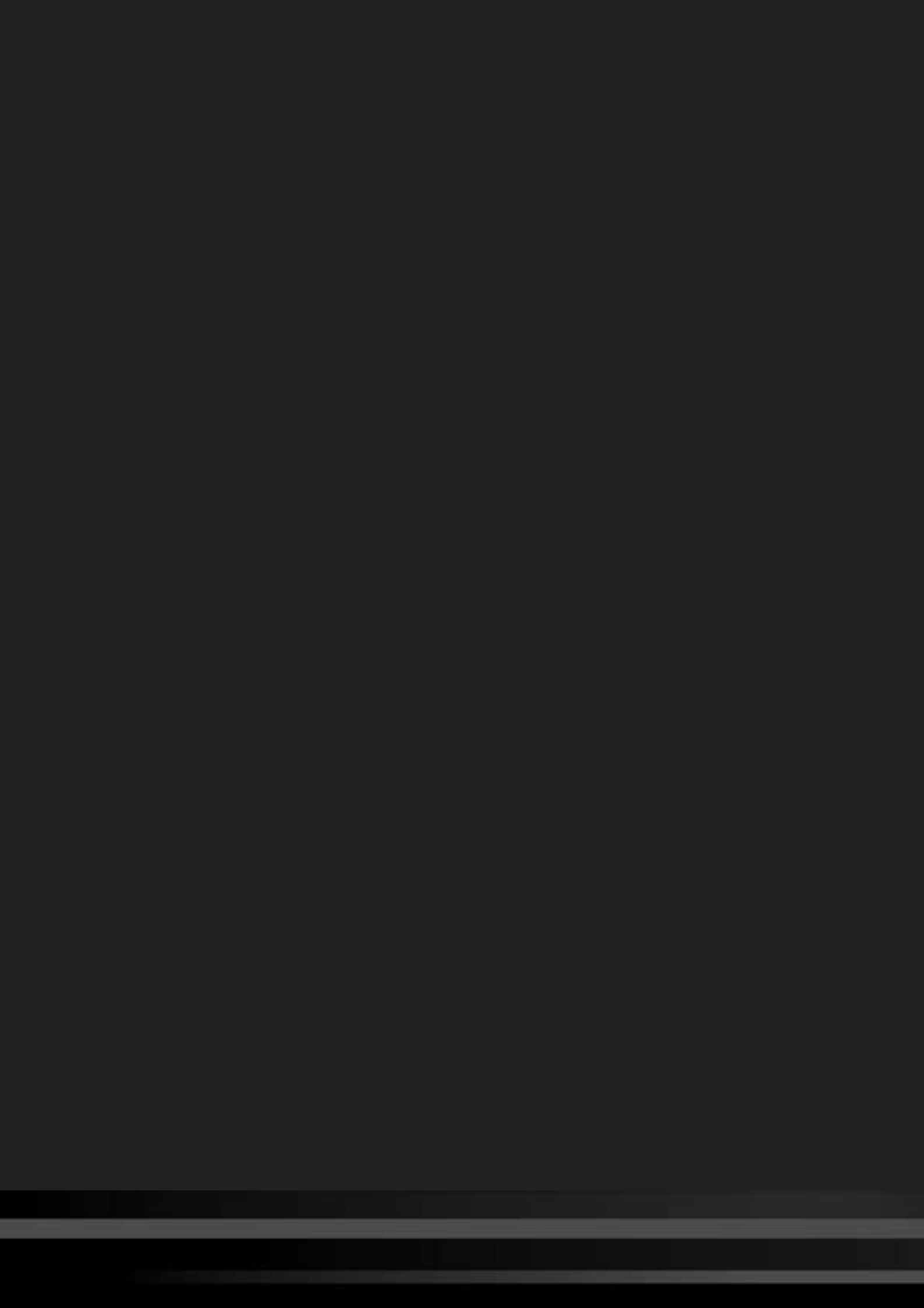


# Understanding **Education**



A guide for social workers and carers to support  
the education of looked after children



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# Understanding Education

## Introduction

Understanding the education process and how schools work can, at times, be confusing. We all want our children to do their best and be happy in school. Giving children support with their education is one of the most important things that parents and carers can offer.

To be effective in our roles and to fulfil our duty as the corporate parent, we need to understand the education system. This is helped by knowing a little about how schools work and how children learn.

When a child is in care, the local authority assumes 'corporate responsibility'. This means that there is a whole range of people collectively responsible for the well being of that child. The role of the social worker and carer is of utmost importance as key people in the day-to-day life of a child, ensuring they attend daily and get the most out of their time at school so they can feel confident to take part in all aspects of school life, sit their tests and take their exams. It is essential that everyone is clear about their roles and responsibilities and who does what, when and how. It is vital to know what children are learning and what they are achieving, so that we know how we can best help.

This guide provides information about how the education system works with the aim of helping carers and social workers meet their responsibilities in supporting the educational needs of looked after children (LAC). We also hope that it will be a useful tool to raise awareness, answer questions or queries and provide helpful information and guidance to enable you to take action or seek support with any educational issues or concerns that you may have.

Looked after children are a council and national priority and Lambeth is committed to raising the educational achievements of looked after children.

If we work together we can provide young people with what they need to enjoy their time at school and encourage them to successfully access education and all the opportunities on offer both during and after school hours.

This document is intended mainly to assist those working with pupils of compulsory school age (i.e. reception to year 11). However, we have added further information on accessing early years education and appropriate provision post 16. In addition I recommend this guide should be used in conjunction with the 'Who Does What?' guide produced by the DfES.

I hope that you find it useful in supporting looked after children in your care.

### **Phyllis Dunipace**

#### **Executive Director**

Lambeth Children and  
Young People's Service



# 1

## Section 1: Schools

### Non-compulsory

**Pre schools** provide care and education for children as young as six weeks to pre school five year olds.

**Nursery schools** provide non-compulsory schooling for three to four year olds. Nursery classes are provided in some state primary schools for children from three or four and usually are open during school term time.

### Compulsory

**Primary schools** provide education for children between the ages of five and 11 years old. This is where infant, junior and sometimes nursery classes are combined within one school.

**Secondary schools** offer compulsory education to 11 to 16 year olds. They are attended by the majority of pupils in the country. Many secondary schools offer 6th form provision which allows pupils to remain in school until they are 18 years old.

**Special schools** provide education to pupils with learning needs that cannot be met in a mainstream school. These schools are provided and maintained by the local authority. These can be primary and/or secondary aged and children who attend will have a statement of special education needs (SEN).

*Appendix 6 provides further information on types of schools*

### How the curriculum works

The National Curriculum was introduced by the government to ensure that all pupils in state schools receive an entitlement to a basic education. There are 11 core subjects in primary school and 14 subjects are taught in secondary school.

In each subject pupils are taught **Skills** (things children need to be able to do), **Understanding** (having a grasp of basic concepts and ideas) and **Knowledge** (knowing things "off by heart"). It sets out standards to measure how well pupils are doing in every subject so that teachers can monitor achievement, review progress and plan how to help them do better.

You can find out more about how the curriculum is taught in your child's school by:

- Looking at the school prospectus, which will explain how the curriculum is taught in each year group,
- Talking to your child's teacher
- Looking up the school website on the Internet. The school receptionist will give you the details for this.

The National Curriculum is divided in to key stages which are explained on the next page.

# 1

## Section 1: Schools

### Year groups, Key Stages and Expected Levels of Attainment

#### Year Groups

Compulsory school age covers children aged 5-16 years old. School year groups for pupils of compulsory school age run in sequence from reception through to year 11 (5th Year of secondary school). The table below provides an outline of how the age and year groups for young people for the academic year 2005 - 2006 are organised.

#### Academic Year Groups: Primary School 2005 - 2006

Age	Date of Birth	Year Group
4+	1/9/00 - 31/8/01	Reception
5+	1/9/99 - 31/8/00	1
6+	1/9/98 - 31/8/99	2
7+	1/9/97 - 31/8/98	3
8+	1/9/96 - 31/8/97	4
9+	1/9/95 - 31/8/96	5
10+	1/9/94 - 31/8/95	6

#### Academic Year Groups: Secondary School 2005 - 2006

Age	Date of Birth	Year Group
11+	1/9/93 - 31/8/94	7
12+	1/9/92 - 31/8/93	8
13+	1/9/91 - 31/8/92	9
14+	1/9/90 - 31/8/91	10
15+	1/9/89 - 31/8/90	11

## Key Stages

### Foundation Stage

All four year olds and many three year olds are entitled to free part-time education. These early years, together with their time in reception class at primary school, make up the Foundation Stage. All children in nursery and reception class between three and five years of age should be following the Foundation Stage curriculum. The Foundation Stage curriculum consists of Early Learning Goals, which cover six areas of learning. These are:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication, language and literacy
- Mathematical development
- Knowledge and understanding of the world
- Physical development and
- Creative development

There will be an assessment at the end of the Foundation Stage which is called the Foundation Stage Profile.

### The Foundation Stage Profile

This is a national scheme to enable teachers to record observations and summarise children's achievements at the end of the Foundation Stage. It will be used to summarise their achievements of the Early Learning Goals within the Foundation Stage and covers all six areas of learning. Teachers record achievement based on their observations of activities throughout the reception year.

For further information about how to ensure your child is accessing the Foundation Stage at nursery or an early years see Section 2: Early Years and Sure Start and/or contact your Local Authority.

The Foundation Stage lasts until the end of reception class when the child is old enough to progress to year 1. (i.e. primary school)



# 1

## Section 1: Schools

### Key Stages in primary and secondary school

From reception to year 11 there are four 'Key Stages'. There are two key stages in primary school:

- Key Stage 1 (KS1) which covers school years 1 & 2
- Key Stage 2 (KS2) which covers years 3, 4, 5 and 6.

There are two key stages in secondary school:

- Key Stage 3 (KS3), which covers school years 7, 8 and 9,
- Key Stage 4 (KS4) covers years 10 & 11.

This table should help you understand how year groups are organised:

Stage	Year group	Tests
Foundation	Nursery/Reception	
Key stage 1	Year 1 Year 2	National tests and tasks in reading, writing and mathematics
Key stage 2	Year 3 Year 4 Year 5 Year 6	National tests in English, mathematics and science
Key stage 3	Year 7 Year 8 Year 9	National tests in English, mathematics and science
Key stage 4	Year 10 Year 11	Most young people take GCSEs or other national qualifications (e.g GNVQ)

### Expected Levels of Attainment

#### National Tests - Standard Attainment Tests (SATs)

The government sets an achievement level at the end of each key stage that every child is expected to reach. At the end of each key stage, children sit Standard Attainment Tests (SATs) or National Curriculum (NC) Tests, as they are now known, to determine this level. The achievement is referred to as their SAT/NC level.

The Government uses these results to measure and compare educational achievement across the country. Local authorities also use these to develop work to improve learning and report on this.

The following tables outline the expected levels of attainment for young people at the end of each key stage. Areas shaded indicate the government's expected level. Parents/carers are informed by the school what level the child has achieved. If there is anything about the levels that you do not understand, the school will be able to explain it to you.

## Key Stage 1 (ages 5-7, Years 1-2)

Key Stage 1 (KS1) Lower Primary: Reception to Year 2	
Level	Expected Outcomes at Age seven
Level 3	Child has exceeded the expected level
Level 2	The expected level for the end of this key stage is split into three (2a, 2b, and 2c). The expected level at this stage is level 2b
Level 1 or below	Child is working towards the expected level

At the end of this Key Stage, your child will take National Curriculum (SATs) tests in reading, writing and mathematics.

Subjects taught at Key Stage 1:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Music
- History
- Geography
- Art & Design
- Design & Technology (DT)
- Physical Education (PE)
- Information & Communication Technology (ICT)
- Religious Education (RE)

## Key Stage 2 (ages 7-11, Years 3-6)

Key Stage 2 (KS2) Upper Primary: Year 3 to Year 6	
Levels	Expected Outcomes at Age 11
Level 5	Child has exceeded the expected level
Level 4	The expected level for the end of this key stage
Level 3 or below	Child is working towards the expected level

At the end of Key Stage 2, the last years of primary school, your child will take National Curriculum (SATs) tests in English, mathematics and science.

Subjects taught at Key Stage 2:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Music
- History
- Geography
- Art & Design
- Design & Technology (DT)
- Physical Education (PE)
- Information & Communication Technology (ICT)
- Religious Education (RE)
- Modern foreign languages

# 1

## Section 1: Schools

### Key Stage 3 (Ages 11-14, Years 7-9)

Key Stage 3 (KS3) Lower Secondary School: Year 7 to Year 9	
Levels	Expected Outcomes at Age 13
Level 6 and above	Child has exceeded the expected level
Level 5	The expected level for the end of this key stage
Level 4 or below	Child is working towards the expected level

At the end of key stage 3, your child will take National Curriculum (SATS) tests in English, mathematics, science.

Subjects that are taught in Key Stage 3:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Design & Technology (DT)
- History
- Geography
- Art & Design
- Music
- Physical Education (PE)
- Modern Foreign Languages
- Information & Communication Technology (ICT)
- Religious Education (RE)
- Citizenship
- Sex education

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) is not compulsory but many schools do teach it. Schools will inform you of the National Curriculum (SATS) test results for English, mathematics and science and the teacher assessment levels for English, mathematics, science, design & technology (DT), history, geography, art & design, music, information & communication technology (ICT), modern foreign languages and Physical Education (PE).



## Key Stage 4 (ages 14-16, Years 10 & 11)

During this stage (the final stage of compulsory education), attainment is measured differently. SAT/NC tests are replaced by GCSE, GNVQ, NVQ and other examinations such as City & Guilds qualifications. These are mainly held in year 11. From the start of year 10, young people will be producing coursework. The grades obtained from coursework contribute to the final qualification.

Subjects studied at Key Stage 4 are:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Design & Technology (DT)
- Modern Foreign Languages
- Information & Communication Technology (ICT)
- Religious Education (RE)
- Citizenship
- Sex Education
- Physical Education (PE)
- Careers Education (PE)

Not all these subjects lead to a qualification.

In addition there are optional subjects chosen by the young person that can include:

- Geography
- History
- Music
- Art and design
- Health and social care

## GCSEs /GNVQs

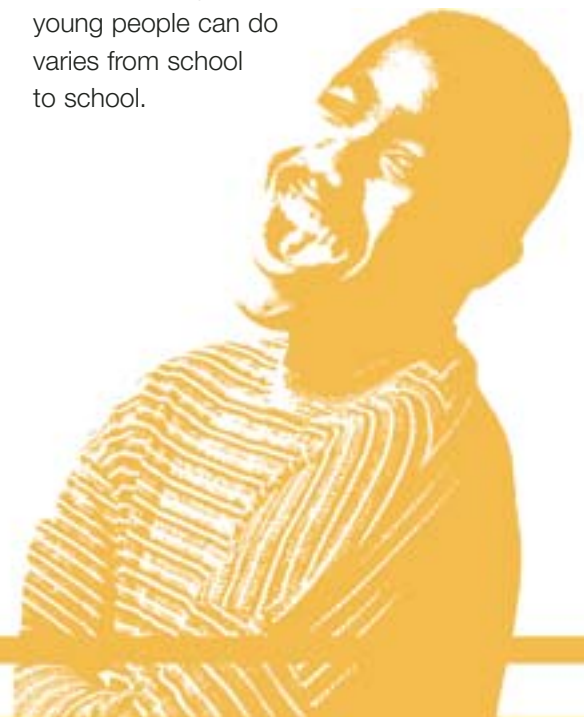
### General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)

GCSE grades are determined by a young person's exam performance combined with their assessed coursework produced during years 10 & 11. GCSEs are graded from A\*-G, with A\* demonstrating exceptional performance. Young people usually require five GCSEs at A\* - C level (including English & maths), to be allowed to start an 'A' level or equivalent course at a school sixth form, sixth form college or college of further education.

### GNVQ/NVQ

These are practical competency based qualifications (also called vocational) that are related to jobs or specific vocational/work related areas. Such as hairdressing and motor mechanics

A GNVQ/NVQ qualification at the appropriate level (level 2) is the equivalent of four GCSEs grade A\*-C. The range of vocational subjects that young people can do varies from school to school.



# 1

## Section 1: Schools

### **How to support your child's progress**

It is essential to know how children are doing at school, to ensure they are making the progress expected and, if not, what can be done to resolve any issues or problems. Good communication with the school and a basic understanding of the curriculum will enable you to recognise when a child is falling behind with their education or when to celebrate their achievements along the way. You should:

- Ensure your child has an up to date Personal Education Plan (PEP)
- Support your child with their homework
- Ensure regular school attendance
- Engage with schools about the achievements and progress of your child
- It is a good idea to find out what coursework your child is doing, when it has to be completed by and if they need any support with that.
- Know when exams are, what time they start and finish and ensure the young person is supported and encouraged to attend punctually on the day.

*Appendix 4 provides a comprehensive guide to the PEP*

*Appendix 7 of this guide provides a list of helpful suggestions to assist social workers and foster carers support children throughout their time in education*

*Appendix 9 provides suggestions for further publications and reading*



## Communication between school and home

Schools have systems in place to ensure social workers, parents and carers are fully aware of how their child is doing in school, to highlight concerns as well as enable opportunities to celebrate success. Below are some of those systems:

### Home - School agreement

When a child starts a new school, the parent/carer should receive a written home-school agreement. This sets out the school's aims and values. The agreement will outline the school's responsibilities, your responsibilities, and what the school expects of its pupils. Each school's agreement is different but all should cover the importance of:

- Regular and punctual attendance
- Discipline and good behaviour
- Homework.

The aim of this agreement is to promote a good working partnership between you and the school. You will be asked to sign a copy of the agreement.

### Parents' Evenings

These usually happen once a year. They provide an opportunity for teachers, and parents/carers to discuss how a child is progressing educationally and socially. Before attending these meetings, it may be a good idea to write a list of points you would like to make and questions you would like to ask. Such areas might be:

- Strengths and weaknesses in subjects?
- Does my child seem happy at school?
- How does my child get on with other pupils?

Some schools have replaced parents' evenings with regular home reports, emails between parents and teachers, or individual face-to-face appointments. However most schools are keeping to the familiar evening formula. Who should attend parents' evening should be agreed at the PEP meeting. If foster carers are unsure when the next parent's evening is, they should contact the child's school to find out.

### School Reports

Schools produce a report on your child's progress every year. This provides information about their achievements, progress, areas for improvement, behaviour and attendance. You should read through the report, and give your child plenty of praise and encouragement for their achievements and improvements as well as addressing their concerns. It is important that both the carer and social worker have copies of the reports as they can contribute to the target setting process in the PEP (see appendix 4). School reports are also a good way of sharing progress and achievement with family members (where relevant) and other people that need to know about a child's educational progress.

# 1

## Section 1: Schools

### **Student diary / journal**

Schools usually give students a diary or journal in which to write their homework or where to note down things they need to do. There is usually a section on each page where you can make any notes for the teacher. This is a way of communicating directly with the form/class tutor on a daily basis.

### **Other school communication**

Schools may need to contact foster carers and social workers from time to time about specific concerns such as behaviour, progress and attendance. This could be through letter, phone call or personal contact.

### **Who's who in schools**

There are a number of key people involved in your child's education that you need to be aware of. The list below indicates some of the key people and their roles within school.

#### **Headteacher**

The headteacher has overall responsibility for the leadership and management of the school. As the leading professional the headteacher should ensure the school is well managed and organised. In order to support teachers and other staff they should ensure there are appropriate policies and procedures in place and that resources and accommodation are used effectively and efficiently and good relationships are fostered within the whole school community.

#### **Deputy Headteacher(s)**

Deputy headteachers play a major role in managing the school and assume responsibility for the school in the absence of the headteacher. Schools vary in terms of the

number of deputy headteachers. Some have no deputies but have several assistant headteachers, others have between 1 and 4 deputies. Deputy headteachers may also hold pastoral or curriculum responsibilities.

#### **Assistant Headteacher(s)**

Assistant headteachers are appointed by some schools to support the headteacher and deputy headteachers with the management of the school. They have roles similar to deputy headteachers but may have more restricted areas of responsibility.

#### **Designated Teacher for Looked After Children**

The designated teacher for looked after children has a special responsibility for knowing and supporting children and young people in care within any school. Designated teachers need to be aware of how many looked after children a school has, who they are and what, if any, support they need to make the most of their time at school. A designated teacher can provide advice and be an advocate for looked after children within their school. They will also be involved in the writing and management of the PEP.



## **Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)**

The SENCO provides support and guidance to ensure that young people with special educational needs receive high quality teaching and access to resources. The SENCO works closely with class teachers to ensure that appropriate work is set for the pupils with SEN in their class.

## **Phase Co-ordinator**

These staff are responsible for the attainment, progress, care and support of children in a specific school phase (i.e. Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2)

## **Head of Year (usually secondary schools)**

Heads of year (also known as Pastoral Managers) are responsible for the social well being of the pupils within their year group and play a major role in the overall development of young people within the school. This includes academic progress, personal development and liaison with carers/residential workers on discipline and behavioural issues.

## **Class/Form Teachers**

The class teacher or form tutor should be the first point of contact for general concerns about your child. They are responsible for planning and preparing lessons, setting and marking work, ensuring good behaviour in class and assessing the overall progress of children they teach.

## **Learning Mentor**

Learning Mentors are based in some schools and work together with teachers and support staff to identify, assess and support pupils who need extra help to overcome barriers to learning in and outside of school.

## **Teaching Assistants / Learning Support Assistants (TA / LSA)**

Work alongside teachers in the classroom to support lessons and sometimes work on a one to one basis with pupils.

## **School Administration Staff**

The staff based in the school office may often be the first point of contact for an inquiry. These offices are usually very busy around the start and end of the school day.

## **Midday Supervisor**

These staff supervise the care of children during the lunchbreak.

## **School Governing Body**

The governing body is drawn from different parts of the community. It has a wide range of duties and powers and a general responsibility for the conduct of the school. All maintained schools have governing bodies, as do City Technology Colleges and City Academies. Some governing bodies have a designated governor for vulnerable pupils including looked after children.

# 2

## Section 2: The Local Authority

*This section outlines the many services in local authorities that can support social workers and carers with education issues. It refers mainly to services provided by Lambeth local authority. However there is much similarity between all local authorities but for those foster carers based outside of Lambeth it is best to seek advice and guidance from your borough of residence about education services available to support looked after children.*

Getting to know who does what in your local authority is essential in helping you understand how to support your child's education. There are many times when you need to take a leading role in finding out about certain issues and advocating for your child. Knowing how your local authority works will help you access advice, guidance and enable you to support your child and without delay.

### **Educational training and support for social workers and foster carers**

Local authorities offer training and support to social workers and foster carers to equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to be able to act on a child's behalf when it comes to education matters. If you are a carer with an independent fostering agency, the education contact in the fostering agency will be able to tell you about the training being offered. Additionally, this guide will help support your understanding of these key issues.

### **Safeguarding Children in Education**

Everyone involved in a child or young person's education must take responsibility to ensure he or she is kept safe. This includes;

- Providing a safe environment.
- Identifying children and young people who may be at risk of significant harm and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and at school.

As of September 2005 the Education Service/LEA and the Children's Services area within Social Services in Lambeth were merged and are now known as Lambeth Children and Young People's Service.

The Children and Young People's Service and schools are required to have systems in place to achieve the following aims:

- To prevent unsuitable people from working with children and young people
- To promote the safe practice and challenge unsafe practices
- To identify instances where there are grounds for concerns about a child's welfare and initiate or take appropriate action to keep them safe

All schools must designate a Senior Person for Child Protection. This person is designated by the school's governing body to take the lead responsibility in dealing with child protection issues in the school.

The local authority has a Safeguarding Children manager who works with schools and other council departments to secure appropriate arrangements are in place to safeguard and protect the welfare of children.

## Early Years and Sure Start

This service looks after day nurseries, nursery schools, one o'clock clubs and out of school clubs. It oversees the following areas:

- Nursery Schools
- Day nurseries
- One O'clock clubs
- Children's Centres

It works closely with the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership in delivering the Children's Information Service (CIS), training for early years staff, child minding networks and the Nursery Education Grant.

You can get details of nurseries, out of school clubs, adventure playgrounds, crèches, toy libraries and parent and toddler groups on the ChildcareLink website.

Work is also undertaken in monitoring and supporting a range of quality early years educational opportunities and developing high quality childcare. This is delivered by a variety of establishments from the maintained, voluntary and private sector.

## The Children's Information Service (CIS)

provides free information on finding, paying for and working in childcare. This includes nurseries, childminders, parent toddler groups, baby friendly cinemas, crèches, adventure playgrounds etc. Lambeth run a 9am to 5pm telephone service (0845 601 5317) and you can also search online for childcare services at: [www.childcarelink.gov.uk](http://www.childcarelink.gov.uk)

## Admissions Service

Lambeth Admissions supports families with children starting primary (Reception) or secondary school (Year 7) through the co-ordinated admissions schemes. The service also assists parents and carers whose children need mid-year / non-routine school places. This is entry into schools outside of the reception/secondary entrance phase. The service offers advice and guidance to social workers and foster carers to assist them locate a school place for a child outside of the normal entrance times. For example: providing information on existing school vacancies. The service also works to ensure there is appropriate education for pupils who are out of education for a period of time.

***Appendix 1 outlines the process that will assist social workers and foster carers secure access to a school place in Lambeth.***



# 2

## Section 2: The Local Authority

### Special Educational Needs Service

Lambeth Special Educational Needs Service is responsible for arranging statutory assessments and identifying if a child is in need of a statement of educational needs. It is responsible for statutory assessments of SEN and the maintenance and monitoring of statements of SEN.

The service is also responsible for:

- SEN Transport
- Resources to schools for pupils who have been identified for SEN
- Processing requests for the Local Authority to initiate statutory assessments

The Local Authority also provides a partnership service for parents who need information and advice about the statutory assessment process and those who may be in disagreement with the Local Authority.

***Appendix 2 of this guide explains the SEN procedure in more detail***

### School Re-integration Service

This service provides support, advice and guidance to school staff, parents/carers and other agencies in relation to pupils missing education or those at risk of exclusion. The service provides support to a range of vulnerable pupils including looked after school age mothers, excluded pupils, and those with special educational needs to settle back into school.

***Appendix 2 provides an explanation of the exclusions process***

### Alternative Education Provision (AEP)

The local authority runs a range of AEP to meet specific needs of children and young people where required. They offer an alternative to school for students who are finding school life or school work challenging or are out of school. Allocation of places to alternative provision is governed by the local authority pupil placement panel (PPP). The pupil placement panel is a multi agency panel who make decisions regarding appropriate education provisions for children and young people who are out of education.

### Pupil Referral Units (PRU)

These provide access to full-time education to students who have been permanently excluded from school. The pupil placement panel makes decisions about which young people attend these.

### Behaviour and Education Support Team (BEST)

BESTs are a multi-agency group of professionals who support children and young people, families and schools to ensure that children and young people are happy and secure. They help with concerns about behaviour and emotional well being. This could be through support and advice to schools, carers/residential workers and social workers on strategies to improve behaviour or through therapeutic sessions to parents and children.

## **Attendance and Intervention Team**

If a young person has poor attendance or refuses to go to school then the school can seek support from an Attendance and Intervention Officer (formerly known as an Education Welfare Officer). The team monitors the absence and attendance of Lambeth pupils including all school age looked after children and young people and provides support and guidance to schools and parents/carers to improve attendance.

## **Ethnic Minority Achievement Team**

The team work with schools to raise standards of achievement for pupils learning English as an additional language (EAL), refugees and asylum seekers, travellers and those from minority ethnic groups who are particularly at risk of under-achieving. Although working mainly with schools, the team offer support for refugee and asylum seeker pupils including Home-School Liaison Officers who work closely with families.

## **The Educational Psychology Service**

This service supports the development and progress of young people between the ages of 0 - 19. Each school has a link to the service. Educational Psychologists (EPs) are trained, experienced teachers and psychology professionals.

They work directly with young people to improve the ways in which they learn. They also offer consultation and advice to a whole range of professionals, parents and carers working for the benefit of young people.

## **The Looked After Children Education Achievement Team (LACEAT)**

The LACEA Team is primarily a strategic team which works with social work teams, education officers, school staff, health teams, other local authorities and professionals to ensure improved educational achievement. The team is a good point of contact for advice and guidance about local authority services and other education provision that exists in the borough.



# 2

## Section 2: The Local Authority

### Other local authority support

#### Study Support

Research into the impact of looked after children's involvement in out of school hours learning indicates that it helps them enjoy school more, become successful learners, improves self-esteem and raises their levels of achievement. Lambeth Study Support promotes learning activity outside normal school hours, which young people take part in, voluntarily. Activities include homework, breakfast clubs and after school clubs which are provided by schools, voluntary groups and community groups. They take place before or after school, at weekends and during the school holidays.

#### Connexions

Connexions is a service that offers guidance and support to young people through their teenage years (and up to 25 for young people with learning difficulties or disabilities), so that they can make the best possible transition to adulthood and working life. The Connexions service offers information, advice and guidance to all young people to help them find positive ways forward in life and to remain successfully in education, employment or training.

#### Lambeth Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP)

PAYP targets at risk young people (aged 8 to 19) to support them away from offending behaviour and other high risk activity. PAYP support to young people is offered through two means: one-to-one key working and through the provision of diversionary activities. One scheme, the Lambeth Uproject supports looked after young people's transition from school to employment, training, etc. through one to one key working, group work and residential.

#### Post 16 support

Lambeth positively encourages young people of post compulsory school age to participate in further education and training. There are many opportunities for Lambeth Learners to develop their skills and gain qualifications. Opportunities to aspire towards university are promoted through seminars and workshops in schools. Six Lambeth secondary schools offer sixth form curriculum. There are a number of sixth form colleges in and around Lambeth. A good source of information for ideas about what courses to do and where to do them is [www.lambeth14-19.org/](http://www.lambeth14-19.org/)

**For contact details of each of the local authority services outlined above see Appendix 5 of this guide**

# 1

## Appendix 1: School Admissions: Finding a school place

This section clarifies the process involved in applying for a school place in and out of Lambeth. Please note that other local authorities may have slightly different requirements and it is important to contact the relevant authority where the young person is educated for advice.

Foster carers and residential staff in care homes are expected to work with social workers to support a child's access to an appropriate school place. Finding education provision when a child moves to a new area is not always easy. Lambeth Admissions produce booklets every year to assist parents and carers with school applications.

The booklet is available from One Stop Shop. The One Stop Shop can be found on the ground floor of International House, Canterbury Crescent, SW9.



### Admissions procedure

Local authorities are expected to have a co-ordinated system of primary and secondary admissions to ensure that school places are offered fairly and consistently in reception and year 7 classes. While this guide concentrates on Lambeth, the government expects that all admissions services across the country operate in a similar way.

New legislation to help looked after children access a school place states that looked after children become top priority for a school place, even if the school year has already started. The only exceptions to this are:

- If the school is full, then looked after children go to the top of the waiting list.
- If it is a faith-based school then top priority will only be given to looked after children from that faith. If they do not share the same faith they will be second priority.
- If the application is to a grammar school then top priority will only be given to looked after children who meet the academic criteria.

**Note: These rules apply whether a young person is looked after by Lambeth authority or not.**

# 1

## Appendix 1: School Admissions: Finding a school place

### School types

How the school is defined will determine whether they manage their own admissions or whether the Local Authority manages it. This definition will also have an impact on the admission criteria that they use. Below is a brief guide to school categories and how they differ when dealing with admissions. See appendix 6 for further details.

#### Academies, Voluntary Aided & Foundation

**Schools:** These schools have their own admissions criteria.

#### Voluntary Controlled and Community

**schools:** These schools follow the Local Authority admissions criteria.

**It is important to note that other local authorities may have different admissions requirements and if you are a carer living outside of Lambeth please consult your local authority Admissions service.**

The following table provides an at a glance guide to the admissions procedure for securing a Reception place in September or January and a Year 7 (1st year of secondary) place in September, annually.

	Nursery	Primary	Secondary
<b>When to Apply?</b>	When a child reaches 2 years of age	Applications for a reception year place should be submitted to the local authority before the set annual February deadline which is in the academic year before the child is due to start reception year.	Applications for secondary transfer (Year 6 to Year 7) should be submitted to the local authority before the set annual October deadline.
<b>To whom?</b>	Contact nursery/nursery schools directly	Lambeth Admissions using the Starting Schools in Lambeth booklet. Additional information may be required from some schools.	Lambeth Admissions using the Secondary Schools in Lambeth booklet. Additional information may be required from some schools.
<b>How do I apply?</b>	Via nursery/nursery schools application form	Using a Lambeth Common Application Form (CAF) which can be obtained from Lambeth Admissions, Lambeth website or CYPS One Stop Shop	Using the secondary school transfer Common Application Form (CAF) which can be obtained from Lambeth Admissions, Lambeth website or CYPS One Stop Shop

# Understanding Education

<p><b>When will I know if the application is successful?</b></p>	<p>You will be notified by the nursery/nursery school when a school place becomes available</p>	<p>Lambeth Admissions will contact you by the set annual deadline (April). Any offers that can be made must be formally accepted by the May deadline as any offer made could be withdrawn.</p>	<p>Lambeth Admissions will contact you on the national offer day in March. Any offers that can be made must be formally accepted by the set deadline for acceptance as any offer made could be withdrawn.</p>
<p><b>What do I need to be aware of?</b></p>	<p>There is no limit to the amount of applications a carer can submit.</p> <p>Priority will be given to families that live close to the school.</p> <p>Voluntary schools and foundation schools with nursery classes have their own admissions rules and need to be contacted directly.</p> <p>There is no right of appeal if you are refused a place, as nursery attendance is not statutory.</p>	<p>You are restricted to three choices, which should be ranked in order of preference.</p> <p>You can only apply to Lambeth schools on the Lambeth Primary CAF. (You will need a separate form to apply to schools in other local authorities).</p> <p>Places are allocated according to a school's admissions criteria. Looked after children are usually given a high priority in this.</p> <p>Young people attending nursery classes in primary schools do not automatically qualify for a reception place at the school. You will have to make a new application.</p>	<p>You can apply for up to 6 on the secondary transfer CAF.</p> <p>These choices can be for schools both in and outside of Lambeth.</p> <p>Places are allocated according to a school's admissions criteria. Looked after children are usually given a high priority in this.</p> <p>Late applications will not be considered until after the national offer day in March.</p>

# 1

## Appendix 1: School Admissions: Finding a school place

### **'In year' admissions**

These occur when a child requires a school place outside the standard time (if you are applying for a reception place in September or January or for a year 7 place starting in September). This can be a difficulty for many looked after children. For entry to schools outside the standard time, the foster carer and social worker will need to contact the school directly. The Admissions team will be able to assist foster carers and social workers with information about vacancies however they are not able to make applications on your behalf.

If a child or young person is unable to access appropriate education, it is important to inform the Lambeth Admissions team so that you can be supported to access provision.

It is expected that Looked After Children will access appropriate education with 20 schools days.



# 2

## Appendix 2: Special Education Needs process

Schools work to a Code of Practice for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN). SEN can cover one or more of the following area of development, such as:

- Emotional or behavioural needs
- Learning difficulties
- Health / medical
- Physical disability
- Social / communication difficulties

Once it has been determined by the school that a young person has special needs, they will be placed on one of the following three levels depending on what support is required. These levels are:

**School Action (or Early Years Action for very young children):** At this level the school provides extra 'in school support' that is not already available as part of the school's usual curriculum. This support is funded from the school's own resources and involves the drafting of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or targeted planning for the child.

**School Action Plus (or Early Years Action Plus):** The class teachers and special education needs co-ordinator (SENCO) are provided with support from outside specialists. This may include involving professionals from the local authority to provide specific support for the young person.

**Statement of Special Educational Needs:** Sometimes a child/young person will require a statement which will outline what the child's special needs are, the support required and who will provide it. A statement is drawn up after a statutory assessment.



# 2

## Appendix 2: Special Education Needs process

The process is outlined below:

- An assessment can be requested by a carer, social worker, the school, other educational provider or the health authority based on clear evidence that despite the help and support of the school and external specialists, the child's learning difficulty has not been sufficiently addressed.
- The assessment will decide whether a child's needs are met by a statement or whether provision can be made without a statement. This process ordinarily takes up to 18 weeks to complete. The decision is made by a multi-agency panel, which includes the SEN service manager, a headteacher representative, the principal educational psychologist and other appropriate local authority officers.
- Once a child has a statement, the child's needs are reviewed regularly and carers and social workers would be expected to be involved in the process.
- For a child placed outside of the borough, the SEN statement will be managed and monitored by the SEN team in the borough of residence.



# 3

## Appendix 3: School Exclusions Procedure

Exclusions are an option or way for a school to discipline young people for a serious breach of the school rules such as bullying, violent or aggressive behaviour or for a number of incidents over an extended period of time. The word exclusion has replaced words like suspended or expelled, which may be more familiar to some social workers or foster carers.

### **'In School' Exclusions**

Some schools use 'in school exclusions' as a means of dealing with specific incidents. This involves using the short-term technique of temporarily separating young people from their class/group during school hours to allow them to 'cool off'. Schools are required to ensure that appropriate staff are available to supervise and support the young person with any work set during this period.

### **Fixed Term Exclusions**

These are used when the school decides that the behaviour of a young person has been serious enough that allowing them to remain in school would be inappropriate. The young person is excluded for a time-limited period i.e. up to a maximum of 45 days in a school year.

### **Permanent Exclusions**

These are used where a young person is not allowed to return to the school. This is normally the final step in dealing with discipline offences, used after other strategies have been exhausted, although it can be used as a sanction following a serious breach of school policy, such as drug use in school.



# 3

## Appendix 3: School Exclusions Procedure

### Procedure for Exclusions

- Only headteachers have the power to exclude (deputy headteachers can have this power in the headteacher's absence)
- Schools must inform carers and/or social workers as soon as an exclusion takes place. A letter should confirm the exclusion within one day. The letter should contain some important details such as:
  - a) For a fixed term exclusion, the precise period of the exclusion and the date and time that the pupil can return to school
  - b) For a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is a permanent exclusion
  - c) The reasons for the exclusion
  - d) The right of the carer/social worker to appeal to the governing body against the decision to permanently exclude
  - e) The name of the person that the carer/social worker should contact if they wish to appeal (usually the Clerk to the governing body)
  - f) In the case of a lunchtime exclusion, the number of lunchtimes for which the pupil is being excluded, and if applicable the arrangements for the child to receive free school meals.
  - g) The steps that have been taken to support the young person prior to exclusion.
  - h) The arrangements made for enabling the pupil to continue his or her education, including the setting and marking of work.
  - i) The name and telephone number of an officer within Lambeth Children & Young People's Service who can provide advice.

### Appealing against an exclusion

Once a child is excluded, the school governing body's pupil discipline committee (or equivalent) must meet to consider:

- a) Whether to uphold a headteacher's decision to permanently exclude a child or and
- b) To consider the circumstances of the exclusion(s) if a child has been excluded for more than 15 days (in total or as one exclusion) in one term.

The committee meeting must take place between the 6th and the 15th school day after the date of receipt of notice of the exclusion and the carer/social worker must be invited to make written and oral representations. They can bring a friend, witness or legal representative to the meeting if they wish.

This is not an appeal, although it is commonly misunderstood as such. If the committee upholds the headteacher's decision there is a right of appeal to an independent appeals panel, but only if a formal written appeal is submitted within 15 school days. The Clerk to the Independent Appeals Panel can be contacted on 020 7926 2170.

**Remember:** It is the school's responsibility to ensure that pupils excluded for fixed terms have work sent home and this should be marked by a teacher. However it is the responsibility of the carer/social worker to ensure that work sent home is completed and returned to the school.

# 4

## Appendix 4: The Personal Education Plan

Every looked after child of compulsory school age (and three year olds in nursery or pre school provision) must have a Personal Education Plan (PEP). The PEP is a document that is put in place within 20 days of a young person becoming looked after. It is used to keep a record of your child's educational progress as well as discussing with them what they hope to achieve in the future.

The PEP is supported by other school-based plans. If a looked after child or young person has a statement of special educational needs (SEN), they will have an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) if there are behavioural concerns, especially if the child has been excluded. These are separate plans that will be attached to a young person's PEP.

The PEP will include short & long term educational targets, plans for the future (including plans for future career and personal aims) and how everyone involved with the child can work towards meeting the targets.

Completing PEPs requires collaboration between the school, the social worker, the main carer and the young person. The social worker has the responsibility for setting up the PEP meeting. The school has a responsibility to set specific educational targets for the child. They should also ensure that appropriate staff (e.g. class teacher) are aware of the targets and that they are being worked towards daily.

It is important that carers contribute to developing the PEP. As well as attending PEP planning and review meetings along with the child's social worker and the designated teacher (or class teacher if this is more appropriate), carers can also help the child or young person complete their section of the PEP. This will usually be completed ahead of the PEP meeting. This gives a child the chance to state their views and make sure that everyone knows what they want from their education.

The PEP should be reviewed regularly. PEP reviews should give everybody a chance to see if set targets have been met and to create new ones. PEP reviews are also a useful way of checking how a child is making progress overall. Copies of the Lambeth PEP and guidance on writing effective PEPs as well as additional sections for children can be found on the Lambeth website at:

**<http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/Services/Education/Learning/LookedAfterChildrenEducation/>**



# 5

## Appendix 5: Lambeth Local Authority contacts

If in doubt of any of the above procedures, contact your local authority and staff. They will be able to point you in the right direction and clear up any confusion. The following is a list of contact numbers for key Lambeth teams offering support and guidance.

**Admissions Service**

Tel: 020 7926 9503

**Attendance and Intervention Service**

Tel: 020 7926 9613

**Behaviour and education Support Team**

Tel: 020 7926 0444

**Children's Information Service**

Tel: 020 7926 8620

**Connexions**

Tel: 020 7326 7642

**Early Years Service**

Tel: 020 7926 9645

**Education Psychology Service**

Tel: 020 7926 9629

**Exclusion and Re-integration**

Tel: 020 7926 9874

**Looked After Children Education Achievement Team**

Tel: 020 7926 9767

**Positive Action for Young People (PAYP)**

Tel: 020 7926 9499

**Safeguarding Children Manager**

Tel: 020 7926 9643

**Special Educational Needs Service**

Tel: 020 7926 9460

**Study Support**

Tel: 020 7926 0357

# 6

## Appendix 6: Types of schools

There are a number of different types of schools which although they appear very similar in what they provide, operate in different ways from each other. For example, it may be a faith school and therefore a child must usually be from that denomination before being admitted. It is always best to find out how your child's school is set up by looking at the prospectus or arranging a meeting with the appropriate member of school staff and by checking the admissions criteria closely.

At crucial transition times, it is important to be aware that not all types of schools will be right for your child. Look at the admissions booklet and guidance provided by your local authority to help you decide which type of school your child should attend.



### Types of Schools

**Community schools** are state schools maintained by the local authority. The local authority administers their admissions and is responsible for employing their staff.

**Foundation schools** are state schools maintained by the local authority. Foundation Schools are supported by a foundation. The governing body employ school staff and have primary responsibility for admission arrangements.

**Voluntary Aided schools** are almost always church schools, and the land and buildings are often owned by a charitable foundation. They are responsible for their own admissions and employ their own staff.

**Voluntary Controlled schools** appoint their own staff and many own their own land however their admissions are administered by the local authority.

**Academies** are also state funded but they are maintained centrally by the government. They have no local authority accountability. They administer their own admissions and employ their own staff.

**Independent schools** are usually funded by fee-paying students and are not maintained by the local authority or central government.

# 7

## Appendix 7: Suggestions for Home Support

- Talk to your child and find out about their day. It is the simplest way to help your child with their education, find out about progress and what happens during the school day.
- Ask what they like and don't like at school. Encourage them to ask questions and listen to others.
- Story reading and helping them to learn nursery rhymes is fun and a useful skill for children to learn.
- Check that homework is being done. Look at your child's homework diary.
- Be interested and remember that you don't have to always understand the homework yourself to inquire about it
- Establish a daily routine with your child for homework and provide a suitable environment for homework to be done (e.g. quiet, comfortable, good lighting)
- Be familiar with school guidelines (e.g. homework completion) and school policies (e.g. discipline, bullying)
- When a child starts secondary school, make sure you have a copy of their timetable. Go through this with your child and make sure they have all the equipment they need and are clear about the timetable.
- Encourage them to always ask their form tutor if they are confused about anything or if there is a problem. A key question you can encourage children to have in mind is: "Do I know what I have to do (to improve) and how?"
- Talk to your child about the best ways for them to study. Look at ways of finding information: e.g. the school library, the local library or the internet.
- Make sure you know who the designated teacher for looked after children is in your child's school and make contact with them.
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is in place for your child.
- Make sure your child attends school every day and ascertain what the difficulties are if a child is reluctant to attend.
- Attend parents' evenings and make appointments to see a member of school staff if you have a concern.
- Find out about the local library and encourage them to use its facilities. Having a variety of books around the home is a good way to promote reading.
- Ask what the school can offer to help improve the child's self-esteem and confidence.
- Ask about clubs and groups that may be on offer both in school, after school and in the community.

# 8

## Appendix 8: Glossary of Key Educational Terms

Teachers and local authority staff sometimes talk in 'jargon', which can be confusing if you are hearing abbreviations and terms for the first time. Below is a list of some frequently used abbreviations and terms and their meanings:

**AT** - attainment target. This is the knowledge, skills and understanding pupils are expected to have by the end of each key stage of the national curriculum

**Baseline assessment** - this is a teacher assessment completed to ascertain the attainment level of each child and helps the teacher know how best to plan for that child.

<b>EP</b>	educational psychologist
<b>EBD</b>	emotional and behavioural difficulties
<b>EWO</b>	education welfare officer
<b>FE</b>	further education. This can be part time or full time education in college for students over statutory school age. This can often have a vocational or practical work aspect to it.
<b>GCSE</b>	general certificate of secondary education. (see section 1)
<b>GNVQ</b>	general national vocational qualification (see section )
<b>HE</b>	higher education. This can be part time or full time education at universities and colleges

<b>IEP</b>	Individual education plan is drawn up by the class teacher and/or SENCO to set out the strategies being used to meet each child's identified needs if they are experiencing difficulties with learning or are exceptionally bright.
<b>KS</b>	key stages (explained in Section 1)
<b>LEA</b>	local education authority
<b>LM</b>	learning mentor
<b>MLD</b>	moderate learning difficulties
<b>NC</b>	national curriculum (explained in Section 1)
<b>NLS</b>	national literacy strategy. This is a framework designed by the government to guide teachers when teaching literacy in primary schools.
<b>NMS</b>	national numeracy strategy. This is a framework by the government to guide teachers when teaching numeracy in schools
<b>NVQ</b>	national vocational qualification (see section 1)
<b>PSP</b>	pastoral support plan - this is a school based intervention plan to help pupil who have difficulties in managing their behaviour in order to avoid exclusion
<b>SATs</b>	standard assessment tests (see section 1)
<b>SENCO</b>	special educational needs co-ordinator in mainstream schools
<b>SLD</b>	severe learning difficulties

# 9 Appendix 9: Some useful publications and suggestions for further reading

There is a wealth of informative and digestible information about education available on the Internet. Below is a suggestion of some websites you can locate:

- [www.lambeth.gov.uk/Services/EducationLearning/](http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/Services/EducationLearning/) for further information on education services
- **'Who Does What':** How social workers and carers can support the education of children in care. A DfES Publication. For a free copy call: 08456022260, quote reference LACWDW) **This is highly recommended.**
- [www.parentcentre.gov.uk](http://www.parentcentre.gov.uk) provides parents/carers with a range of information and advice about many aspects of education
- [www.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.dfes.gov.uk) the department for education and skills website. You can also order free DfES publications by clicking on to [www.dfespublications.gov.uk](http://www.dfespublications.gov.uk)
- [www.educationprotects.gov.uk](http://www.educationprotects.gov.uk) provides key educational names and contacts in your area. You will find details of all the looked after children education teams across the country here. They will provide you with relevant information about local support services and amenities.
- [www.connexions-direct.com](http://www.connexions-direct.com) useful publications and information for parents/carers of year 9 pupils
- [www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk) Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) Ltd. This is an independent national advice centre for parents. ACE advise on many school-related issues such as exclusions, SEN, bullying and admissions. Contact 020 7704 9822

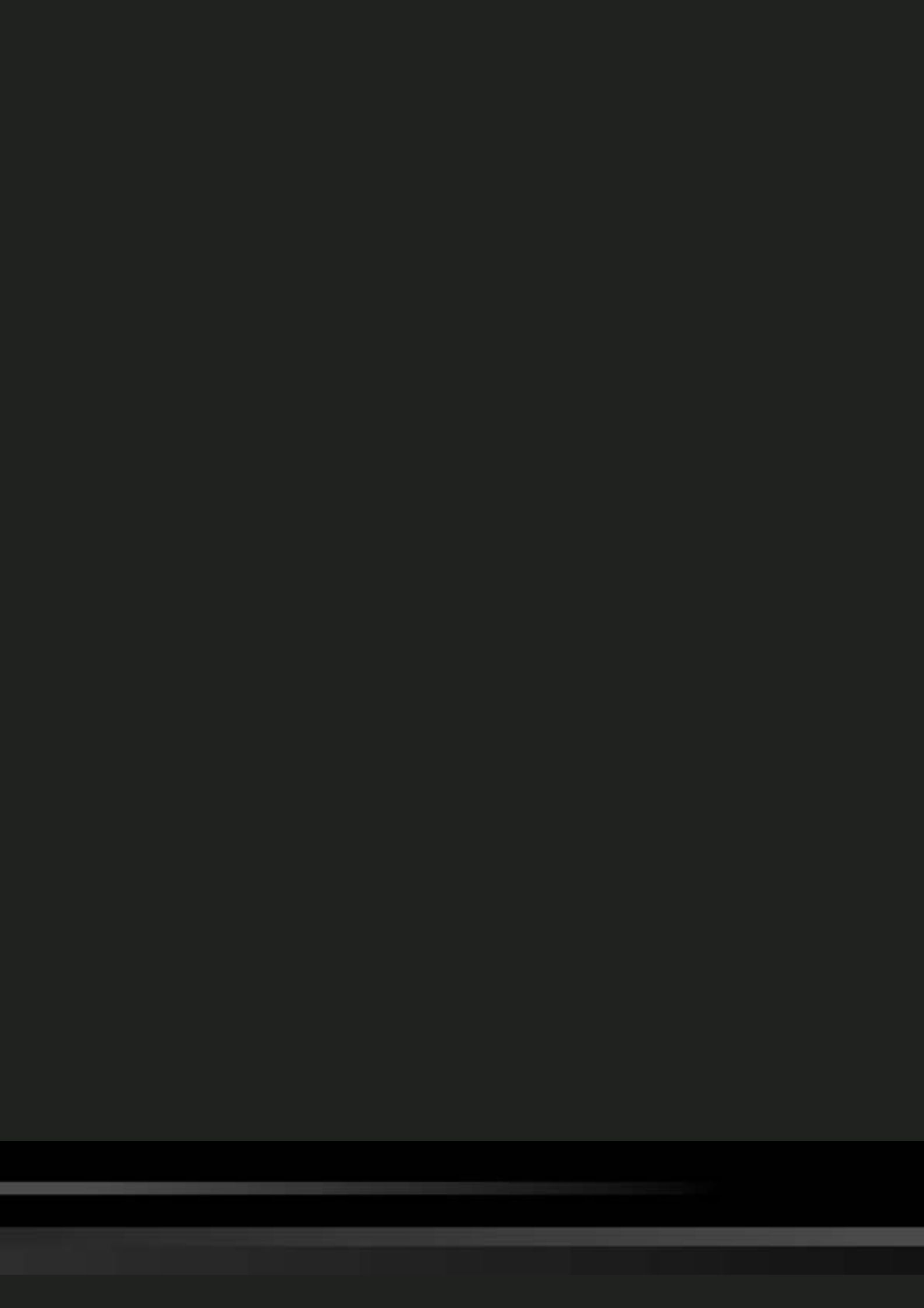
- [www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/sen/parentcarers](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/sen/parentcarers) provides answers to common questions parents/carers may ask. It also allows you to order SEN publications online
- [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk) provides relevant publications and current legislation information.
- [www.ofsted.gov.uk/reports](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/reports) to view Ofsted inspection reports on any school
- [www.bbc.co.uk/schools](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools) offers a range of educational sites

## Websites to support young people with their learning

You could suggest the following website to your child to support with their school work:

- [www.bitesize.com](http://www.bitesize.com) a BBC revision guide to help young people prepare for GCSEs
- [www.s-cool.co.uk](http://www.s-cool.co.uk) helpful tips and techniques for learning and revising
- [www.schoolzone.co.uk](http://www.schoolzone.co.uk) provides safe, differentiated internet material which teachers, students and parents can use

There are many websites that can help you and your child with education support. However, be aware that the internet does pose some dangers such as accessing 'Chat rooms'. Ask your local authority for advice on internet use and for ways to ensure your child is using it safely.



For more information please contact:

**Looked After Children's Education Achievement Team**

Inclusion and Standards Division

Children and Young People's Service

London Borough of Lambeth

Tel: 020 7926 9767

Email: [cdoyle@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:cdoyle@lambeth.gov.uk)

[www.lambeth.gov.uk](http://www.lambeth.gov.uk)