

## ST MARY'S CE (A) FIRST SCHOOL LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY

*"Our Vision is to provide the best opportunities to become life-long learners.  
Our Christian values rooted in the Good Samaritan recognise everyone is loved by God.  
Our ethos is to show love and respect - to ourselves, each other and God's creation."*

### Aims

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)

St Mary's CE(A) First School endeavours to provide positive experiences and offer stability, safety, continuity and individual care and attention for all our pupils. Our school ethos is guided by the Good Samaritan, and with this in mind, we aim to:

- Encourage pupils to reach the highest standards of which they are capable and to make good progress from what they are currently already able to do.
- Ensure that pupils enjoy high quality teaching and are enjoying a curriculum which meets their needs and the requirements of legislation.
- Plan realistically and use the school's resources efficiently in order to ensure we meet the needs of the children.
- Promote a positive approach in all aspects of school life.
- Help pupils develop their cultural, moral and social understanding.

### Legal Framework

**This policy has due regard to legislation including, but not limited to, the following:**

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, updated by subsequent legislation, Children and Social work Act 2017
- The Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- The Children and Families Act 2014

**This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the school's:**

- Admissions Policy, Code of Conduct, Behaviour Policy, Anti-bullying Policy, Equality Opportunities Policy, Child Protection Policy and Special Educational Needs Policy.

#### **Definition of Looked After Children**

**Looked after children** are defined as children or young people who are subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989.

This definition applies to children who are placed in foster care, children's residential homes, with relatives or friends, in semi-independent or supported independent accommodation.

If a child is subject to a Care or Interim Care Order whilst placed with a parent, they are classed as looked after, since the LA has parental responsibility.

Children who are not subject to an order but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents, are regarded as looked after.

**Previously Looked After Children** are children who have previously been in care but may now be adopted or under Special Guardianship.

### Personal Education Plans (PEP)

Every looked after child must have a personal education plan (PEP), which is used to support the child in fulfilling their educational potential.

- The PEP is an evolving record of what needs to happen for the child to enable them to make their expected progress.
- The PEP will reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning which meets the identified educational needs of the child.
- All the relevant bodies, such as the LA, the Virtual School, the designated teacher and other teachers, will work with the child in creating the PEP.
- Appropriate provision and support will be made available for children, academically and pastorally.
- If a child is not in school because of suspension or exclusion, suitable education is provided by the LA.
- If a child is moving to a new school, transitional support will be provided and be factored into the PEP.

Support will be provided to help the child meet their aspirations, including:

- Support to achieve expected levels of progress, improving attendance, behaviour, social and emotional skills.

## **The Role of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children**

Under the Children and Young Persons Act 2008, all maintained schools are required to have a designated teacher for looked after children (LAC) & previously looked after children (PLAC).

The primary duty of the designated teacher is to promote the educational achievement of LAC/PLAC at the school.

It is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure the designated teacher has received adequate training for the role.

**The designated teacher for Looked After/Post Looked After Children at St Mary's CE(A) First School is:**

**Jo Moulton – Head Teacher**

The designated teacher must submit an annual report to the governing body, which details the progress of looked after children.

The designated teacher will:

- Promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations.
- Ensure the child is involved in setting their targets.
- Advise staff on teaching strategies for looked after children.
- Ensure that looked after children are prioritised for 1 – 1 tuition.
- Take responsibility for developing and implementing PEPs.
- Develop knowledge of legislation and good practice by attending training events organised by the Virtual School and cascade to school staff as appropriate

## **Roles & Responsibilities**

### **Head Teacher**

It is the responsibility of the headteacher to oversee this policy and monitor its implementation.

- The headteacher will make all members of staff aware that the support of looked after/post looked after children is a key priority.
- The headteacher will allow the designated teacher the time and facilities to succeed in carrying out their duties.
- The headteacher will lead in actively challenging negative stereotypes of looked after children.

### **School Staff**

- Staff will be aware of looked after/previously looked after children in their classes and provide them with support and encouragement.
- Staff will preserve confidentiality and show sensitivity and understanding.
- Staff will be vigilant for signs of emotional trauma, attachment difficulties, bullying, social difficulties
- Staff will promote the self-esteem of looked after/post looked after children.

### **Governors**

The named governor (Lesley White) will ensure, on an annual basis, the following information is reported:

- a comparison of NC levels/results as a discrete group
- the attendance of pupils as a discrete group
- the level of fixed term/permanent exclusions
- pupil destinations
- a school's self-audit of provision for Looked After Children is undertaken

The named governor should be satisfied that the school's policies and procedure ensure that Looked After Children have equal access to:

- the full curriculum and extra-curricular activities
- public examinations
- additional educational support

## **Admission Arrangements**

On admission, records (including the PEP) will be requested from the pupil's previous school, and a meeting will be held with carer/parent/Social Worker. A date will be agreed for a PEP meeting, taking reference to statutory timescales. An appropriate school induction/transition period will take place.

## **Communication with Other Agencies**

Schools should ensure that copies of all reports (e.g. end of year reports) are forwarded to the young person's Social Worker in addition to the Foster Carer or Residential Social Worker.

Schools, Families First, including the Virtual School and education services should endeavour to co-ordinate their review meetings e.g. to have an Annual Review of a Statement combined with a Statutory Care Review.

Schools, Families First, including the Virtual School and education services will need to exchange information between formal reviews if there are significant changes in the young person's circumstances, e.g. if school is considering an exclusion, there is a change of care placement or there are significant attendance issues.

## **Assessment, Monitoring and Review Procedures**

Each Looked After Child will have a PEP which the Social Worker takes a lead in developing. School will play an active role in contributing to those areas of the PEP that are education related e.g.

- SMART target setting
- identification of current and target levels
- how additional resources are being utilised to meet educational targets (e.g. the Pupil Premium, Personal Education Allowance)
- attendance
- involvement in Extra Curricular Activities
- Special Educational Needs (if any)
- long term plans and aspirations

The PEP will be updated at least every term, as part of the Statutory Reviewing process carried out by Families First.

Reviewed - November 2023, November 2025

Next Review - November 2027