

# St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

## Looked After Children Policy

*Here at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we learn and grow through the love of Jesus. Our community is a safe, caring and happy place where everyone is supported and valued. We encourage and challenge everyone to achieve their full potential, spiritually, academically, morally and socially. We inspire others with a love of learning and aim for excellence in everything we do. Through our own faith, we treat one another the way we would like to be treated. We help every child to be gentle and fair: to always do their best.*

*'Learning through the Love of Jesus Christ'*

### **Introduction**

Here at St Joseph's we are committed to giving all of our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations of all the children. The achievement, attitude and well-being of all our children matter. This policy helps to ensure that this school promotes the individuality of all our children, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background. We do this by taking account the particular needs of our Looked After pupils.

St Joseph's is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for its pupils and staff. The governors and staff are committed to promoting British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths, cultures and lifestyles.

Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that Looked After Children are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic well being, in line with Every Child Matters. Helping Looked After Children succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority. This policy takes account of:

- The Local Authorities duty under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children (LAC).
- The Education (Admission of Looked After Children)(England) Regulations 2006.
- Relevant Department of Education guidance to Governing Bodies (Supporting Looked After Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors).

**The member of staff with responsibility for Looked After Children is Mrs Barbara Burns (Deputy Head)**

**The governor with responsibility for Looked After Children is Mrs Joan McConnell**

St Joseph's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education.
- Promoting attendance.
- Targeting support.
- Having high expectations.
- Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes.
- Achieving stability and continuity.
- Early intervention and priority action.
- Listening to children.
- Promoting health and wellbeing.

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- Reducing exclusions and promoting stability.
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals.

The school is aware that Looked After Children may suffer from the following:

- low self esteem
- poor education standards due to time out of school
- delayed social/emotional/ cognitive development
- be bullied or bully others.
- be prone to mental health issues
- be isolated with few friends
- have behaviour issues.
- poor attachments to others.
- have a need to be very private

### Admission

The school's Admissions Policy states that Looked After Catholic Children have first priority on a place in the school. Other Looked After Children are ranked 5<sup>th</sup> however there is a Special Consideration that can apply. See Admissions Policy for full details.

### Responsibility

#### Headteacher

- Identify a Designated Teacher for Looked After Children, whose role is set out below. It is essential that another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take sick leave.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusions of Looked After Children and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of Looked After Children. OFSTED now select a number of Looked After Children, tracking their results and the support they have received.
- Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

#### The Designated Teacher

Government Guidance says that the Designated Teacher should be "someone with sufficient authority to make things happen...[who] should be an advocate for Looked After Children, assessing services and support, and ensuring that the school shares and supports high expectations for them."

Our Designated Teacher will:

- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan to plan for that transition in consultation with the child's social worker
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed with the child, the social worker, the foster carer and any other relevant people, at least two weeks before the Care Plan reviews.
- Ensure that each Looked After Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher, but should be based on the child's own wishes. Members of staff who take on this role may need to be supported by someone from the school's pastoral staff. They should also be alert to any child protection issues, any

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disclosures that pupils may make, and know what action to take. They should link closely therefore with the school's Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

- Track academic progress and target support appropriately
- Co-ordinate any support for the Looked After Children that is necessary within school.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
- Encourage Looked After Children to join in extra-curricular activities and out of school learning.
- Ensure, as far as possible, attendance at planning and review meetings.
- Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of Looked After Children.
- Set up timely meetings with relevant parties where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion.
- Ensure the speedy transfer of information between individuals, agencies and – if the pupil changes school – to a new school.
- Be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately.
- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life.
- Actively monitor and prevent bullying in school by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy.
- Ensure that the audit on attendance and numbers is returned to the LAC Education Adviser every Term.

### All Staff

All our staff will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children, as for all pupils.
- Maintain Looked After Children's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond positively to a pupil's request to be the named member of staff whom they can talk to when they feel it is necessary.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- Work to enable Looked After Children to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all Looked After Children.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of Looked After Children.
- Work to prevent bullying in line with the School's policy.

The Head teacher/Designated Teacher will ensure that all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

### The Governing Body

- Identify a nominated Governor for Looked After Children.
- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Looked After Children.
- Ensure the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Looked After Children.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of Looked After Children.
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.

Procedures: the Governing Body will:

- Monitor the academic progress of Local After Children, through an annual report (see below).
- Ensure that Looked After Children are given top priority when applying for places in accordance with the school's oversubscription criteria.

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- Work to prevent exclusions and reduce time out of school, by ensuring the school implements policies and procedures to ensure Looked After Children achieve and enjoy their time at the school, by recognising the extra problems caused by excluding them and by not excluding them except as a last resort.
- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Support the Headteacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of Looked After Children are recognised and met.
- Receive a report once a year setting out:
  - The number of looked-after pupils on the school's roll (if any).
  - Their attendance, as a discreet group, compared to other pupils.
  - Their SAT scores as a discreet group, compared to other pupils.
  - The number of fixed term and permanent exclusions (if any).
  - The destinations of pupils who leave the school.
  - The information for this report should be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.

### **Confidentiality**

- information on looked after children will be shared with school staff on a "need to know basis"
- the Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with which school staff at the PEP meeting. Once this has been agreed with the social worker, carer, young person, and other parties, complete confidentiality is to be maintained.

### **Former Looked After Children**

From April 2014, schools in England can receive the Pupil Premium for children adopted from care, or who left care under a Special Guardianship Order on or after 30 December 2005.

The Government has extended the coverage of the Pupil Premium in recognition of the traumatic experiences many adopted children have endured in their early lives and a realisation that their needs do not change overnight.

To enable the school to claim the Pupil Premium, parents will need to inform the school about their child and provide supporting evidence, for example, show the school the original Adoption (Court) Order. (This does not apply to children adopted from abroad or children who are adopted privately)