



# **ST PAUL'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**



## **Children Looked After Policy**

**January 2021**

**Headteacher - Miss S Rowe**

# Policy for Education of Children Looked After

## January 2021

### a) **The Objective**

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of Children Looked After.

The governing body of St. Paul's Catholic Primary School is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. This governing body recognises that, nationally, there is considerable educational underachievement of children in residential and foster care, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in "Guidance on the Education of Looked After Children" (May 2000) and Section 52 of the Children Act 2004. Children who are "looked after" may be "Accommodated" "In Care" or "remanded/ detained" as follows:

#### **Accommodated (Section 20)**

This is a voluntary arrangement, because parents are ill, missing, unable to cope, or as part of a child protection plan negotiated with the family. The parents retain parental responsibility.

#### **In Care**

A child is in care only if a court has granted a Care Order which it will issue if it believes a child to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. A care order generally gives parental responsibility to the local authority, or shares this with the parents.

#### **Remanded/Detained**

A child can be remanded or detained as in the following:

- an emergency protection order
- removed by police using their powers of protection
- remanded by a court following criminal charges
- a court directing a social services department to accommodate a child (already on a supervision order for criminal behaviour) for up to six months.

#### **Looked After Children may (or may not) have some or all the following issues:**

- 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

This makes them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life-chances. The governing body of St. Paul's Catholic Primary School is committed to ensuring that these children are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following are in place, and are working effectively:

- A Designated Teacher for Looked After Children
- Personal Education Plans for all Looked After Children.
- All staff have a clear understanding of confidentiality and issues that affect looked after children.
- Effective strategies that support the education of this vulnerable group

**b) The Name of the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After is: Sarah Rowe**

**c) The Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After**

#### **Within School Systems:**

- To ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have an understanding of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by Children Looked After and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them;
- To inform members of staff of the general educational needs of Children Looked After, and to promote the involvement of these children in school homework clubs, extra curricular activities, home reading schemes, school councils etc.
- To act as an advocate for Children Looked After;
- To develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers, Children's Services and the Virtual School.
- To hold a supervisory brief for all Children Looked After e.g. to ensure all relevant education and care information is available to school staff and carer(s), and that this information is kept up to date;
- To monitor the educational progress of Children Looked After in order to inform the school's development plan;
- To intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy; and

#### **Work with Individual Looked After Children:**

- To enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their care plan;
- To help ensure that each pupil has a Personal Education Plan (the PEP should be initiated by the young person's social worker);
- To ensure that a home-school agreement is drawn up with the primary carer and signed by the social worker;

#### **Liaison:**

- To liaise with the member of staff responsible for monitoring children on the Child Protection Register;
- To help co-ordinate education and Children Looked After review meetings, so that the Personal Education Plan can inform the child's Care Plan;
- To attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or to contribute in other ways to Children Looked After care planning meetings;

- To be the named contact for colleagues in Children's Services and the Virtual School; and
- To ensure the speedy transfer of information between agencies and individuals.

### **Training:**

- To develop knowledge of Children's Services and the Virtual School's procedures by attending training events organised by the Local Authority;
- To cascade training to school staff as appropriate.
- The Head Teacher or the Designated Teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy

### **d) The name of a Governor with special responsibility for Children Looked After is: Sharron Bates**

The governing body of this school will:

- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for Looked After Children;
- be aware of whether the school has Looked After Children and how many (no names);
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Looked After Children;
- liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out her/his responsibilities in relation to Looked After Children;
- support the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of Looked After Children are met;
- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body (These reports should not include any names of individual children for child protection and confidentiality reasons)
- review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually.

### **e) The role of that Governor**

The named governor will report to the Governing Body on an annual basis:

- a comparison of test scores as a discrete group, compared with those of other pupils;
- the attendance of pupils as a discrete group, compared with other pupils;
- the level of fixed term/permanent exclusions;
- pupil destinations;
- the impact of the additional funding (PP+).

The named governor should be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that looked-after pupils have equal access to:

- the national curriculum;
- additional educational support;
- extra-curricular activities;

## **f) Responsibilities of all staff for Children Looked After in school**

It is important that all teaching staff that are in contact with the child or young person are aware that he/she is being looked-after by the Local Authority. The responsibility for the transfer of this information should be that of the Headteacher and/or the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After.

It is appropriate for other teachers and Learning Support Assistants to have knowledge that the young person is being looked-after.

In the absence of the usual class teacher, some information regarding the child's circumstances should be shared with the teacher covering the class. The extent of this sharing should be determined by the Headteacher or the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After.

### **All Staff should**

- ensure that any child in public care is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained;
- be familiar with the and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings;
- respond positively to a child in public care's request to be the named person that they can talk to when they feel it is necessary;
- contribute to the Designated Teacher's requests for information on educational attainment and needs, as appropriate;
- as with all children, ensure that no child in public care is stigmatised in any way;
- provide a supportive climate to enable a child in public care to achieve stability within the school setting;
- as with all children, have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children
- positively promote the self-esteem of Looked After Children

## **g) Admission Arrangements**

On admission, records (including the P.E.P.) 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 upon for a new Personal Education Plan. An appropriate school induction will take place.

## **h) Involving the Young Person**

It is important that a young person is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. How this is shared with them clearly depends on their age and understanding. The explanation should emphasise that the school, the Social Worker, and their carer(s) are working together to promote their education.

## **i) 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.

## **j) Personal Education Plans (PEP) Completion**

- Social worker informs school of a child becoming looked after (or a looked after children entering the school)
- Date is set for the completion of a Personal Education Plan (PEP).
- Educational section of the PEP is completed online at least 10 days prior to the meeting involving the young person if appropriate.
- A date is set for the next PEP meeting
- Personal Education Plan is taken to the child's statutory review and discussed within the wider context of the child's life.
- The PEP is downloaded and a hard copy kept in the child's CP file.
- The PEP will be updated at least every six months.

## **k) Communication with Other Agencies**

Schools should ensure that a copy of all reports (e.g. end of year reports) should be forwarded to the young person's Social Worker in addition to the foster carer and the Virtual School.

Children's Social Care, the Virtual School and schools 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.

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

Each looked-after pupil will have a Care Plan that will include a Personal Education Plan (PEP) that the Social Worker takes a lead in developing. This will identify specific areas of concern and include achievable targets. It will also identify how the Pupil Premium will be used and its impact. Areas for consideration will include:

- Attendance;
- Achievement Record (academic or otherwise);
- Behaviour;
- Homework;
- Involvement in Extra Curricular Activities;
- Special needs (if any);
- Development needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge or subject areas and experiences);
- Long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations).

Date: January 2021

Review: January 2024

Signed: Kathy Turvey (Chair of Governors)

Signed: Dawn Potteron (Headteacher)