

# All Saints Catholic College



## Looked After Children Policy

Approved by Governors: 19<sup>th</sup> September 2019

Date reviewed: 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022

Date for further review: Summer 2023

## **LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY**

### **Objective**

- To promote the educational achievement and welfare of looked after pupils.

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

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a Local Authority if he or she is in their care, or is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the Authority. They fall into four main groups:

- Accommodated under a voluntary agreement with parents
- Care Order or Interim Care Order
- Emergency Protection Order
- Compulsory accommodated (this includes remanded to the Local Authority).

The term 'in care' refers only to children who are subject to a Care Order by the courts under Section 31 of the Children Act 1989. The Local Authority acquires parental responsibility which it **shares** with the parents. These children may live with:

- Foster carers
- In a children's home
- In a residential school
- With relatives, or even with parents (under supervision).

Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are 'accommodated' by the Local Authority under Section 20 of the Children Act. They may live with:

- Foster carers
- In a children's home
- In a residential school
- Even, very unusually, with parents.

Unaccompanied children under 16 years arriving in the UK as asylum seekers or refugees are accommodated under Section 20 by the Local Authority.

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

The name of the designated teacher for Looked After Children is Miss S Scott.

## **The Role of the Named Teacher**

- To ensure that all staff, both teaching and support staff, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by children who are looked after, and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them.
- To inform members of staff, or delegate as appropriate, of the general educational needs of children who are looked after, and to promote the involvement of these children in school homework clubs, extra curricular activities, home reading schemes, school councils, etc.
- To hold a supervisory brief/overview for all children who are 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 all children who are looked after in order to form part of the school's Development Plan.
- To intervene, as appropriate, if there is evidence of individual underachievement.
- To develop and monitor systems for liaising with Children's Services colleagues and carers for reporting and recording absence from school, and by acting to address these issues through early and positive intervention.
- To follow all current guidance and legislation in relation to Looked After Children.

### Working with individual children in care

- To work with individual children, possibly through a carer, to arrive at a statement about their circumstances that they would be happy to share with staff and/or pupils.
- To enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their Care Plan.
- To ensure that each pupil has a Personal Education Plan (PEP) and that these are reviewed and updated, within the processes of the Local Authority Virtual School, 3 times a year by designated staff.
- To ensure relevant information is provided to all concerned for appropriate meetings.

### Liaison

- To liaise with pastoral staff regarding any key issues, concerns or celebrations.
- To attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or contribute in other ways to care planning meetings for children who are looked after.
- To be the named contact for Children's Services colleagues in relation to Looked After Children.

- To report on the progress of all children who are looked after.
- To liaise with primary schools or other secondary schools on transition or on mid-year admission.

### Training

- To develop a knowledge of Children's Services procedures by attending training events.
- To cascade training to school staff as appropriate.

### **The Role of the Named Governor**

A governor will be appointed to oversee the provision for Looked After Children. The Named Governor will meet regularly with the teacher in charge of Looked After Children.

Information regarding students who are looked after will be reported to the Governors as needed, with the named Governor making visits to school and meeting with the Designated Teacher as appropriate.

The Named Governor should be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that children who are looked after have access to:

- An appropriate curriculum
- Public examinations
- Careers guidance
- Extra-curricular activities
- Work experience
- Additional educational support

### **Responsibility for Looked After Children at School**

It is important that all teaching staff who 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 person named as the designated teacher for Looked After Children within the school.

It is appropriate for a classroom support assistant to have knowledge that the young person is a looked after child only when they are directly involved in the teaching of the young person.

In the absence of the usual class teacher, some information regarding the child's circumstances should be shared with the teaching staff covering the class. The extent of this sharing should be determined by the Headteacher or the school's designated teacher for children in care.

## **Admission Arrangements**

On admission, records will be requested from the pupil's previous school. A meeting will be held with the carer/parent/social worker/Virtual School staff as appropriate to complete base line information to form part of the pupil's Personal Education Plan and clarify contact arrangements. An appropriate school induction will take place.

## **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 the child's carer(s) are working together to promote their education.

It is important to establish the child's view of their changed circumstances and what they want others to know.

## **Communication with Other Agencies**

Ideally, the Social Worker and the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children should meet when the young person becomes looked after, or when they join the school. This will enable information concerning the child's progress and circumstances to be shared.

Relevant school staff should ensure that a copy of all reports (for example, end of year) should be forwarded to the relevant people when necessary. This would usually be the carer, but could be the parent and/or the Head of the Virtual School

The school and Children's Services should endeavour to co-ordinate their review meetings, for example, to have an Annual Review of a Statement combined with a Statutory Care Review.

Children's Services and the school will need to exchange information between formal reviews if there are significant changes in the young person's circumstances – for example, if the school is considering an exclusion, if there is a change of care placement, or if there are significant attendance issues.

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

Areas for consideration will include:

- Attendance
- Achievement Record (academic or otherwise)
- Behaviour
- Homework
- Involvement in extra-curricular activities
- Special Needs (if any)
- Development needs (eg. 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)

Liaison will be undertaken with the relevant Virtual School/ Education Welfare/Education Psychology/Social Workers etc. in the assessment and review processes as appropriate.