

## St Pius X R.C Primary School

### Looked After Children Policy

The governing body of St. Pius X R.C. Primary School is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. We recognise that there is considerable educational underachievement of looked after children, when compared with their peers, and are committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in DfEE Circular 0269/2000 and DfEE/DoH Guidance 2000 and the Children Act 2004.

The Children Act places a duty to safeguard looked after children, to promote their educational achievements and to ensure that they are able to “achieve and reach their full potential”. The Guidance recognises the collective responsibility of local authorities and schools to achieve good parenting and sets out six principles:

- Prioritising education;
- Having high expectations;
- Inclusion – changing and challenging attitudes;
- Achieving continuity and stability;
- Early intervention – priority action; and
- Listening to children.

#### **Who are Looked After children?**

Children and young people become “Looked After” either if they have been taken into care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most Children Looked After will be living with foster parents but a smaller number may be in children’s residential units, living with a relative or even be placed at home with their birth parents.

## Roles and responsibilities:

### The Headteacher

- Will appoint the **designated teacher**
- Ensure that the **designated teacher** has received appropriate training
- Oversee the development of the policy on looked after children
- Be responsible for all systems to support looked after children.
- Report to the governing body on an annual basis on the following:
  - The number of looked after pupils in the school
  - An analysis of looked after pupils value added data, compared to other pupils
  - The attendance of looked after pupils, compared to other pupils
  - The level of fixed term and permanent exclusions of looked after pupils, compared to other pupils
  - If all looked after pupils have active Personal Education Plans (PEP's) which are reviewed termly by designated teachers
  - Additional intervention programmes and/or activities where relevant

### The Governing Body

- Ensure that the school's admission criteria prioritise looked after children, in accordance with The Education (Admission of Looked after Children) Regulations 2006.
- Ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for looked after children
- Nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives from the Designated Teacher regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body
  - For child protection and confidentiality reasons, ensure that information will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity, and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.
  - Review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years.
  - Ensure that the school's other policies and procedures give looked after children equal access in respect of:
    - The National Curriculum and public examinations
    - Additional educational support where this is needed and access to extra curricular activities
    - Work experience and careers guidance.

The Governing Body will provide a named link Governor to liaise with the Designated Teacher to enable the Governing Body to fulfil its corporate parenting role. The name of this Governor is Mrs N Jacques.

The named Governor should be satisfied that:

- The school has a coherent policy for looked after children which is reviewed preferably annually
- The Designated Teacher has received appropriate training
- Looked after children have equal access to all areas of the curriculum
- The Governing Body receives an annual report
- Looked after children are noted as a termly agenda item

### **The Designated Teacher**

- Act as an advocate for looked after children in order to allow them equal access to educational opportunities and support with important decisions affecting their future life chances;
- When a looked after child is new to the school, ensure a smooth and welcome induction for the child and their parent(s) and/or carer(s), and note any specific requirements;
- Ensure that a Personal Education Plan is completed within 20 school days of the pupil entering care or joining a new school. This should be prepared with the child and the carer(s) (and parent(s) if possible), in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies. Where appropriate, the PEP should take account of the pupil's Individual Education Plan (IEP), Pastoral Support Plan (PSP), Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP), career plan or any other relevant plans.
- Ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantages faced by looked after children and understand the need for positive systems to support them, whilst maintaining appropriately high expectations for their educational achievements;
- Maintain and respect the confidentiality of all looked after children, ensuring that personal information is shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis;
- Ensure that each looked after child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to, who can provide advice and/or practical help on academic or pastoral issues (this maybe the class teacher in primary schools)
- Co-ordinate support for looked after children and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary;
- Monitor the educational progress of all looked after children and intervene, in co-operation with other services/agencies if required, if there is evidence of underachievement, absence from school or truancy, or other similar concern;
- Encourage looked after children to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning;
- Attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or contribute in other ways to care planning meetings and statutory reviews;

- Establish a system for contacting and forwarding educational records to new schools to facilitate a smooth and speedy transfer

The designated teacher is Mr N Bennett

### **All School Staff**

- As with all children, have high aspirations for looked after children and celebrate the educational and personal achievement;
- Ensure that looked after children are supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained;
- 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 looked after child's request to be the named person that they can talk to when they feel it is necessary;
- Provide a supportive climate to enable looked after children to achieve stability within the school setting;
- Liaise with the Designated Teacher where a looked after child is experiencing difficulty;
- Contribute to the Designated Teacher's requests for information on educational attainment and needs as appropriate;
- Ensure entry to examinations for looked after children;
- Positively promote the self esteem of looked after children

### **Sharing Information**

If the child's class teacher is absent, some information regarding the pupils' circumstances will be shared with the teacher covering the class. The amount of information given should be determined by the Designated Teacher for Looked after Children.

### **Child Involvement**

The young person will be made aware of the fact that information about his/her personal background is being recorded. This will be relayed to the child in a manner appropriate to their age and understanding with emphasis on the fact that the school, social worker and carer(s) are working together to promote their education.

### **Personal Education Plans (PEPs)**

Each looked after child will have a personal education plan (PEP) which forms an integral part of the care plan. The designated teacher will work in partnership

with the social worker (who is responsible for initiating the PEP), pupil, carer and any other person that may be relevant.

The PEP should be agreed upon within twenty school days of entering care or of joining our school. The PEP will normally be reviewed alongside the care plan.

The PEP will identify specific areas of strengths and weaknesses and will include achievable targets. And appropriate intervention strategies. Areas to be included in the PEP are as follows:

- Attendance
- Achievement record (academic or otherwise)
- Behaviour
- Homework
- Involvement in extra curricular activities

### **Training**

The Head Teacher and Designated Teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in the guidance from the DfES and DoH (as above).

Training will be provided on an annual basis, including refresher courses when necessary.

### **Relationship to other policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and documents

- Behaviour Policy
- Home/School Agreement
- Inclusion Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Internet Policy (Cyber-bullying)

### **Monitoring and Review**

Author	
Created on	
Last updated on	
Approved by	
Approved on	
Adopted by Governing Body on	
Scheduled review date	
Head teacher's signature and date	
Chair of Governor's signature and date	

