

# St Joseph's Catholic High School

## *Business & Enterprise College*



*“Living, loving, learning – through Christ”*

By

- Living and promoting the Catholic faith in a spirit of tolerance, with Jesus at the centre of everything we do.
- Loving and caring for all and worshipping God together.
- Learning by providing enterprising educational opportunities to enable all to reach their full potential.
- Recognising our responsibility to the local and global community

Name of Policy: Looked After Children Policy

Person Responsible for Policy Development: John Kinsella

Governor Committee: Pupil Committee

Adopted: July 2014

Review Date: June 2017

Located: School Website, Staff Shared Area, Policy File

# St Joseph's Catholic High School

## Policy for Looked After Children

### Introduction

Children and young people become 'Looked After' if they have been taken into care by the local authority. This occurs, either via a legal route under The Children's Act 1989 or where a voluntary agreement has been reached with the birth family.

Most Children Looked After (CLA's) will be living in foster homes, but a smaller number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even be placed back at home with their birth family.

St Joseph's School believes that in partnership with Cumbria County Council as Corporate Parents, we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of Children Looked After.

### Rationale

St Joseph's School believes that every child should be provided with a high quality education in a safe and secure environment, regardless of their circumstances, so that they can thrive, enjoy learning and achieve their potential.

### **To fulfil our schools' role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our Children Looked After, we will:**

- Nominate a Designated teacher for CLA's who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them.
- Nominate a school governor to ensure that the needs of CLA's are taken into account at a school management level and to support the Designated Teacher. (Safeguarding Governor)
- Support the Designated teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend the termly Designated Teacher Network meetings and any specific training which is required to ensure that they have the most up to date information on supporting CLA's.
- Review all policies and procedures regularly to ensure that they adequately address the needs of Looked After Children and that those children have access to all aspects of education.
- Have a clear and consistent plan for attendance at all PEP meetings to ensure coherence and efficiency in planning and attaining targets.
- Discuss issues relating to attendance and/or exclusions with the Virtual School Headteacher or a member of CLA Team to ensure that there is as little disruption to a child's education as possible. When considering a permanent exclusion, a discussion will be held with the Corporate Director of Children and Young People

### **The Designated teacher will:**

- Be an advocate for any CLA's in the school.
- Maintain an up to date record of all CLA's who are on the school roll. This will include:
  - Status i.e. care order or Section 20 accommodation.
  - Type of Placement i.e. Foster, respite, residential.
  - Name of Social Worker, area office, telephone number.
  - Daily contact and numbers e.g. name of parent and carer or key worker in children's home.
  - SEN Code of Practice – School Action/School Action Plus where appropriate
  - Child Protection information when appropriate.
  - Progress and assessment data

#### Attendance figures / Exclusions

- Ensure that there is a Personal Education Plan (PEP) for each child/young person to include appropriate targets and above information. This must be compatible with the child's/young person's Care Plan and where applicable include any other school plan, e.g. Statement of Special Education Need, and associated plans, Transition Plan, Pastoral Support Programme.
- Ensure that someone attends Children's Services Reviews on each child/young person and/or always prepares a written report which promotes the continuity and stability of their education.
- Liaise with CLA team on a regular basis with regard to the performance, attendance and attainment of Children Looked After.
- Provide the LA with termly attainment data to enable the Virtual School Headteacher to have clear tracking data for all Looked After Children
- Ensure that if/when the child transfers school all relevant information is forwarded to the receiving school as a matter of priority.
- Ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when CLA's are underachieving and have early interventions to improve this in line with existing school policy including access to 1:1 tuition.
- Ensure that systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about CLA's where and when appropriate.
- Ensure that CLA's along with all children are listened to and have equal opportunity to pastoral support in school.
- Ensure that they keep the school up to date with current legislation and its implication for the school in respect of CLA's.
- Report to the Governing Body annually on the academic performance; attendance and exclusions of CLA's who are on the roll of the school.
- Ensure that the school evaluates the performance data for all CLA's and that it is recorded in the school's self - evaluation documentation

#### **All staff will:**

- As with all children, have high aspirations and celebrate the educational and personal achievement of CLA's
- ensure entry to examinations for CLA's;
- be familiar with the Guidance on CLA's and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings;
- liaise with the Designated Teacher where a CLA is experiencing difficulty. These may be academic; pastoral; behaviour and/or attendance issues.

#### **All governors will:**

- ensure that admission criteria prioritise CLA's, according to the Code of Practice on Admissions
- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for CLA's
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for CLA's
- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives 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:
  - Admission to school
  - The National Curriculum and public examinations
  - Additional educational support where this is needed. Extra- curricular activities
  - Work experience and careers guidance.

- Support the local authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of CLA's
- Ensure that appropriate systems and procedures are in place in the school even if there are no CLA's on roll at the time and that the Designated Teacher continues to attend training and is up to date in regards to the legal processes.

### **Personal Education Plans:**

All Children Looked After have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) which is reviewed every 6 months or more regularly if required. The plan includes achievements and targets based on a review of progress. The PEP meeting is attended by the child, the carer, social worker, Local Authority CLA achievement teacher, the designated CLA school lead and the tutor/PPC.

Each Looked After Child receives specific ring-fenced funding to support the delivery of the targets agreed at the meeting. Decisions relating to targets and the funding of support must be ratified by the Virtual Headteacher following the meeting.

Targets and Actions will be circulated to relevant staff following each meeting. Further details raised at PEP meetings will be circulated to other teaching and support staff on a 'need to know' basis as agreed with the child concerned.

Date of Policy June 2014

Review Date: June 2017 (review annually)

Person responsible for this policy: Ann Brook (Designated teacher for Children Looked After)