



# **Bishop Ullathorne Catholic School**

**Child Looked After**

**Policy  
2023**

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Our ***Mission*** is to be an active  
Christian  
community of love and service,  
where *all* feel they belong  
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We will help each other to recognise  
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## Our Mission Statement

Our Mission is to be an active Christian community of love and service, where all feel they belong and are valued.

We will help each other to recognise the gift of God within us, to search for excellence and foster the development of our true self.

## Our Philosophy

The discovery of 'our true self' is both a spiritual and educational journey. Our core belief that 'every child matters' places students physical and mental wellbeing at the heart of all that we do. This philosophy extends to ensuring that every member of our school community, including the most vulnerable, will receive the best possible pastoral and academic opportunities.

## School Policy for Looked After Children

*"An educationally inclusive school is one in which the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of every young person matter. Effective schools are educationally inclusive schools. This shows, not only in their performance, but also in their ethos and their willingness to offer new opportunities to pupils who may have experienced previous difficulties. This does not mean treating all pupils in the same way. Rather it involves taking account of pupils' varied life experiences and needs."*

The above quote is taken from 'Evaluating Educational Inclusion – Guidance for Inspectors and Schools' (DfES 2000) and forms the rationale for this policy.

We are also aware that Looked After Children constitute a group in the sense that they may share common experiences as a result of having been taken into Public Care, but that they are also individuals and members of other groups. We will take this into account when planning to meet their needs and avoid any action that may lead to stigmatization.

## Aim

The aim of this policy is to promote educational inclusion for Looked After Children, to enable them to access the full range of educational opportunities available to them and to reach their potential, both academically and personally.

## Objectives

### Looked After Children in this school will

- receive an appropriate level of monitoring and support
- have access to the full range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities

### Teachers and other staff in this school will

- receive an appropriate level of training on the issues affecting the educational achievement and psychological well-being of Looked After Children and use this to guide their interactions with them
- plan for and meet the individual needs of Looked After Children

### The Looked After coordinator and Senior Management will

- identify, arrange and/or deliver training to staff to enable the above to take place
- ensure the development of effective and inclusive strategies to address the needs of Looked After Children

- ensure the smooth transfer of information within school and between school, carers and other agencies

## Induction

To ensure a supportive and sympathetic induction for Looked After Children (CLA) admitted to our school, the following arrangements are in place.

- Where possible information will be obtained from the primary schools or previous educational establishment before the CLA child starts at Bishop Ullathorne.
- Where possible visits made to see the CLA child in their current educational establishment by the relevant Key Stage Leader and Pastoral Support Manager.
- All information collected will be passed to the designated CLA Coordinator (DT) and Education Welfare Officer (EWO).
- All ePEPs and contact information to be transferred to the EWO and DT, where possible this should be tracked through C-POMS
- Contact made with social care and/or CLAES to obtain accurate contact information.
- Buddy system used to support young person on their transition.
- One to one meetings with CLA child to discuss initial experiences
- ePEP to be arranged within first four weeks.
- Where possible ePEP reviews in students home establishment will be attended before starting at Bishop Ullathorne.

## Pastoral Support

To ensure Looked After Children continue to receive an appropriate level of support the following arrangements are in place

- Each child will be assigned a Key Stage Leader (KSL) and a Pastoral Support Manager (PSM) as a pastoral point of contact and guidance.
- Each child will be assigned to a form group and have a daily point of contact in the form of a form tutor.
- Students will be made aware of Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) and be engaged in regular catch up meetings with them.
- Through the involvement of the SENDCo students will have access to additional support if a learning need is identified.
- Students will automatically be placed on to the agenda for our weekly Child Protection meetings
- Regular meetings held by DT and EWO to track and monitor pastoral and academic concerns of the CLA students.

## Information

- The Looked After coordinator will seek and receive information about the academic attainment and other educational issues affecting the learning of newly admitted Looked After Children at an early stage and pass this on to relevant staff to avoid unnecessary breaks in learning. This will include the Personal Education Plan if in place. If there is no current ePEP, the Looked After Co-ordinator will liaise with the Social Worker to ensure this is part of the initial meeting in school.
- Information about the circumstances of Looked After Children will be shared on a 'need to know' basis. Where no particular arrangements are in place, only teaching staff who are in direct contact with a Looked After Child will be informed of these. If there are learning or behaviour issues for a Looked After Child, all staff will be informed by the Looked After Co-ordinator of strategies in place or if the young person is experiencing particular difficulties. Supply teachers and non-teaching staff will be given an appropriate amount of information, to be determined by the Looked After Coordinator (Deputy Headteacher – Sarah Boyle DT)

- All essential information regarding CLA is collated and organised by the EWO in collaboration with the DT.
- Information that is relevant to an ePEP is collated and logged by the EWO.
- Contact with home is the shared responsibility of the PSM and the EWO
- The Looked After Co-ordinator or EWO will talk to young people about the information to be recorded about their personal circumstances and make it clear that this is in order to help all the people involved in their lives work together to help them in school. The nature of this conversation will depend upon the age and level of understanding of the young person.
- Information about the academic attainment of all Looked After Children in school will be collected as follows:
  - DT to contact members of teaching staff directly to request SMART targets and current attainment four times throughout the academic year.
  - Data to be collected and placed on to ePEP.
  - Attainment data and current progress will be shared with carers and, where appropriate, parents through the reporting processes in the school.
  - An achievement and attainment report will be presented to Governors once a year
  - This information will be analysed by the DT to measure the attainment of Looked After Children against the school population as a whole.

Information about the attendance of Looked After Children will be collected as follows:

- Daily registers are taken by form tutors/subject staff
- All attendance is checked by PSM at the start of the day. First call response is prioritised for PP and PP+ students
- Weekly reports are produced and shared with students
- Attendance is reported to parents during key report periods (see school calendar)
- Attendance of CLA students is reported on the ePEP
- CLA attendance is monitored daily by the EWO.

*This information will be analysed by the DT to identify individuals or groups of Looked After Children whose attendance is poor so early intervention can take place.*

Information about the behaviour of Looked After Children will be collected as follows:

- Class teachers log behaviour through the SIMS system
- This information can be used to log sanctions
- Serious incidents of behaviour are also logged through PSM on SIMS
- Internal exclusion can be used as an alternative to fixed term exclusion when students have been involved in significant negative behaviour. Isolation is logged and recorded by DT and HLTA in charge of BSU
- In the case of CLA fixed term exclusion is only considered once every other possibility has been considered. If fixed term exclusion is deemed necessary, then CLAES and the Social care team relevant to the child will be informed immediately
- Positive behaviour, including effort and attainment will be logged using the schools ACE points system.

*This information will be analysed by The Looked After Co-ordinator (DT) to identify individuals or groups of Looked After Children who are at increased risk of exclusion so early intervention can take place.*

# Strategies

## Curriculum

- If a Looked After Child appears to be having difficulties with the curriculum or to be failing to engage with it there are a wide range of possible causes. We recognise that there are factors which may prevent Looked After Children from achieving as highly as they could, even if there are no apparent learning difficulties. To ensure that under-achievement does not go unrecognised, the attainment of each Looked After Child will be tracked and compared to previous results. If progress is not as could be expected:
- DT in liaison with the EWO will look at all possible contributory factors and gather a wide range of evidence in conjunction with other relevant staff
- Look for factors which may be masking underlying learning difficulties
- Talk to the child
- Students will be discussed during half termly welfare meetings and a 360 plan put in place to support progress
- Students will be assessed for intervention with HLTA or TA in liaison with SENCO
- 1:1 support can be provided if relevant
- Students can be placed into the mentoring system to provide a regular point of contact to track progress and attainment
- At the advice of the SENCO and CLAES external support could be employed (eg: CAMHS, EP) to identify barriers to learning.

We are aware that certain aspects of the curriculum, for example activities to mark Mother's Day or to investigate family history, may cause difficulties for Looked After Children and we will ensure this is handled sensitively by planning alternative but relevant activities.

## Attendance

If a Looked After Child is identified as having poor attendance or punctuality:

- The Social Worker and carers will be contacted by EWO to gain their support and collect any relevant information
- We will continue to work with the School Education Welfare Officer who will be involved fully in planning and delivering strategies to improve attendance
- We will set short term targets to improve attendance
- School may decide that support is required with transport.
- If necessary a home visit will be scheduled to discuss barriers to attendance
- Alternative provision can be organised for the student to support with positive approaches to education. The LSSA (Learning Support Study Area) will be used to provide alternative provision to students for fixed periods.

## Behaviour

We recognise that psychological trauma and lack of continuity in the lives of Looked After Children may lead to challenging behaviour in school and that it is especially important to employ positive behaviour strategies in these circumstances. The following arrangements are in place to address behaviour problems at an early stage:

- The Social Worker and carers will be contacted by the DT or EWO as soon as behaviour problems are identified or if there are significant changes to the behaviour of a Looked After Child
- CLA students will in all aspects follow the behaviour policy of the school.
- Significant concerns or sudden changes in behaviour to be shared with CLAES or social worker at the earliest possible time

- If the problem continues, the Social Worker, carers and staff from support services such as the Educational Psychology Service, LBSS and Education Access will be invited to a meeting with appropriate school staff to determine supportive strategies to reduce the problem behaviour. The responsibility for organising such a meeting lies with the DT.

We recognise that Looked After Children as a group are far more likely to be excluded than the school population as a whole, and that exclusion can place additional pressure on foster placements. To reduce the likelihood of this occurring:

- Early intervention will be a priority
- Internal exclusion will be used where necessary to replace a fixed term exclusion.

## **Homework**

Whilst we recognise that Looked After Children may not always find it easy to complete homework, we believe they should be given support and encouragement to do so. The following strategies are in place to help Looked After Children complete homework tasks as set for their peers:

- Students actively encouraged to join homework club
- Carers made aware of homework club provision
- Homework logged using online portal (Class Charts)
- Use of staff mentors to track homework and provide support where necessary.

## **Extra-Curricular Activities**

We recognise that Looked After Children are often prevented from joining in with after school activities because of transport arrangements and that they may resist taking part in any school-based activities because of poor relationships with their peers, for example. As we believe it is essential that Looked After Children are able to play a full part in school life, the following strategies are in place to help them to do this:

- The Looked After Co-ordinator will monitor the involvement of Looked After Children in extra-curricular activities half termly through monitoring of the enrichment provision map
- The Looked After Co-ordinator will liaise with the young person, carers and Social Workers to try to promote involvement in extra-curricular activities. This will be completed through EPEP meetings and regular contact with home
- The Looked After Co-ordinator will liaise with LEA support services such as Education Access or the Study Support Co-ordinator to develop strategies for increasing the involvement of Looked After Children in extra-curricular activities if their uptake is shown to be low
- Students encouraged to be part of the PALS club. School minibus used to support travel home.

The success of all school strategies and use of funded initiative will be monitored and evaluated by the DT.

- Collection and analysis of information
- Discussion with school staff, carers, Social Workers and staff from LA Support Services, both informally and during meetings eg those set up to write Personal Education Plans
- Discussions with Looked After Children
- Responsibility for monitoring and evaluation of school strategies lies with the DT.

## **Liaison with Outside Agencies**

To ensure that all those involved in the education and care of Looked After Children work together in their best interests, the Looked After Co-ordinator will devise and implement effective strategies and procedures for:



- Accessing additional support, funding or use of funded initiatives
- Liaising with Social Workers to ensure all Looked After Children have a Personal Education Plan
- Participation in and co-ordination of Review and Planning meetings for Looked After Children. Statutory school procedures such as Annual Reviews for children with Statements of SEN will be timed to coincide with these wherever possible and appropriate.

In addition, school management will do everything possible to enable class teachers or other appropriate staff to attend meetings where this would be in the interests of the young person.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Looked After Co-ordinator is Sarah Boyle (Deputy Headteacher)

The role of the Looked After Co-ordinator is of central importance in enabling Looked After Children to achieve their full potential in school. For this reason the person appointed will:

- Meet every two weeks with the EWO to discuss the pastoral and academic progress of CLA students
- Liaise with the business manager over allocation of funds
- Coordinate the collation of academic data for the EPEP meetings
- Support the EWO in setting up and running EPEP meetings
- Monitor and track data relating to CLA students and liaise with key staff to feedback and identify interventions.

The majority of the roles and responsibilities of the Looked After Co-ordinator are implicit in the above sections of this policy. In addition, the Looked After Co-ordinator will:

- Attend training sessions organised by the LA
- Cascade this training to school staff
- Arrange and/or deliver training to all staff, including those newly appointed, on issues affecting the educational attainment of Looked After Children and the ways in which educational disadvantage can be overcome
- Ensure the involvement of Careers advisory staff with all young people in Years 10 and 11 who are looked-after
- Liaise with the member of staff responsible for monitoring children on the Child Protection Register
- Work closely with Social Workers and other SSD staff to enable the writing of effective Personal Education Plans which will inform Care Plans
- Attend, arrange for someone else to attend or contribute in other ways to SSD care planning meetings
- Work with young people at an appropriate level to enable them to contribute to educational aspects of their care plans.

## **The Head Teacher and Senior Leadership**

The responsibility for the educational and personal well-being of Looked After Children rests with the Headteacher, although some of the day-to-day tasks may be delegated to other staff. Working with the Senior Leadership Team, the Headteacher will ensure that inclusive strategies are in place for Looked After Children and that staff, particularly the Looked After Co-ordinator, are enabled to carry them out.

### **6.3 The named Governor with special responsibility for Looked After Children is Leanne Ward**

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

- The number of Looked After pupils in the school

- A comparison of test scores for Looked After Children as a group, compared to those of other pupils
- The attendance of pupils as a discrete group, compared to other pupils
- The level of fixed term/permanent exclusions
- Pupil destinations.

The named governor must be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that Looked After Children have equal access to:

- The National Curriculum
- Public examinations
- Statutory assessments
- Careers guidance
- Additional educational support
- Appropriate pastoral support
- Extra-curricular activities
- Work experience

## **Evaluation**

The general success and appropriateness of this policy will be evaluated annually. In addition, we will monitor and analyse the impact of this policy on pupils, staff and parents of different ethnic groups. The results of the evaluation will be passed to the school Governor with responsibility for Looked After Children before being presented to the Governing Body.