

Policy name: Child Looked After Policy (CLA)

Reviewer: J McCue

Date of last review: September 2024

Date of next review: September 2025

## CHILD LOOKED AFTER (CLA) POLICY



### Governing Body Approval

Policy approved by:

Mr Jim Livesey

(NAME)

(SIGNATURE)

Vice Chair of Governors

(GOVERNOR POSITION)

24<sup>th</sup> September 2024

(DATE)

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## 1. Purpose of Policy

- 1.1 To promote the educational achievement and welfare of Children Looked After within Blessed Trinity RC College and enable them to fulfil their potential.

## 2. Rationale:

- 2.1 Children Looked After (CLA) are one of the most vulnerable groups within society. The majority of Children Looked After have suffered abuse or neglect and it is nationally recognised that they underachieve in terms of education when compared to their peers.
- 2.2 Under the Children's Act 1989, a child is "looked after" by a local authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They fall into four main groups:
  - a. Children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (Section 20).
  - b. Children who are subjects of a care order (Section 31) or interim care order (section 38).
  - c. Children who are subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44.&.46).
  - d. Children who are compulsory accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21).
- 2.2 New legislation has come in from February 2018 and now includes:
  - a. A previously looked-after child is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales; and a child is in 'state care' outside England and Wales if s/he is in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.
  - b. The term 'In Care' refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the Court under Section 31 of the Children Act 1989 - they may live with Foster Carers, in a Children's Home, in a Residential School, with relatives or with parents under supervision.
  - c. 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 in foster care, in a children's home or in a residential school.
  - d. All these groups are said to be 'Children Looked After' (CLA). They may be looked after by Lancashire County Council or may be in the care of another authority but living in Lancashire.
- 2.3 Blessed Trinity RC College aims to promote the educational attainment and achievement and welfare of Children Looked After and/or previously a looked-after child who is no longer looked after because s/he is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person<sup>3</sup>, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales.
- 2.4 The Designated Teacher for Children Looked After is Miss J McCue (Assistant Head teacher).
- 2.5 The Governor with special responsibility for Children Looked After is Miss Gail Barton.
- 2.6 The governing body is committed to providing a quality education for all its pupils based on equality of access, opportunity and outcomes. This policy includes requirements set out in "Statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children under Section 52 of the Children Act 2004" (November 2005) and associated guidance on the education of Children Looked After.

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2.7 As corporate parents, this school believes in the principles of good parenting by:

- a. Giving priority to education.
- b. listening to children.
- c. providing stability and continuity.
- d. taking corporate responsibility.
- e. promoting inclusion.
- f. raising standards.
- g. intervening early.
- h. celebrating success.
- i. However, more importantly asking the question, "Would this be good enough for my child?".

### **3. Aims**

**3.1** The aims of the school are to support our CLA/OR PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER and give them access to every opportunity to achieve their full potential and enjoy learning by:

- a. ensuring that school policies and procedures are followed for Children Looked After/OR PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER as for all children.
- b. ensuring that all Children Looked After /OR PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER have access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- c. providing a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual's needs and ability.
- d. ensuring that Children Looked After/OR PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER take as full a part as possible in school activities.
- e. ensuring that carers, parents and social workers of Children Looked After/OR PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment.
- f. Ensuring that Children Looked After/OR PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision.

### **4. Admissions**

4.1 The Governing Body endorses the Lancashire County Council Policy for the admission of Children Looked After /OR PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER. Due to changes in care placements, Children Looked After/OR PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER may enter school at any time in the term. This school believes that it is vital that we give each Child Looked After/OR PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER a positive welcome and full support for their induction to help them settle and be part of our school community.

### **5. Inclusion**

5.1 This policy recognises that all pupils are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum. Our CLA Policy reinforces the need for teaching and learning that is fully inclusive. The Governing Body will ensure the school makes appropriate provision for all CLA pupils

### **6. Allocation of Resources**

6.1 The Governing Body will ensure that the school allocates resources to support appropriate provision for CLA, meeting the objectives set out in this policy. We will work in partnership with Lancashire County Council who have responsibility for Children Looked After/OR PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER and other Local Authorities, to ensure that Children Looked After/OR PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER receive the full range of support to which they are entitled to enable them to make progress and achieve.

### **7. Monitoring the progress of Children Looked After**

7.1 This school assesses each Looked After pupil's /OR PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER attainment on entry to ensure continuity of learning. The social worker for the Child Looked After initiates a Personal

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Education Plan – PEP - within 10 days of the student joining the school, or of entering care, and ensures that the young person is actively involved.

7.2 Following the initial PEP, the role of the Designated Teacher is to liaise with other agencies involved to arrange further PEP review meetings and provide copies of the PEP to the social worker, Carer, virtual school and other agencies.

7.3 Half termly progress snapshots are undertaken to ensure that all CLA pupils are making the correct progress and if not we can put in the intervention if required.

## **8. Record Keeping**

8.1 The Designated Teacher knows all the Children Looked After in school and has access to their relevant contact details including parents, carers, specialist staff, teacher/support worker and social worker. The status of Children Looked After is identified within the school's information systems so that information is readily available to all classroom teachers and relevant associate staff. CLA are identified as a vulnerable group when tracking, monitoring and reporting on attendance, attainment and progress.

## **9 Staff Development**

9.1 Part of the Designated Teacher's role is to raise awareness of issues associated with CLA within the school and disseminate information.

## **10 Partnership with Parents/ Carers and Care Workers**

10.1 We believe in developing strong partnerships with parents/carers and care workers and social workers to enable CLA to achieve their potential to aid their future economic well-being. Regular review meetings are an opportunity to further this collaboration and partnership working.

## **11 Links with External Agencies/ Organisations**

11.1 We recognise the important contribution that external support services make in supporting CLA. Colleagues from the following support services may be involved with individual CLA:

- a. Social care worker/ Community care worker/ Residential childcare worker.
- b. Children Looked After in Education Team.
- c. Other Virtual Schools for CLA's from other Local Authorities.
- d. Educational psychologists, Clinical Psychologists and others from Local Authority SEND services.
- e. School nurses.
- f. External Learning Providers.

## **12. CLA Policy Review and Evaluation**

12.1 The Designated Teacher for CLA will undertake a thorough review and evaluation of the impact of the Children Looked After policy and practice each year and report to the relevant Governing Body committee.

## **13 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

13.1 The Designated Teacher will:

- a. Be an advocate for Children Looked After within school.
- b. Be proactive in identifying ways in which the school can raise attainment of Children Looked After.
- c. work in partnership with Lancashire Virtual School, and/or other Virtual Schools for those students who are from other Local Authorities, providing progress data on the progress of Children Looked After.

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- d. Give regard to the impact of relevant decisions for Children Looked After on both the Looked After Children and the rest of the school community.
- e. Know all the Children Looked After in school, including those in the care of other authorities, and ensure the availability of all relevant details from school record-keeping systems as required.
- f. Attend relevant training about Children Looked After and disseminate information and good practice to other staff.
- g. Influence school policy and practice for Children Looked After.
- h. Act as the key liaison professional for other agencies, parents/Carers in relation to Children Looked After.
- i. Ensure that Children Looked After receive a positive welcome on entering school, especially mid-year, and offer additional support wherever possible such as a pre-entry visit to help the new pupil settle.
- j. Ensure that all CLA have an appropriate PEP that is completed when joining the school or of entering care and ensure that the young person contributes to the plan.
- k. Arrange and contribute to PEP Review meetings.
- l. Keep PEPs and other records up to date and review PEPs at transfer and at four monthly intervals.
- m. monitor the targets set out in the PEP.
- n. Convene an urgent multi-agency meeting if a Children Looked After is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion (where possible be present at the re-integration meeting following an exclusion).
- o. ensure confidentiality on individual children, sharing confidential and personal information on a need-to-know basis, bearing in mind the wishes of the individual student.
- p. Act as the key adviser for staff and governors on issues relevant to Children Looked After.
- q. ensure a speedy transfer of information, records and coursework, where appropriate, when a Child Looked After transfers to another educational placement.
- r. Ensure that any Special Educational Needs are addressed in conjunction with the SENCO and in accordance with the Code of Practice for SEND.
- s. Will ensure that CLA funding is spent appropriately to support the educational needs of the CLA students.
- t. Report annually to the governors on the performance of Children Looked After on the school roll.

### **13.2 All school staff will:**

- a. Positively promote the raising of a Child Looked After's self-esteem.
- b. Have high expectations of the educational and personal achievements of Children Looked After.
- c. Keep the Designated Teacher informed about a CLA's progress.
- d. Ensure any CLA is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained.
- e. Follow school procedures.
- f. Be familiar with the school's policy and guidance on CLA and respond appropriately to requests for information to support PEPs and review meetings.
- g. Liaise with the Designated Teachers where a CLA is experiencing difficulties.
- h. keep appropriate records, confidentially as necessary, and make these available to the Designated Teacher.

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### **13.3 The Governing Body will:**

- a. Ensure that the admission criteria and practice prioritises CLA according to the DFE Admissions Code of Practice.
- b. Ensure all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance for CLA.
- c. Ensure there is a Designated Teacher for CLA.
- d. Liaise with the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and all other staff to ensure the needs of CLA are met.
- e. Nominate a governor with responsibility for CLA who links with the Designated Teacher.
- f. Ensure that the school's policies and procedures give CLA equal access in respect of:
  - i. admission to school
  - ii. National Curriculum and examinations, both academic and vocational
  - iii. Out of school learning and extra-curricular activities
  - iv. Additional educational support
  - v. Careers guidance
  - vi. Ensure the school has a coherent policy for CLA
  - vii. Annually review the effective implementation of the school policy for CLA
  - viii. In the event of an exclusion, ensure that the Designated Teacher is invited to the exclusion meeting of the CLA.