

Our Lady's RC Primary School



Looked After Child Policy

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Signed: _____ (Person Responsible) **Date:** _____

Signed: _____ (Headteacher) **Date:** _____

Signed: _____ (Chair/Governor) **Date:** _____

"Learning and loving together; we grow with Jesus"

1.1 Our Core Values

During Summer 2020 workshops, we revisited both our Mission Statement and Core Values. This involved everyone in discussion, reflection and prayer about the values, Mission and Aims of our Catholic school. There was a calling to all to re-commit to our purpose and to work together to understand our roles and responsibilities as part of Our Lady's



During the workshops, the feedback from parents, and the views expressed by the children during sessions played a prominent role in the decisions we made.

Our Mission Statement is:

"Learning and loving together; we grow with Jesus"

The Core Values that provide the foundation for that Mission are:

1.2 Faithful

1.3 Positive

1.4 Safe

1.5 Nurturing

1.6 Forgiving

1.7 Fair

1.8 Respectful

1.9 Honest

NURTURE

The School's six nurturing principles sum up our practice and theory. They underpin the context, organisation and curriculum.

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally
2. The classroom offers a safe base
3. the importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing
4. Language as a vital means of communication
5. All behaviour is communication
6. The importance of transition in children's lives



Our Mission is represented by this design. As with the statement itself, the logo was developed by all stakeholders, with the children in particular providing the symbolic ideas of **growth – the tree, love – the hearts** and **Christ – the Cross**



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Statement of intent

Educational achievement and subsequent life chances for LAC and previously-LAC are of real concern. Pupils who are looked after require special treatment and additional attention in order to improve their situation.

Our Lady's endeavours to provide positive experiences and offer stability, safety, and individual care and attention for all our pupils. With this in mind, we aim to:

- Encourage pupils to reach their potential and to make good progress in relation to their professional, social and emotional development.
- Ensure that pupils enjoy high quality teaching and a curriculum which meets their needs and the requirements of legislation.
- Plan support for LAC realistically and use the school's resources efficiently to ensure the school meets their needs.
- Promote a positive culture in all aspects of school life.
- Help pupils develop their cultural, moral and social understanding.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children Act 1989
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE (2018) 'Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2018) 'The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children'
- DfE (2017) 'Exclusions from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England'
- DfE (2019) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'

1.2. This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies and documents:

- Admissions Policy
- One-to-One Tuition Policy
- Behavioural Policy
- Home School Agreement
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy

2. Definitions

2.1. “**Looked after children (LAC)**” are defined as:

- Children or young people who are the subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order under the Children Act 1989.
- Children who are placed in foster care, children’s residential homes, with relatives or friends, in semi-independent or supported independent accommodation.
- Children subject to a Care or Interim Care Order whilst placed with a parent, where the LA has parental responsibility.

- Children who are not subject to an order, but are accommodated by the LA under an agreement with their parents.

2.2. “Previously-LAC” are defined as:

- Children who are no longer looked after by an LA in England and Wales because they have either been adopted or are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order.
- Children who were adopted outside England and Wales from ‘state care’ (care that is provided by a public authority, religious organisation, or other organisation whose main purpose is to benefit society).

3. Roles and responsibilities

The Designated Governor in school for LAC and previously LAC is Emily Coffey.

3.1. The governing board is responsible for:

- Ensuring the school has a coherent policy for LAC and previously-LAC.
- Reviewing the school’s policies and procedures in conjunction with legislation and statutory guidance.
- Ensuring the designated teacher for LAC and previously-LAC has received the appropriate training.
- Ensuring that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to each looked after child’s:
 - Legal status (i.e. whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility.
 - Care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the LA.
- Ensuring that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep LAC and previously-LAC safe.
- Ensuring LAC and previously-LAC have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and that reasonable adjustments are made, if necessary.
- Ensuring they receive feedback from the head teacher regarding the effectiveness of the policy on an annual basis.
- Holding school account to how the Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) is spent as well as the progress LAC and previously LAC are making

3.2. The virtual school head (VSH) is responsible for:

- Monitoring the attendance and educational progress of the children their authority looks after; this includes children who have left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders, or who were adopted from state care outside of England and Wales.
- Ensuring that arrangements are in place to improve the education and outcomes of the authority’s LAC, including those placed out-of-authority.

- Building relationships with health, education and social care partners, as well as other partners, so they and the designated teachers understand the support available to LAC and previously-LAC.
- Working with the school to ensure all LAC in attendance are fully supported in reaching their full potential.
- Acting as the educational advocate for LAC.
- Acting as a source of advice and information to help parents of previously-LAC as effectively as possible.
- Managing the school's allocation of pupil premium plus (PP+) for LAC.
- Ensuring there are effective systems in place to:
 - Maintain an up-to-date roll of the LAC who are in school settings, and gather information about their educational placement, attendance and progress.
 - Inform the headteacher and designated teacher if they have a pupil on roll who is looked after by the LA.
 - Ensure social workers, schools, designated teachers, careers and independent reviewing officers understand their role and responsibilities regarding a pupil's PEP.
 - Ensure that up-to-date and effective PEPs that focus on educational outcomes are maintained for all LAC.
 - Avoid delays in providing suitable educational provision.
 - Ensure the education achievement of LAC is seen as a priority by everyone who has responsibilities for promoting their welfare.
 - Report regularly on the attainment, progress and school attendance of LAC through the authority's corporate parenting structures.

3.3. The headteacher is responsible for:

- Appointing the designated teacher for LAC and previously-LAC.
- Allowing the designated teacher the time and facilities to succeed in carrying out their duties.
- Overseeing this policy and monitoring its implementation, feeding back to the governing board annually on the following:
 - The number of LAC and previously-LAC in the school
 - An analysis of assessment scores as a cohort, compared to other pupil groups
 - The attendance of LAC and previously-LAC, compared to other pupil groups
 - The level of fixed term and permanent exclusions, compared to other pupil groups
- Ensuring all members of staff are aware that supporting LAC is a key priority.
- Ensure the voice of LAC and previously LAC is a vital part of successfully understanding and meeting their needs.

- Ensuring PP+ for previously-LAC is managed effectively to support progress, attainment, engagement and well-being.
- Promoting the advantages of actively challenging negative stereotypes of LAC.
- Work in partnership with the Virtual School, Children's Social Care and other relevant agencies to share information and promote progress and achievement.
- Provide continuing professional development for staff on issues pertaining to CLA and previously LAC, such as Attachment and Trauma.
- Provide an annual report on the provision for, and progress of, CLA and previously LAC, to the governing body.

The Designated Teacher for Our Lady's is Catherine Teahan and she will carry out her role in line with statutory guidance.

3.4. The designated teacher for LAC and previously-LAC is responsible for:

- Building relationships with health, education and social care partners and other partners so that they and the VSH understand the support available to LAC and previously-LAC.
- Promoting the educational achievement of LAC and previously-LAC at the school; this includes those that left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or were adopted from state care outside England and Wales.
- Acting as the main contact for social services and the DfE.
- Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations.
- Ensuring LAC are involved in setting their own targets.
- Having an awareness of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation (attachment awareness and trauma informed practice).
- Advising staff on teaching strategies for LAC.
- Ensuring that LAC are prioritised for one-to-one tuition and support.
- Leading on how the child's PEP is developed and used in school to ensure the child's progress towards targets is monitored.
- Liaising with the SENCO to ensure all pupil needs are met.
- Working with the child's VSH and social worker to develop and implement their PEP.
- Working with the VSH to discuss how funding can be used to support the child's progress and meet the needs identified in their PEP.
- Working with the head teacher to submit an annual report to the governing board, which details the progress of all LAC and previously-LAC.
- For previously LAC, understand the importance of involving the child's parents or guardians in decisions affecting their child's education, and

be a contact for parents or guardians who want advice or have concerns about their child's progress at school.

The Designated Teacher will have a direct and day-to-day role in promoting the educational achievement of CLA and PLAC. They will:

- Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies and procedures.
- Ensure the pupil premium plus is used effectively within school to have the greatest positive impact on children's learning. This includes: ensuring parents and guardians of PLAC are reminded that they need to inform the school if their child is eligible to attract PP+.
- Ensure CLA and PLAC are prioritised for support; listened to; encouraged to participate; and believe they can achieve through an ethos of aspiration.
- The Designated Teacher will co-chair Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings and make a record of discussions and decisions, so that each child has access to the support they need to achieve. These meetings will take place a minimum of three times per academic year to review support and deploy effective resources.
- The Designated Teacher will closely monitor school attendance and suspensions. When a child is at risk of either a fixed term suspension or permanent exclusion, the Designated Teacher - working with the VSH, social care and the child's carers - will be asked to consider what additional assessment and support is needed to address the cause of the child's behaviour and prevent the need for suspension.

3.5. The DSL is responsible for:

- Keeping up-to-date records of LAC's respective social worker and VSH.
- Where a child ceases to be looked after and becomes a care leaver, keeping up-to-date contact details of their LA personal advisor and liaising with the advisor as necessary regarding any issues of concern affecting the care leaver.

3.6. The SENCO is responsible for:

- Ensuring they are involved in reviewing PEP and care plans for LAC and previously-LAC.
- Liaising with the class teacher, designated teacher, specialists and parents when considering interventions to support the progress of previously-LAC.

3.7. Staff are responsible for:

- Have high expectations of and aspirations for CLA and PLAC's learning and set targets to accelerate educational progress.
- Be aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation (attachment awareness) from birth families and that some children may find it difficult to build relationships of trust with adults because of their experiences, and how this might affect the child's behaviour.

- Understand how important it is to see CLA and PLAC as individuals rather than as a homogeneous group, not publicly treat them differently from their peers, and show sensitivity about who else knows about their legal status.
- Appreciate the central importance of the PEP in helping to create a shared understanding between teachers, carers, social workers and, most importantly, the child's own understanding of how they are being supported;
- Have the level of understanding they need of the role of social workers, Virtual School Heads and carers, and how the function of the PEP fits into the wider care planning duties of the authority which looks after the child;
- For PLAC, understand the importance of involving the child's parents or guardians in decisions affecting their child's education, and be a contact for parents or guardians who want advice or have concerns about their child's progress at school.

4. Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)

4.1 Looked-after children and children adopted from care, on a special guardianship or child arrangements order are eligible for PP+ funding. This is additional funding provided to help improve the attainment of looked-after and previously looked-after children and close the attainment gap between this group and their peers.

- All pupil premium spending will take account of the specific needs of eligible pupils.
- PP+ reflects the significant additional barriers faced by looked-after and previously looked-after children
- PP+ is allocated according to need rather than a personal budget.
- Our school will use pupil premium to address need in social, academic and mental health needs. This will be in agreement with the VSH from the child's home authority

5. Personal education plan (PEP)

- 5.1. All LAC must have a care plan; PEPs are an integral part of this care plan.
- 5.2. The PEP is an evolving record of what needs to happen for a pupil to enable them to make the expected progress and fulfil their potential.
- 5.3. The PEP will reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning which meets the identified educational needs of the child.
- 5.4. The school with other professionals and the child's carers will use the PEP to support the child's educational needs, raise the child's aspirations and improve their life chances.
- 5.5. All relevant bodies, such as the LA, the designated teacher and carers, will involve the child in the PEP process at all stages.
- 5.6. The PEP will address the pupil's full range of education and development needs, including:
 - On-going catch-up support, which will be made available for children who have fallen behind with work.
 - Suitable education provided by the LA, where the child is not in school because of suspension or exclusion.

- Transitional support where needed, such as if a child is moving to a new school.
- School attendance and behaviour support, where appropriate.
- Support to help the child meet their aspirations, which includes:
 - Support to achieve expected levels of progress for the relevant national key stage and to complete an appropriate range of approved qualifications.
 - Careers advice, guidance and financial information about FE, training and employment, that focusses on the child's strengths, capabilities and the outcomes they want to achieve.
 - Out-of-school hours learning activities, study support and leisure interests.

6. Working with agencies and the VSH

- 6.1. The school will ensure that copies of all relevant reports are forwarded to the LAC social workers, in addition to carers or residential social workers.
- 6.2. The school will coordinate their review meetings; for example, hold their annual review of LAC with their statutory care review.
- 6.3. The school will work with other agencies to exchange information, such as changes in circumstances, exclusions or attendance issues, taking prompt action, where necessary, to safeguard LAC and previously-LAC.
- 6.4. Behaviour management strategies will be agreed between the VSH and the school, to ensure challenging behaviour is managed in the most effective way for that individual child.
- 6.5. The designated teacher for LAC and previously-LAC will communicate with the VSH and child's social worker to facilitate the completion of the PEP.
- 6.6. Through the designated teacher, the school will work with the VSH, social worker and other relevant agencies to monitor any arrangements in place so that actions and activities recorded in the child's PEP are implemented without delay.
- 6.7. The designated teacher will communicate with the VSH and agree on how PP+ can be used effectively to accommodate the child's educational attainment and progress.
- 6.8. PP+ for previously-LAC will be allocated directly to, and managed by, the school.
- 6.9. The school will work with the VSH to manage allocation of PP+ for the benefit of our cohort of LAC, or previously-LAC, and according to their needs.
- 6.10. If deemed necessary, the school will allocate an amount of funding to an individual to support their needs.
- 6.11. The designated teacher will ensure consistent and strong communication with the VSH regarding LAC who are absent without authorisation.
- 6.12. The school will share their expertise on what works in supporting the education of LAC and previously-LAC.

7. Transfer out of care

7.1 When children cease to be looked-after the designated teacher will maintain links with VSHs for the purposes of promoting the educational achievement of this group of previously looked-after children.

7.2 The Designated teacher will ensure that family members and carers are aware that they must pass on information about previous care status to any education settings. This information cannot be passed from school to school as it will be protected information under GDPR.

8. Training

8.1. The designated teacher and other school staff involved in the education of LAC and previously-LAC have received the appropriate training, this includes information about the following:

- School admissions arrangements
- SEND
- Attendance
- Exclusions
- Homework
- Managing and challenging behaviour
- Promoting positive educational and recreational activities
- Supporting pupils to be aspirational for their future education, training and employment
- Safeguarding

9. Pupil mental health

9.1. LAC and previously-LAC are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues which can impact their behaviour and education. Designated teachers will have awareness, training and skills regarding a child's needs and how to support them in relation to behaviour management and mental health.

9.2. The designated teacher will work with the VSH to ensure the school is able to identify signs of potential mental health issues, understand the impact issues can have on LAC and previously-LAC, and knows how to access further assessment and support, where necessary.

9.3. A Boxall profile will be completed on a termly basis to help social workers and other relevant professionals to form a view about LAC and previously-LAC's current emotional wellbeing.

10. Exclusions

- 10.1. Past experiences of LAC and previously-LAC will be considered when designing and implementing the school's Behavioural Policy.
- 10.2. The school will have regard to the DfE's statutory guidance 'Exclusions from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England' and, as far as possible, avoid excluding any LAC.
- 10.3. Where the school has concerns about a child's behaviour, the VSH will be informed at the earliest opportunity.
- 10.4. Exclusion will only be used as a last resort, after the school and VSH have considered what additional support can be provided to prevent exclusion, and any additional arrangements to support the pupil's education in the event of exclusion.
- 10.5. The school will inform parents that they can seek the advice of the VSH on strategies to support their child to avoid exclusion.

11. Pupils with SEND

- 11.1. Support for LAC with SEND, who do not need an EHC plan, will be covered as part of the child's PEP and care plan reviews.
- 11.2. The SENCO, class teacher, designated teacher and specialists will involve parents when considering interventions to support their child's progress.
- 11.3. If appropriate, the VSH will be invited to comment on proposed SEND provision for previously-LAC.

12. Information sharing

- 12.1. Appropriate and specific arrangements for sharing reliable data are in place to ensure that the education needs of LAC and previously-LAC are understood and met.
- 12.2. The arrangements set out include:
 - Who has access to information on LAC and previously LAC and how data will remain secure.
 - How pupils and parents are informed of, and allowed to challenge, information that is kept about them.
 - How carers contribute to and receive information.
 - Mechanisms for sharing information between the school and relevant LA departments.
 - How relevant information about individual pupils is passed between authorities, departments and the school when pupils move.

13. Monitoring and review

- 13.1. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the designated teacher and the headteacher.
- 13.2. The next scheduled review date for this policy is April 2021.