



# Child Looked After (CLA) Policy

**Approved:** Autumn 2021

**To be reviewed:** Autumn 2023

*Together, we learn, love and grow with Jesus*

This policy has due regard to all relevant 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 (2021) 'Keeping children safe in education 2021'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'

Any policy for the education of looked after and previously looked after children should be considered alongside the statutory guidance.

### **Definitions**

"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.

"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).

### **The Governing Body:**

The governors will carry out their role in line with statutory guidance.

### ***The designated governor in school is Mrs M. Sims***

The governing body, head teacher and school leadership team at St. Jude's will support the education of looked after and previously looked after children by ensuring that the designated teacher has:

- Appropriate seniority and professional experience to provide leadership, training, information, challenge and advice to others

- Appropriate monitoring arrangements to ensure that the school/education setting is providing appropriate support for looked-after and previously looked-after children

They will also ensure that school policies consider the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children. This consideration will include additional arrangements for looked – after and previously looked-after children when considering;

- Admission
- Exclusion
- Behaviour management
- Mental health needs
- Specific safeguarding challenges
- Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- Gifted and talented students
- Teaching and learning needs
- Educational visits and extended school activities

The Governing body will hold the school to account on how it supports its looked-after and previously looked-after children, including;

- How the Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) is used
- Level of progress

### **The Designated Teacher:**

The designated teacher will carry out their role in line with statutory guidance.

*The designated teachers are:*

Mrs R Cregan- [j.bradshaw@saintjudes.wigan.sch.uk](mailto:j.bradshaw@saintjudes.wigan.sch.uk)

Mrs M Ashurst- [m.ashurst@saintjudes.wigan.sch.uk](mailto:m.ashurst@saintjudes.wigan.sch.uk)

The designated teacher (DT) is the central point of initial contact within the school. They will join up resources and support to minimise any disruption to a child's learning.

The DT will work with VSHs to promote the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children by promoting a whole school culture where the personalised learning needs of every looked-after and previously looked-after child matters and their personal, emotional and academic needs are prioritised.

They will take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils. Our school will make sure that all staff:

- have high expectations of children's learning and set targets to accelerate educational progress;
- are aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation (attachment awareness)
- understand how important it is to see children as individuals
- appreciate the central importance of the looked-after child's PEP

- for previously looked-after children, 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 looked-after and previously looked-after children.

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 previously looked-after children are reminded that they need to inform the school if their child is eligible to attract PP+
- Ensure looked after and previously looked after children are prioritised for support; listened to; encouraged to participate; and believe they can achieve through an ethos of aspiration.

The designated teacher will chair Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings to effectively plan to utilise school resources and ensure each child has access to the support they need to achieve.

These meetings will take place 3 times per academic year to review support and deploy effective resources.

Documentation will be coproduced with family and social care and shared with appropriate professionals as part of the child's care plan.

The designated teacher will work closely with professional agencies including the foster carer; allocated social worker; virtual school head; learning and behaviour support agencies; EPS; SENDs, CAMHs, local police/youth offending service; community nurses and any other professional agency involved in supporting the child and family.

### **Transfer out of care:**

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.

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.

### **Voice of the child:**

We will listen to the voice of looked-after and previously looked-after children as a vital part of successfully understanding and meeting their needs.

### **Pupil Premium Plus (PP+):**

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

### **Special Educational Needs (SEN):**

Looked-after children and previously looked-after children are significantly more likely to have SEN than their peers. Of those with SEN, a significant proportion will have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC plans).

The designated teacher will ensure that:

- They work closely with local authority support team where applicable.
- Children's PEPs work in harmony with their EHC plan.

### **Meeting Mental Health Needs:**

Looked-after children and previously looked-after children are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues than their peers.

The designated teacher has an important role in ensuring they and other school staff can identify signs of potential issues and understand where the school can draw on specialist services

- Our school will utilise the CAMHS education link to support understanding mental health needs for looked-after and previously looked-after children.
- This will enable us to improve a whole school understanding of attachment and trauma and the impact on learning and behaviour for vulnerable children.
- We also recognise the impact on staff when working with traumatised children. We will ensure all staff feel supported to address their own needs as well as those of the vulnerable children they are caring for.

### **Working with Local Authorities:**

As a school we work closely with the Virtual Schools Team based in Wigan. Our team of education advisers and support workers provides help to individual members of staff, staff groups and children.

- Advice and support to schools, social workers, residential homes and carers and challenge them where necessary
- Direct support and intervention with children in school - academic, social, emotional, behavioural and attendance issues
- Termly tracking and monitoring all aspects of a child's attendance, attainment and progress

- Attendance at, and guidance for, Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings
- Manage the pupil premium plus for children looked after and ensure schools are allocated funds according to need. This fund is managed by the Virtual School
- Support the application for pupil premium plus for children POST CLA. This fund is then managed by the school
- Audit of PEP including the scrutiny of quality target setting
- Training for all professionals involved with the education of CLA
- Termly network meetings for schools to address new legislation and guidance

### **Working with Parents and carers:**

At Jude's our parents/carers are kept involved in all aspects of the child's education. They are:

- invited to all PEP meetings.
- Given all paperwork/meeting minutes from any meetings held

We also have an open-door policy at school, therefore parents can come into school and discuss the child's needs, education and progress with the appropriate member of staff as and when needed.

### **Exclusions:**

- The past experiences of looked-after and previously looked-after children can impact on their behaviour
- Where a looked-after child is at risk of either fixed term or permanent exclusion, the designated teacher will contact the relevant authority's VSH as soon as possible so they can help the school decide how to support the child to improve their behaviour and avoid exclusion becoming necessary.