Painsley Catholic College

Designated Teacher LAC Policy

INTERNAL POLICY

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1. Aims

As a Catholic school, we uphold the Catholic Social Teaching of Human Dignity. Every person's life and dignity must be respected and supported from conception until the end of their natural life on earth. Human Dignity is about ensuring that there is nothing which prevents an individual from growing and flourishing in all aspects of their being and recognising and speaking out and acting when this is not so.

With this in mind, the school aims to ensure that:

- A suitable member of staff is appointed as the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children
- The designated teacher promotes the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children, and supports other staff members to do this too
- we are highly ambitious for these young people, knowing that securing the best possible progress for them will greatly enhance their life chances
- be fully inclusive and challenge negative views and stereotypes
- staff, parents, carers and guardians are aware of the identity of the designated teacher, how to contact them and what they are responsible for

We will support the Government's agenda for giving all looked after children the same life chances as any other child, in that we want them to: be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution to society, and achieve economic well-being.

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance on the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

The Children Act 2004 and the statutory guidance Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children 2015, place a duty on us to work together to promote the educational achievement of looked after children. We recognise that schools and teachers are at the very heart of this process so that we can provide a good education in order to unlock a bright future and so increase life chances of this vulnerable group.

3. Definitions

Looked-after children are registered pupils that are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services functions, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours

Previously looked-after children are registered pupils that fall into either of these categories:

- They were looked after by a local authority but ceased to be as a result of any of the following:

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- A child arrangements order, which includes arrangements relating to who the child lives with and when they are to live with them
- A special guardianship order ○ An adoption order

- They appear to the governing board to have:
  - Been in state care in a place outside of England and Wales because they would not have otherwise been cared for adequately, and
  - Ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted

Personal education plan (PEP) is part of a looked-after child's care plan that is developed with the school. It forms a record of what needs to happen and who will make it happen to ensure the child reaches their full potential.

Virtual school head (VSH) is a local authority officer responsible for promoting the educational achievement of their authority's looked-after children, working across schools to monitor and support these pupils as if they were in a single school. The VSH is also responsible for providing information and advice to schools, parents and guardians in respect of previously looked-after children.

4. Identity of our designated teacher

Our designated teacher is Mr D Bullock.

You can contact them in the Pentecost office, by calling 01538 493777.

Our designated teacher takes lead responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of lookedafter and previously looked-after children at our school. They are your initial point of contact for any of the matters set out in the section below.

5. Role of the designated teacher

5.1 Leadership responsibilities

The designated teacher will:

- Act as a central point of initial contact within the school for any matters involving looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Promote the educational achievement of every looked-after and previously looked-after child on roll by:
  - Working with VSHs
  - Promoting a whole school culture where the needs of these pupils matter and are prioritised
- Take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand:
  - The things which can affect how looked-after and previously looked-after children learn and achieve
  - How the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils
- Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies to ensure they consider the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children

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- Promote a culture in which looked-after and previously looked-after children are encouraged and supported to engage with their education and other school activities
- Act as a source of advice for teachers about working with looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Work directly with looked-after and previously looked-after children and their carers, parents and guardians to promote good home-school links, support progress and encourage high aspirations
- Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of looked-after children's PEPs
- Work closely with the school's safeguarding team to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding looked-after and previously looked-after children are quickly and effectively responded to
- Involve parents and guardians of previously looked-after children in decisions affecting their child's education

5.2 Supporting looked-after children

The designated teacher will:

- Make sure looked-after children's PEPs meet their needs by working closely with other teachers to assess each child's specific educational needs
- Have overall responsibility for leading the process of target-setting in PEPs
- Monitor and track how looked-after children's attainment progresses under their PEPs
- If a child is not on track to meet their targets, be instrumental in agreeing the best way forward with them in order to make progress, and ensure that this is reflected in their PEP
- Ensure the identified actions of PEPs are put in place
- During the development and review of PEPs, help the school and relevant local authority decide what arrangements work best for pupils
- Ensure that:
    - A looked-after child's PEP is reviewed before the statutory review of their care plan – this includes making sure the PEP is up to date and contains any new information since the last PEP review, including whether agreed provision is being delivered
    - PEPs are clear about what has or has not been taken forward, noting what resources may be required to further support the child and from where these may be sourced. This will identify specific areas of concern and include achievable targets. Areas for consideration will include:
        - Attendance
        - Achievement Record (academic or otherwise)
        - Behaviour
        - Homework
        - Involvement in Extra-Curricular Activities
        - Special needs (if any)
        - Development needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge or subject areas and experiences)

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- Long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations).

- The updated PEP is passed to the child's social worker and VSH ahead of the statutory review of their care plan
- Ensure that Looked After Children have equal access to:
  - the national curriculum
  - public examinations
  - careers guidance
  - additional educational support if required
  - extra-curricular activities
  - work experience ○ Attend, arrange for the class teacher / Pastoral Lead to attend, or to contribute in other ways, to Looked after Children care planning meetings.
- Cascade training to school staff as appropriate.
- Ensure all teaching staff who are in contact with the student are aware that he/she is being looked-after by the Local Authority.
- Ensure Teaching Assistants have knowledge that the student is being looked-after when directly involved in the teaching of the young person.

- Transfer a looked-after child's PEP to their next school or college, making sure it is up to date and that the local authority responsible for looking after them has the most recent version

5.3 Supporting both looked-after children and previously looked-after children

The designated teacher will:

- Ensure the specific needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children are understood by staff and reflected in how the school uses pupil premium funding
- Work with VSHs to agree how pupil premium funding for looked-after children can most effectively be used to improve their attainment
- Help raise the awareness of parents and guardians of previously looked-after children about pupil premium funding and other support for these children
- Play a key part in decisions on how pupil premium funding is used to support previously looked-after children
- Encourage parents' and guardians' involvement in deciding how pupil premium funding is used to support their child, and be the main contact for queries about its use
- Ensure teachers have awareness and understanding of the specific needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children in areas like attendance, homework, behaviour and future career planning
- Be aware of the special educational needs (SEN) of looked-after and previously looked-after children, and make sure teachers also have awareness and understanding of this

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- Ensure the SEND code of practice, as it relates to looked-after children, is followed
- Make sure PEPs work in harmony with any education, health and care (EHC) plans that a looked-after child may have
- Ensure that, with the help of VSHs, they have the skills to identify signs of potential SEN issues in looked-after and previously looked-after children, and know how to access further assessment and support where necessary
- Ensure that they and other staff can identify signs of potential mental health issues in looked-after and previously looked-after children and understand where the school can draw on specialist services
- Put in place robust arrangements to have strengths and difficulties questionnaires (SDQs) completed for looked-after children, and use the results of these SDQs to inform PEPs
- Put in place mechanisms for understanding the emotional and behavioural needs of previously lookedafter children

5.4 Relationships beyond the school

The designated teacher will:

- Proactively engage with social workers and other professionals to enable the school to respond effectively to the needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children
- Discuss with social workers how the school should engage with birth parents, and ensure the school is clear about who has parental responsibility and what information can be shared with whom
- Be open and accessible to parents and guardians of previously looked-after children and encourage them to be actively involved in their children's education
- Proactively build relationships with local authority professionals, such as VSHs and SEN departments
- Consider how the school works with others outside of the school to maximise the stability of education for looked-after children, such as:
    - Finding ways of making sure the latest information about educational progress is available to contribute to the statutory review of care plans
    - Ensuring mechanisms are in place to inform VSHs when looked-after children are absent without authorisation and work with the responsible authority to take appropriate safeguarding action
    - Talking to the child's social worker and/or other relevant parties in the local authority regarding any decisions about changes in care placements which will disrupt the child's education, providing advice about the likely impact and what the local authority should do to minimise disruption
    - Making sure that, if a looked-after child moves school, their new designated teacher receives any information needed to help the transition process
- Seek advice from VSHs about meeting the needs of individual previously looked-after children, but only with the agreement of their parents or guardians
- Make sure that for each looked-after child:
    - There's an agreed process for how the school works in partnership with the child's carer and other professionals, such as their social worker, in order to review and develop educational progress

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- School policies are communicated to their carer and social worker and, where appropriate, birth parents
- Teachers know the most appropriate person to contact where necessary, such as who has the authority to sign permission slips

- Where a looked-after child is at risk of exclusion:
  - Contact the 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
  - Working with the VSH and child's carers, consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to address the causes of the child's behaviour
- Where a previously looked-after child is at risk of exclusion, talk to the child's parents or guardians before seeking advice from the VSH on avoiding exclusion

6.Role of the teacher/Emmaus Tutor/Pastoral Lead and support staff

We require our school teaching and support staff to assist in the implementation and support of this policy for looked after children by requiring all staff to:

- ensure appropriate sensitivities and confidentialities are maintained
- be familiar with, and respond appropriately to, requests for progress and/or attainment information in order to compile the PEP and other documentation necessary for reviews
- respond positively to any request by a child to be the person they want to talk with
- ensure that no child in care becomes the victim of stigmatisation at any time and that any such attitudes are swiftly reported and eradicated
- positively promote the self-esteem of looked after children
- convey high aspirations for their educational and personal achievement.

7. Role of the link governor

It is the designated governor's responsibility to:

- Report to the Local Governing Body on an annual basis
- Report to the Board of Directors as required
- Monitor the LAC's education progress compared with those of other pupils
- Monitor the attendance of LAC compared with other pupils
- Monitor if the LAC has a suspension/permanent exclusion
- Monitor College policies and procedures to ensure that Looked After Children have equal access to:
  - the national curriculum
  - public examinations
  - careers guidance
  - additional educational support if required - extra-curricular activities - work experience.
- Report annually to the Board of Directors and Local Governing Body on the progress of all Looked After Children against the key indicators outlined above.

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8. LAC and Safeguarding

At Painsley Catholic College, the designated safeguarding lead is also the lead teacher for looked after children. The LAC group is extremely vulnerable, the most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect and the school is aware of the need to monitor the welfare and ensure the support of children in this category.

The designated safeguarding lead has details of the of the legal status of each individual looked after child's care arrangements and what the contact arrangements are with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They will also know the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her.

The designated teacher will work with the virtual school head and the child's social worker to discuss how funding can be best used to support the progress of looked after children in the school and meet the needs identified in the child's personal education plan and to ensure their safety and security.

9. LAC and SEND

As some of our looked after children have special educational needs and/ or disabilities, our SENDCO will be closely involved with the provision for these children.

10. LAC Funding

Use of the pupil premium funding for LAC to raise aspirations and ensure rapid progress in line with all other students.

Extra support for pupil premium students, including LAC, is offered through a variety of methods common across the school. These include additional staffing to create smaller groups, additional leadership and management time with a focus on vulnerable groups and curriculum provision, literacy/numeracy tuition, assessment tracking (vulnerable groups form a crucial part of the tracking process), after-school support, emotional and wellbeing coaching, laptop provision and the Implementation Plan having a dedicated section on the Pupil Premium.

11. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by Mr D Bullock. At every review, it will be approved by the Board of Directors.

The name of our appointed Designated Governor is: Mrs Anniela Grattage

The name of our school's Designated Teacher is: Mr D Bullock

12. Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Values and Expectations policy

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- Safeguarding policy
- SEND
- Supporting pupils with medical needs

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