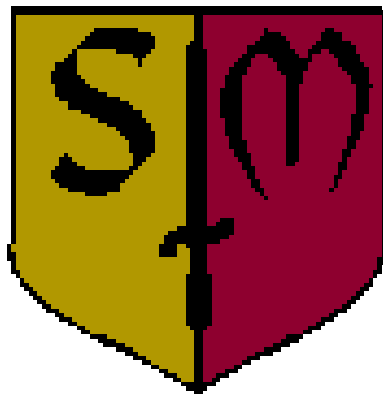


St Mary's Catholic **Primary School**



Policy for Looked After Children

**Learning and Loving
Caring and Sharing
through
The message of Christ**



**St Mary's Catholic Primary School is a happy
community where we are loved and valued as
individuals.**

**As Disciples of Jesus, we learn
together, pray together and
celebrate together as one in God's love.**

**Together with parents/carers, the parish and
the wider community, we prepare our children
to live and build God's kingdom on earth.**

The Objective

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of Looked After pupils

1. The Name of the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children:

Ruth Williams

2. Definition of LAC

Under the Children 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:

- Children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents.
- Children who are the subjects of a care order or interim care order.
- Children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection.
- Children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement.

The term '**in care**' refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 – they may live with foster carers, in a Children's home, in a residential school, with or with parents under supervision.

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.

All these groups are said to be '**Looked After Children**' – LAC. They may be looked after by our local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

Post adoption placement, a child will remain under the **Looked After Child** until the final hearing and sometimes due to complexities for a period after determined by the court.

3. The Role of the Designated teacher for Looked After Children

Within School Systems:

- To ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by children and young Looked After People and understand the need for positive systems of support to overcome them;
- To inform members of staff of the general educational needs of children who are Looked After, and to promote the involvement of these children in homework clubs, extra curricular activities, home reading schemes, school councils etc
- To develop monitoring systems for liaising with carers, the Social Services Department and the Education service
- To hold a supervisory brief for all children being looked after e.g to ensure all relevant education and care information is available to school staff and carers and that this information is kept up to date
- To monitor the educational progress of all children who are looked after in order to inform the school's development plan
- To intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy; and
- To ensure the involvement of the Careers Service with children in Year 10 and 11 who are Looked After

Work with Individual Looked After Children

- To enable the child to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their Care Plan
- To help ensure that each pupil has a Personal Education Plan (N.B. the PEP should be initiated by the young person's Social Worker)

- To ensure that a Home-School Agreement is drawn up with the primary carer and signed by the Social Worker and
- To supervise the smooth induction of a new looked after child into the school

Liaison

- To liaise with the member of staff responsible for monitoring children on the Child Protection Register
- To help co-ordinate education review meetings so that the Personal Education Plan can inform the Child's Care Plan
- To attend, arrange for somebody else to attend or to contribute in other ways to the Social Care Developments care planning meetings
- To be the named contact for colleagues in Education and Social Care
- To ensure the speedy transfer of information between agencies and individuals, and report on the progress of all Looked After Children

Training

- To develop knowledge of Social Care Development/Education procedures by attending training events organised by the Local Authority and
- To cascade training to school staff as appropriate
- Funding may be allocated by LEA and Social Services for additional resources, this will need to be applied for on an ad hoc basis through the LAC officer

4. The Name of a Governor with Special responsibility for Looked After children

Esther Bennington

5. The Role of that Governor

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 as a discrete group, compared with those of other pupils
- The attendance of pupils as a discrete group, compared to other pupils
- The level of fixed term/permanent exclusions and
- Pupil destinations

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

- The National Curriculum
- Public examinations
- Careers guidance
- Additional educational support
- Extra- curricular activities and
- Work experience

6. Responsibility for LAC in School

Who are Looked After Children?

It is important that all teaching staff who are in contact with the child or young person are aware that he/she is being looked after by the Local Authority.

The responsibility for the transfer of this information should be that of the head teacher and/or the Designated teacher.

It is appropriate for the classroom support assistant to have knowledge that the young person is being looked after only when directly involved in the teaching of the young person.

In the absence of the usual class teacher some information regarding the child's circumstances should be shared with the teacher covering the class. The extent of this sharing should be determined by the Head teacher or the Designated teacher.

7. Admissions Arrangements

On admission, records will be requested from the pupil's previous school and a meeting will be held with the carer/parent/Social worker – but always somebody with parental responsibility. This meeting **MUST** take place within 20 days and is the Personal Education Plan meeting.

8. Involving the Young Person

It is important that the young person is aware that the school, the Social Worker and their carers are working together to promote their education.

It is also important to establish the child's point of view of their changed circumstances and what they want others to know. It is also important to ensure that a Social Worker/teacher/carer prepares the child for situations when they may be asked about home e.g. by other pupils in the playground.

9. Communications with other Agencies

Schools should ensure that a copy of all reports (e.g. end of year reports) should be forwarded to the young person's Social Worker in addition to the foster carer or Residential Social worker in the case of a children's home.

Schools, the Education service and Social Care department should endeavour to co-ordinate their review meetings, e.g. to have an Annual Review of Statement combined with a Statutory Care Review.

Social Care department, the Education Service and schools will need to exchange information between formal reviews if there are significant attendance issues.

10. Assessment, Monitoring and Review Procedures

Each Looked After pupil will have a Care Plan that will include a Personal Education Plan (PEP) that the Social Worker takes a lead in developing. 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
- Developmental needs (short and long term development of skills, knowledge or subject areas and experiences) and
- Long term plans and aspirations (targets including progress, career plans and aspirations)

The PEP will be updated regularly as part of the Statutory Reviewing process carried out by Prevention and Social Care department.

The named governor will report annually to the Governing Body on the progress of all Looked After children against the key indicators outlined above.

Equal Opportunities

Equal opportunities are given to all pupils of all abilities in this subject area. We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

11. Work themes and curriculum

St Mary's will be aware that certain themes in the school curriculum may impact the well-being of pupils, who are currently LAC or previously. School will reflect on wording used in family themed work and monitor the impact on the pupil.

12. Previously LAC children

St Mary's recognises that even though a child may no longer be LAC they remain vulnerable and may continue to need support and monitoring throughout their school journey.