

St Bernard's Catholic Primary & Nursery School

Looked after Children Policy



St Bernard's Primary & Nursery School, A Voluntary Academy

Approved by Governors: January 2025

Review date: January 2027

Looked After Children

'To grow, love and learn following Jesus'

We understand that children or young people who have been taken into care by the local authority or who have a voluntary care arrangement are known as 'Looked After'. Looked After Children will either be living in foster homes, children's residential homes, living with a relative or with their natural parent(s).

We are committed to providing quality education for all our pupils including Looked After Children. It is nationally recognised that Looked After Children significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion when compared with their peers. Therefore, we believe we have a duty 'to safeguard Looked After Children, to promote their educational achievements and to ensure they are able to achieve and reach their full potential'. (Children Act 2004)

We as a school community have a commitment to promote equality. Therefore, an equality impact assessment has been undertaken and we believe this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Aims

- To promote the educational achievements of Looked After Children by ensuring they are able to achieve and reach their full potential.
- To give priority consideration to Looked After Children in the school's oversubscription criteria.
- To work with other schools to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body has:

- appointed a member of staff to be responsible for Looked After Children;
- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel and visitors to the school are aware of and comply with this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring the school's admission criteria complies with current legislation therefore giving top priority for Looked After Children in the event of over subscription;

- responsibility for ensuring Looked After Children have equal access to admission to school, the National Curriculum, examinations, out of school learning and extra-curricular activities;
- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;
- nominated a link governor to visit the school regularly, to liaise with the Headteacher and the Designated Teacher and to report back to the Governing Body;
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy

Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- the Looked After Children policy is implemented;
- a designated teacher is in place who is an advocate for Looked After Children;
- appropriate support and training is provided for the Looked After Children teacher;
- ensure all school personnel and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- all staff receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities;
- that tracking procedures are in place to monitor, admissions, attendance, exclusions, progress, behaviour and support;
- work closely with the link governor and the Designated Teacher;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy;
- the Governing Body receives a termly report that outlines the following:

- the number of Looked After Children in the school
- an analysis of test scores, as a discrete group, compared to other pupils
- attendance figures compared to other pupils
- the level of fixed term and permanent exclusions compared to other pupils
- the number of complaints
- the destinations of Looked After Children pupils when they leave the school

Role of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher is a strong advocate for Looked After Children and will ensure that:

- all Looked After Children and their carers receive a positive and smooth induction into the school;
- an appropriate Personal Education Plan is completed within 20 days of Looked After Children joining the school or entering care;
- each Looked After Child has an identified fully trained member of staff, other than the Designated Teacher, that they can talk to;
- strong and positive home/school relationships are in place;
- Looked After Children are included in all areas of school life;
- Looked After Children are not bullied in any form by actively monitoring and preventing bullying by raising awareness through the school's anti-bullying policy;
- all staff and governors are kept up to date on all issues relevant to Looked After Children and receive the necessary training;
- all Looked After Children receive the necessary support within the school;
- strong links are in place with all agencies dealing with Looked After Children;
- urgent multi agency meetings will be convened if a Looked After Child is experiencing difficulties or at risk of exclusion;
- Looked After Children have full access to the National Curriculum;
- out of hours learning and extra-curricular activities are promoted for Looked After Children;
- procedures are in place to provide confidentiality for all Looked After Children;
- academic progress, attendance and behaviour is tracked with appropriate support given;
- all information is transferred quickly and efficiently when Looked After Children move to another school or phase;
- the Governing Body receives an annual report on Looked After Children

Role of the School Personnel

All teaching and support staff will:

- be made aware of and will be familiar with the Guidance on Looked After Children;
- liaise with the Designated Teacher to enable Looked After Children to achieve stability, success and to overcome any problems they may experience;
- on request provide relevant information for Personal Education Plans and review meetings;
- encourage Looked After Children to achieve their full educational and personal potential which will be celebrated at weekly achievement assemblies and the Annual Presentation of Awards;
- constantly endeavour to promote self-esteem;
- prevent bullying in line with the school's anti-bullying policy;
- accept a request to be a Looked After Child's named person to whom they can speak with when they feel it necessary;
- maintain Looked After Children's confidentiality;
- ensure Looked After Children are supported sensitively;
- implement the school's equalities policy and schemes;
- report and deal with all incidents of discrimination;
- attend appropriate training sessions on equality;
- report any concerns they have on any aspect of the school community

Role of Parents/Carers

Parents/carers will:

- be aware of and comply with this policy;
- work in partnership with the school;
- comply with this policy for the benefit of their children;
- be asked to take part periodic surveys conducted by the school;
- support the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure smooth running of the school

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- the school website
- meetings with parents such as introductory, transition, parent-teacher consultations and periodic curriculum workshops
- school events
- meetings with school personnel
- reports such annual report to parents and Headteacher reports to the Governing Body
- information displays in the main school

Training

We ensure all school personnel have equal chances of training, career development and promotion.

Periodic training will be organised for all school personnel so that they are kept up to date with new information and guide lines concerning equal opportunities.

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy

Bi-annually the effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed by the Executive Head, Head of School and SLT. The necessary recommendations for improvement will be made to the Governors.