

# Children in Care Policy

## Ellesmere Port Catholic High School



Approved by:	Mr J Coucill, Chair of Governors 
Lead of Review:	Mrs V Marsland, SENCO
Last reviewed on:	August 2020
Next review due by:	July 2021

**Name of Designated Teacher: Mrs Victoria Marsland**

**Name of Designated Governor: Mrs Alison Ryan**

### **Definition**

Children in care (previously referred to as Looked-After Children and Previously Looked-After) are those in public care and are either –

- Subject to a Care Order or Interim Care Order, living either at home or away from home. The Local Authority has parental authority which it then shares with the parents in a prescribed way.
- Accommodated with friends or relatives, foster care or residential homes – parents retain full parental responsibility.
- Remanded into care.

A private agreement is not public care - when a child lives with friends or relatives by private arrangement and these children are not designated as Looked After.

### **Governing Body**

The Governing Body is committed to ensuring that children in care are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following are in place, and are working effectively:

- have a Designated governor responsible for children in care
- appoint a Designated Teacher for children in care
- Personal Education Plans (PEPs) for all children in care
- the designated teacher will have as a minimum 2 days a year for training opportunities to factors that impact on the attainment of children in care
- all staff in school will have a clear understanding of the issues that affect children in care, their learning needs, how to support them in school and issues relating to confidentiality
- policies, procedures and strategies to promote the achievement and well-being of this vulnerable group
- receive reports on children in care as outlined above

### **Aims**

- To provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children.
- To support our children in care and give them access to every opportunity to achieve their potential and enjoy learning.
- To fulfil our schools' role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our children in care, by asking the question, 'Would this be good enough for my child?'

## **Rationale**

- The national outcomes for children in care in terms of educational achievement and subsequent life chances are of real concern.
- It follows that children and young people who are looked after need special treatment and positive discrimination in their favour if this situation is to be improved.
- For children in care this school aims to provide positive experiences and to offer stability, safety, continuity, and individual care and attention.

## **ROLES AND PRIORITIES**

### **The Headteacher and Leadership Team**

The Headteacher and Leadership Team will ensure the provision/outcomes for children in care are specifically recorded in:-

- School Improvement Plan
- Planning Documents
- Appropriate School Policies and Procedure
- Specific Reports on issues such as student progress in relation to targets and Fischer Family Trust; exam results; attendance; behaviour, sanctions, exclusions; student voice.

The Headteacher and Leadership team will also:-

- Provide an annual report on the provision for, and progress of, children in care to the Governing Body.
- Ensure staff are aware that the provision to support children in care is a key school priority.
- Give the Designated Teacher for children in care the time and facilities to carry out their job description and to support them at all times in their work.
- Show a personal interest and involvement in children in care in the school.
- Challenge negative stereotypes of children in care if they exist and to insist on the highest of expectations and especially in terms of the children achieving their full potential.
- Provide Continuing Professional Development for staff on issues pertaining to children in care and to ensure that the Designated Teacher attends regular training.
- Provide information to the School Improvement Partner regarding the progress of children in care on the school's roll.

### **Designated Teacher**

The Designated Teacher will

- Be a champion for children in care within the school and ensure that they are receiving special provision.
- Ensure that the children in care are aware of who the Designated Teacher is, and that the member of staff's role is to support them at school.
- Ensure that teachers who need to know are aware of who are children in care, and ensure that the staff treat the information confidentially.

- Ensure that any issues regarding a child or young person being in care are treated sensitively by all staff.
- Ensure children in care receive extra support as necessary and appropriate, with the key aims of helping them achieve their academic potential and further their personal and social development.
- Ensure that all possible is being done to raise the achievement levels of Children in care –
  - the students are following an appropriate curriculum
  - the students know their targets and get feedback at least termly on how they are improving in relation to these targets and how they can improve and do better;
  - the school's data tracking and comparisons with FFT show on at least a termly basis if a student is underachieving with monitored intervention strategies then being put into place;
  - the students are entered for public exams in all cases unless it is totally inappropriate;
  - the students have access to any booster support / intervention that is available in the school;
  - the students have all possible individual assistance in developing their basic literacy, reading and numeracy skills;
  - Children in Care, with identified Special Educational Needs, receive all possible support to meet their needs;
  - able students have access to the school's Gifted and Talented provision;
  - all possible support is given at times of transition (KS2 – KS3, KS3- KS4);
  - students are completing home learning and coursework on time and of good quality and that intervention takes place if this is not the case
  - application is made for Pupil Premium Plus funding to support the education of individual students
- To ensure that children in care receive a smooth induction into the school, with the obtaining of all relevant past history.
- To keep comprehensive and up to date files on each student and to ensure that these are passed on should the student move school.
- To ensure PEP and PEP Reviews occur on time and to play the lead educational role at these PEP meetings.
- To meet with the child in care frequently to check progress and to listen to his/her views about both in school and out of school issues.
- To check with staff on a continuous basis how the students are doing and to intervene quickly at the first sign of a problem, eg. behaviour issues, poor effort etc.
- To monitor attendance on a weekly basis and to report any concerns to the EWO straightaway.
- To draw up strategies for students who are not achieving, behaving poorly or not attending and then monitor the success of their implementation.
- To undertake periodic student voice exercises.
- To encourage students to be fully involved in extra curricular and extension activities both in and outside school; to help them with the logistics of taking part in school trips and other activities; to encourage them to be fully involved in the school, eg year and school councils.
- To ensure that students know there is someone they can approach if ever they have a problem or just want to talk, (this could be either the Designated Teacher or another member of staff – a Trusted Adult).
- To make provision for specific mentoring or counselling as needed.
- To liaise with carers, parents or guardians to promote good home-school links, support progress by paying attention to effective communication, keeping them informed but also urging them to be partners in the student's education and showing them how they can do this

and to encourage high aspirations and work with the child to plan for their future success and fulfilment.

- To ensure that students are getting their fair share of praise and rewards from the school's systems and to intervene when this seems not to be the case.
- To be vigilant for any child protection issues and work closely with the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure any safeguarding concerns regarding children in care are quickly and effectively responded to and also to check carefully for any sign of a child in care being bullied.
- To ensure that the School Nurse is aware of the child's medical history and is liaising with the children in care Health Support Team.
- To liaise closely with the Virtual School Team regarding progress or concerns

NB: The Virtual School Team will keep Designated Teachers informed on all issues relating to their Children in care on a continuous and regular basis.

### **All staff**

All staff in school will:

- Have high expectations of children in care'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 their behaviour;
- Understand how important it is to see children in care as individuals and show sensitivity about who else knows their looked-after or previously looked-after status;
- Appreciate the importance of the PEP and its function in the wider care planning duties of the authority who looks after the child and the roles of social workers, virtual heads and carers;
- For previously looked after children, to understand the importance of involving the parents/guardians in decisions affecting their child's education.