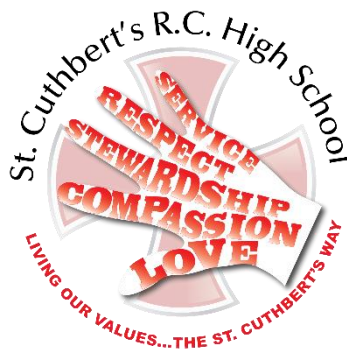




St. Cuthbert's
Roman Catholic High School

WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY & PROCEDURES

CARED FOR CHILDREN



Mission Statement

*'The Lord God requires of us that we should help others whenever we can,
always make the right choices and be the best that we can be in everything that we do.'*

Policy: Cared for Children		
Type: School Policy	Website: Yes	Author: N Dewhurst
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CARED FOR CHILDREN POLICY

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AIMS:

St Cuthbert’s RC High School recognises that all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broad-based curriculum and aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in public care. The school and the governing body welcome Cared for Children (CLA) & previously cared for children (Previously CLA) who may be looked after by our local authority or those who may be in the care of another authority but living in Rochdale (see appendix A)

St Cuthbert's RC High School's approach to encouraging and supporting the educational achievement of Cared for Children is based on the following principles:

- Ensuring an appropriately trained Designated Teacher is appointed, who will be responsible for all Cared for children.
- All Cared for Children will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) drawn up between the school, the child, and the child's social worker, which will identify the child's individual needs and the support they require
- Having high expectations for the child and ensuring equal access to a balanced and broadly based education.
- Recording, monitoring, and improving the academic achievement of the child in addition to their health and wellbeing.
- Achieving stability and continuity
- Prioritising reduction in exclusions and promoting attendance.
- Promoting good communication between all those involved in the child's life and listening to the child.
- Maintaining and respecting the child's confidentiality wherever possible.
- Ensuring staff awareness of, and sensitivity to, the difficulties and educational disadvantages of Cared for Children.

LEGISLATION & GUIDANCE

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 (section 31) 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 relatives 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 'Cared for Children' (CLA).

They may be looked after by our local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours. LAC will have a care manager who arranges their care plan.

Cared for Children (CLA) are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational underachievement when compared to their peers. For example, they may experience:

- a high level of disruption and change in school placements
- lack of involvement in extra-curricular activities
- inconsistent or no attention paid to homework.

This may result in:

- poor exam success rates in comparison with the general population
- under-achievement in further and higher education.

Section 20 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 (“the 2008 Act”) places a duty on the governing body of maintained schools to designate a member of staff (the ‘designated teacher’) as having responsibility to promote the educational achievement of Cared for Children who are registered pupils at the school.

PREVIOUSLY CARED FOR CHILDREN

A previously looked-after child is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person, or has been adopted from ‘state care’ outside England and Wales;

Following amendments made by the 2017 Act, section 20A of the 2008 Act and Section 2E of the Academies Act 2010 place duties on the governing body to:

- designate a member of staff to have responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of previously looked-after pupils who are no longer looked after in England and Wales because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order, or were adopted from ‘state care’

The Designated Teacher (Looked-After Pupils) (England) Regulations 2009 require that the designated person is:

- a qualified teacher who has completed the appropriate induction period (if required) and is working as a teacher at the school (regulation 3(2)); or
- a head teacher or acting head teacher of the school

The Designated Teacher for Cared for Children & Previously Cared for Children at St Cuthbert’s RC High School is Miss A Costello

The Designated Governor for Cared for Children & Previously Cared for Children at St Cuthbert’s RC High School is

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

1 Responsibility of the Head teacher

- Identify a Designated Teacher for Cared for Children, whose role is set out below.

- It is essential that another appropriate person is identified quickly should the Designated Teacher leave the school or take sick leave.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusion of Cared for Children and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations.
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of Cared for Children to all parties involved.
- Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.
- Review the implementation and effectiveness of the Policy and report to Governors.

2 Responsibility of the Governing Body

- Ensure that all Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Looked After Children:
- The Education (Admission of Looked After Children England) Regulations 2006. Relevant DfE guidance to Governing Bodies (Supporting Looked After Learners: A Practical Guide for School Governors).
- Ensure that the school has an overview of the needs and progress of Cared for Children.
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of Cared for Children.
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs.
- Ensure that the school has a Designated Teacher, and that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out his or her responsibilities as below.
- Support the Head teacher, the Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring that the needs of Cared for Children are recognised and met.
- Consider reports from the Head Teacher on the implementation and effectiveness of the Policy

3 The role of the Designated Teacher

- Ensure a welcome and smooth induction for the child and their carer, using the Personal Education Plan to plan for that transition in consultation with the child's social worker and arrangements are put in place to ensure their needs identified and met.
- This may include providing basic equipment and resources if necessary and providing appropriate support in meeting uniform requirements if needed.
- Ensure that the social worker coordinates a Personal Education Plan meeting with the child, the foster carer and any other relevant people, at least two weeks before the Care Plan reviews.
- Maintaining an up-to-date record of the Cared for Children in school, including those in the care of other authorities and ensuring all necessary information is passed to other staff as required
- Ensure that each Cared for Child has an identified member of staff that they can talk to. This need not be the Designated Teacher, but should be based on the child's own wishes.
- Track academic progress and target support appropriately

- Co-ordinate any support for the Cared for Children that is necessary within school liaising with teaching and non-teaching staff in school, including the person responsible for Child Protection as well as pastoral and subject staff to ensure they are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage LACs may face.
- Establish and maintain regular contact with home, statutory and voluntary agencies.
- Ensure confidentiality for individual pupils, sharing personal information on a need to know basis.
- Promote inclusion in all areas of school life and encourage Cared for Children to join in extracurricular activities and out of school learning.
- Act as an advisor to staff and Governors, raising their awareness of the needs of Cared for Children.
- Set up meetings with relevant parties where the pupil is experiencing difficulties in school or is at risk of exclusion.
- Ensure the rapid transfer of information between individuals, agencies and if the pupil changes to a new school.
- Be pro-active in supporting transition and planning when moving to a new phase in education.
- Ensure that attendance is monitored.
- Attending training as required to keep fully informed of latest developments and policies regarding Cared for Children.

4 The responsibility of the all staff

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Cared for Children, as for all pupils.
- Maintain Cared for Children's confidentiality and ensure they are supported sensitively.
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information.
- Work to enable Cared for Children to achieve stability and success within school.
- Promote the self-esteem of all Cared for Children.
- Have an understanding of the key issues that affect the learning of Cared for Children.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Information on Cared for children will be shared with school staff on a "need to know" basis. The Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with which school staff at the PEP meeting. Once this has been agreed with the social worker, carer, young person, and other parties, complete confidentiality is to be maintained.

SAFEGUARDING

School staff will be vigilant for any safeguarding issues which can impact particularly on CLA and previously CLA by: familiarising themselves with the school's child protection policy and the 'DfE: Keeping Children Safe in Education' document (September 2024), if there are any safeguarding concerns.

RECORD KEEPING AND INFORMATION SHARING

The Designated Teacher will keep an up-to-date record of Cared for Children and Young People in school and will ensure that relevant information is made known to appropriate staff.

A Personal Education Plan will be initiated within 20 school days of the Cared for Child or Young Person starting at the school or being taken into care and will be reviewed regularly and as necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the young person.

The PEP will provide a regular opportunity to review progress, note any concerns and ensure that all relevant parties are informed accordingly. Copies of reports and appropriate documentation will be sent to authorised carers and agencies involved with the child as well as any receiving school at point of transition. It is vital that the Cared for Child or Young Person is aware of information being recorded, in what circumstances and who will have access to it.

How this is shared with them will depend on their age and level of understanding.

EXCLUSIONS

St Cuthbert's RC High School recognises that Cared for Children are particularly vulnerable to exclusions. Where a Cared for Child is at risk of exclusion the school will try every practicable means to maintain the child in school. A multi-professional meeting will be arranged, bringing together all those involved with the young person to discuss strategies to minimise the risk of exclusion. The child or young person's Personal Education Plan will reflect strategies to support the child and where relevant those employed in the Pastoral Support Plan. All relevant measures and resources will be considered to provide support and provide alternative educational packages to prevent an exclusion from happening.

Please refer to the school's Behaviour Policy for more information.

ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

We will make every effort to ensure that any arrangements for provision, alternative to daily attendance at school, will be:

- a plan that will retain the CLA on the roll of the school or clarify in writing which educational establishment will be responsible for reporting and accountable for the PP+
- an agreed part of the overall PEP for the student

- full time (25 hours) or contribute to full time attendance and be of high quality
- meet the educational needs of the CLA or Previously-CLA
- will provide the opportunity to make rapid progress in the course of study provided by the setting
- will be monitored regularly and that PEPs will include the school and the alternative provider

ATTENDANCE

School attendance procedures reflect the specific needs of CLA and Previously CLA to ensure good school attendance. Where there is a concern about attendance or punctuality the school contacts the carer, social worker and other professionals including the Virtual School, as an early intervention, as outlined in the attendance policy.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Arrangements will be made to ensure that the Designated Teacher is kept up to date with developments relating to the education and attainment of Cared for Children.

Other staff will receive relevant training and support to enable them to work sympathetically and productively with Cared for Children, including those who are underachieving or at risk of underachieving or who have additional needs. These may include EAL, being Gifted and Talented or having learning or physical needs.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

All Staff endeavour to secure accelerated and rapid progress for CLA and previously CLA who have special educational needs by:

- adhering to graduated approach as outlined in the SEN Code of Practice
- having high expectation of minimum levels of progress each academic year (in line with the expectation set out in the PEP)
- ensuring that all plans are coordinated, appropriate interventions identified, and teaching to the plan is systematic
- ensuring that progress is regularly monitored and reviewed, in line with the SEN Code of Practice
- Designated Teacher and SENDCO monitor delivery of interventions and review outcomes with class teacher
- where an EHCP is in place, PEPs and EHCP should be aligned to avoid duplication

HOME-SCHOOL LIAISON

The school recognises the value of a close working relationship between home and school and will work towards developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable Cared for Children to achieve their potential.

Open Evenings as well as PEP and Care Plan review meetings provide opportunities to continue to develop this partnership working

ADMISSION & TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS

We recognise that due to care arrangements Cared for children may enter school mid-term and that it is important that they are given a positive welcome and where appropriate additional support and pre-entry visits to help them settle.

The school recognises that Cared for children are an 'excepted group' and will prioritise Cared for Children in the school's over subscription criteria following the DfE Admissions Code (Admissions of Cared for Children (England) Regulations 2006).

School procedures to support CLA during admission and transition include:

- prioritising CLA and Previously CLA at the point of admission
- the swift transfer of information between schools that may include school visits and at times of transition, teaching at the previous school
- early identification of a staff mentor and peer buddy
- additional support and planning for CLA and Previously CLA at times of transition
- structured activities to 'say goodbye', in recognition of the impact of broken attachments and loss

LINKS WITH OTHER AGENCIES

The school recognises the value of working together with other agencies and organisations and will work closely with colleagues from services involved with the Cared for Child or Young Person including Social Care teams; Educational Psychologist; Health Services, CAMHS; Youth Offending Teams.

RACIAL EQUALITY & EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

All children have equal access and inclusive rights to the curriculum regardless of their gender, race, disability or ability. We plan work that is differentiated for the performance of all groups and individuals. St Cuthbert's RC High School is committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment and to achieve their full potential.

SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

The Governing body will ensure that the school allocates resources, including professional time and expertise, to support appropriate provision for Cared for Children, meeting the objectives set out in this policy.

MONITORING

This policy will be reviewed annually by the **Assistant Head Pastoral**. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Links to other policies:

This policy links to:

Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy

Behaviour Policy

Attendance Policy

Pupil Premium Policy

SEN policy

Appendix A:

St Cuthbert's RC High School works alongside Rochdale Virtual School in supporting Cared for Children and previously cared for children.

Key contacts for Cared for Children in Rochdale:

Kirstie Rathbone - Virtual Headteacher, Cared for Children

kirstie.rathbone@rochdale.gov.uk 01706 925 126

All guidance can be found at <http://www.rochdale.gov.uk/schools-and-education/virtual-school/Pages/default.aspx>