



# ST. CUTHBERT MAYNE SCHOOL

*Growing together in love and learning as followers of Jesus*



## **Policy for the Education of Children Looked After (CLA) by Hertfordshire and Previously Looked After Children (PLA)**

“There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us. A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.”

1 Corinthians 12: 4-7

### **Policy Objective:**

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of Children Looked After (CLA), Post-Children Looked after (Post-CLA), children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children on the roll of this school.

**Name of the Designated Teacher for CLA and PLA:** Mrs A Hobbs

**Name of the Designated School Governor for CLA and PLA:** Mrs M Heffernan

At **St Cuthbert Mayne School** we create an environment where children looked after (CLA), children previously looked after (Post-CLA), children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children have access to excellent educational provision and are prioritised for additional support through school-based interventions, in accordance with the *‘DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018.*

We recognise that our school plays a vital role in providing a stable base for CLA and in promoting their academic, social and emotional development. We promote whole school staff training in their specific needs, so that all adults at this school are sensitive to the barriers to learning that CLA experience and feel able to support the children discretely and confidentially, as needs arise. We understand the need to work in a ‘relationship-based’ way so that children looked after and previously looked after feel valued and a part of our school community.

Our aim is to champion the needs of CLA to ensure they make rapid educational and social progress during their period in care on the roll of this school.

### **Equality and Diversity statement**

This policy is intended to be helpful for improvement in the education available for all learners but has a focus on children looked after who, statistically, experience

disadvantage in education. The criteria are clear that the expectation is that all learners receive a high-quality, ambitious education; that providers are inclusive of all learners; and that all providers must be meeting their statutory duties, including those under the Equality Act 2010 and all protected characteristics therein.

An inclusive learning environment in which everybody is respected is conducive to a happy and healthy learning environment.

The Virtual School Attachment Aware and Trauma Informed Toolkit training will support a greater understanding of diversity and equality and is relevant to many children particularly those returning to school post COVID-19 lockdowns.

### **Coronavirus response:**

We have adapted our school development plan to ensure that the whole school takes a holistic approach to well-being. This will help to create an ethos where all of those working within the school feel confident in reporting and evidencing issues relating to equality and diversity. Promoting an inclusive environment is key to the well-being of all pupils as is a commitment to deepening pupils' understanding of "democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law and mutual respect and tolerance" (Ofsted 2019).

### **Our Aims for CLA, Post-CLA, children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children:**

- to provide a safe and secure environment where education is always central to the planning and all adults understand the specific needs of CLA, Post-CLA, children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children
- to narrow the gap between the attainment of CLA, Post-CLA, children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children and their peers, ensuring **accelerated** and **rapid** progress (Promoting the health and well-being of looked-after children Statutory guidance for local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and NHS England)
- that they benefit from school-based interventions, including 'Making Good Progress 121 Tuition', even if they do not meet the criteria for that intervention (Promoting the health and well-being of looked-after children Statutory guidance for local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and NHS England) and to use the allocated Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) to ensure effective impact
- for all CLA to have a minimum of three Personal Education Planning (ePEP) meetings in an academic year and for the joint planning to actively impact on each child's learning on a daily basis, to ensure accelerated and rapid progress (Promoting the health and well-being of looked-after children Statutory guidance for local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and NHS England)
- for all adults to provide discreet, sensitive, child-led support, with one key adult identified who will form a strong relationship and take a special interest in daily life at school
- that school systems facilitate discrete support, as appropriate
- CLA, Post-CLA, children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children will be advantaged within school policies and procedures, with their needs explicitly considered and provided for (Promoting the health and well-being of looked-after children Statutory guidance for local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and NHS England)
- CLA and their foster families will feel part of the school community; they will be actively welcomed into the community in recognition of the particular needs of this

group (Promoting the health and well-being of looked-after children Statutory guidance for local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and NHS England).

## **Educational Planning for Children Looked After**

### **Personal Education Plans (ePEP) and CLA Self Evaluation Forms (CLASEF):**

The school will ensure that every CLA on roll has a Personal Education Planning (PEP) meeting that is reviewed termly, within the statutory care planning framework, and in collaboration with the social worker, carer and other relevant professionals. The school will complete the CLASEF to inform the Hertfordshire Virtual School of the school's policy and practice, to account for the efficient and effective spend of the PP+ funding and to inform the school Governing Body as the annual report.

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

**The Headteacher and Governing Body** are committed to promoting improved educational life chances for CLA, Post-CLA, children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children. They will ensure that the Designated Teacher for Children Looked After has qualified teacher status, appropriate seniority in the leadership team and time and experience to fulfil this statutory role. They will monitor the role of the Designated Teacher to ensure that all CLA, Post-CLA, children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children make accelerated and rapid progress and that the whole school staff receives appropriate training.

**The Designated Teacher for Children Looked After** is Mrs A Hobbs. She is a qualified teacher, and will promote improved educational life chances for CLA, Post-CLA, children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children by:

- ensuring that the CLA, Post-CLA, children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children has access to quality first teaching
- tracking the progress of CLA, Post-CLA, children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children across the curriculum using data, teacher reports and book looks
- ensuring that the PP+ is used effectively and efficiently
- performing a coordinating role with school staff and outside agencies
- ensuring effective communication with the school's assigned Education Adviser from the Virtual School
- developing expertise in the field of CLA
- providing and attending training and offering advice to the whole school staff
- promoting a school culture which is supportive and has high expectations for CLA, Post-CLA, children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children
- regularly reporting to the Head and Governing Body on the attainment of CLA, Post-CLA, children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children and school resource and staff training needs for working with this group
- prioritising CLA for school-based additional support, even when the young person does not meet the criteria (Promoting the health and well-being of looked-after children Statutory guidance for local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and NHS England)
- ensuring that CLA, Post-CLA, children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children are not overlooked for positions of student responsibility within the school because of their care status

- completing the annual Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) of each CLA as requested, to inform the annual health review.
- ensuring that carers and care staff are engaged with the targets outlined in the PEP.

**All staff** will promote improved educational life chances for CLA, Post-CLA, children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children by:

- reading the 'school policy' and 'school policy guidance document' for CLA
- attending relevant training, including the Virtual School toolkit training on 'Attachment Aware and Trauma-Informed Practice' (to be found on the Virtual School website: [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/virtualschool](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/virtualschool))
- providing accurate information and data when asked by the Designated Teacher
- referring to the Designated Teacher for advice
- playing their part in creating a 'CLA-friendly' culture and securing rapid progress for CLA by ensuring that they benefit from any additional school-based support available.

### **Attendance:**

**School attendance procedures** reflect the specific needs of CLA, Post-CLA, children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children 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.

### **Admissions/ Transitions:**

**School procedures to support CLA during admission and transition include:**

- prioritising CLA, Post-CLA, children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children 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 staff mentor and peer buddy
- additional support and planning for CLA, Post-CLA, children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children at times of transition
- structured activities to 'say goodbye', in recognition of the impact of broken attachments and loss

### **Additional Educational Needs: The Graduated Approach:**

**All Staff endeavour to secure accelerated and rapid progress for CLA and PLA children with additional educational needs by:**

- having high expectations
- ensuring that they are prioritised for additional school-based support, even if they do not meet the criteria (*in line with the DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018*)

- ensuring that planning is coordinated, appropriate interventions identified and teaching to the plan is systematic; ensuring that any work undertaken by non-teaching staff has teacher over-sight (*in line with the Lamb Report, Dec '09*)
- ensuring that progress is regularly monitored and reviewed, against the targets set as agreed in the termly Virtual School visit, ePEP and CLASEF

### **Special Educational Needs:**

**All Staff endeavour to secure accelerated and rapid progress for CLA, Post-CLA, children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children 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 ePEP and CLA-SEF*)
- 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 SENCO 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.

### **Safeguarding:**

**School staff will be vigilant for any safeguarding issues which can impact particularly on CLA by:** familiarising themselves with the 'School Policy Guidance for Children in Care' and following the school's child protection policy and the 'DfE: Keeping Children Safe in Education' (All staff) June 2019, if there are any safeguarding concerns.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

### **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, Post-CLA, children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children on the roll of the school or clarify in writing which educational establishment will be responsible for essential reporting and accountable for the PP+
- an agreed part of the overall ePEP 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, Post-CLA, children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children
- will provide the opportunity to make rapid progress in the course of study provided by the setting
- will be monitored regularly and that ePEPs will include the school and the alternative provider.

### **Exclusion:**

- **We will make every effort to avoid excluding a CLA, PLA children**, in recognition of the increased risk this poses in terms of them quickly disengaging from the school, due to their early experience of broken attachments and loss. Before acting, we will discuss the rationale for exclusion with the assigned Education Adviser from the Virtual School. If there is no option other than exclusion, then we will make every attempt to reduce the number of days of the exclusion.
- School procedures are in place to reduce the risk of exclusion of CLA, Post-CLA, children who have left care, children who have been adopted and permanently placed children. (Ref: statutory guidance published in February 2018 (*DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018*).

### **Multi-Agency Working:**

**School staff will make every effort to** develop positive professional relationships with colleagues from other agencies and facilitate their work. This will enable colleagues to successfully perform their roles and positively impact on the education and wider needs of CLA and PLA.

**The Headteacher, Designated Teacher and Governing Body will ensure that all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.**

**Date – November 2021**

**Review date - September 2022 to incorporate 2021 publications and forthcoming guidance from Herts Virtual School**

The Hertfordshire Virtual School for Children Looked After

- *Website:* [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/virtualschool](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/virtualschool)
- *Twitter:* @VS\_HCC
- *Email:* [virtualschool@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:virtualschool@hertfordshire.gov.uk)
- *Phone:* 01992 556915