

St Bede's School

Looked After Children Policy

1 Rationale

- Nationally, 'looked after children' (LAC) significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with peers. Schools have a major part to play in ensuring that LAC are enabled to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, achieve, make a positive contribution to society and achieve economic wellbeing, in line with Every Child Matters.
- With due regard for Keeping Children Safe in Education (May/September 2016), this document should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy, in particular:
 - "St Bede's School does not currently have any child on roll that is known as 'looked after' (by Staffordshire County Council or another LA). Nevertheless, we would ensure that we had the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep them safe, including: ensuring that a designated member of staff had responsibility for their welfare and progress with up-to-date assessment information from the relevant LA, the most recent care plan and contact arrangements with parents, and delegated authority to carers. Advice, training and support would be sought immediately from SSCB - this would include information regarding their legal status (voluntary/interim/full care order), contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility, care arrangements, levels of authority delegated to carers and social worker. We acknowledge that the most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect."

2 Aims of the policy

- 2.1 St Bede's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Looked After Children is based on the following principles:
- Prioritising education.
 - Promoting attendance.
 - Targeting support.
 - Having high expectations.
 - Promoting inclusion through challenging and changing attitudes.
 - Achieving stability and continuity.
 - Early intervention and priority action.
 - Listening to children.
 - Promoting health and wellbeing.
 - Reducing exclusions and promoting stability.
 - Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals.
- 2.2 As for all our pupils, St Bede's is committed to helping every Looked After Child to achieve the highest standards they can, including supporting aspirations to achieve in further and higher education. This can be measured by improvement in their achievements and attendance.
- 2.3 The school will raise awareness of the needs of Looked After Children and challenge negative stereotypes about them in order to ensure that they achieve as well as they possibly can and do their personal best.

3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The Headmaster will:

- Ensure an overview of the needs and progress of Looked After Children
- Allocate appropriate resources to meet the needs of Looked After Children
- Ensure the school's other policies and procedures support their needs
- Support other staff in ensuring that the needs of Looked After Children are met
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusions of Looked After Children and take action where attainment, behaviour or attendance is causing concern
- Report on the attainment, behaviour and attendance of Looked After Children
- Ensure that staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.

3.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Continue to develop this policy for LAC
- Be the designated teacher for LAC
- Be the lead contact for colleagues/carers within the school community, colleagues in children's services including social services, health and virtual school head
- Keep an up to date list of our LAC and clearly establish parental responsibility
- Advocate on behalf of LAC with particular regard to issues such as school trips, fixed term exclusions, flexibility of procedures and communicating high expectations for LAC with both staff and the pupils themselves
- Develop knowledge of legislation relating to LAC and of Children's Services procedures through a variety of ways including attending multi-agency training
- Attend relevant training and inform staff about up to date training
- Be aware that the specific needs of LAC should be communicated sensitively to appropriate staff – teaching and non-teaching
- In conjunction with social workers, arrange education planning meetings for new admissions, liaising with social workers and other relevant outside professionals
- Liaise with the Education Adviser as appropriate
- Advise on systems, including recording of progress, to be put in place to support attendance and achievement
- Promote the involvement of LAC in school clubs, extra-curricular activities especially where these coincide with the pupil's interests
- Liaise with other designated teachers at transition such as moving to a new school

3.3 All staff will:

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

Headmaster
September 2016

Director of Studies
September 2016