



ST PHILIP HOWARD CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Designated Teacher Policy (‘Children We Care For’ and previously ‘Children We Care For’)

This Policy has been approved and adopted by the LGC

Approved:	For review:
October 2023	October 2024

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N.B. The term 'Looked After Children' and previously 'Looked After Children' has been changed to 'Children We Care For' (CWCF). Throughout this policy, we will now refer to any students who have involvement with local authority services as Children We Care For.

1. Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

- A suitable member of staff is appointed as the Designated Teacher for Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For
- The Designated Teacher promotes the educational achievement of Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For, and supports other staff members to do this too
- Staff, carers, parents and guardians are aware of the identity of the Designated Teacher, how to contact them and what they are responsible for

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's [statutory guidance on the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children](#).

It also takes into account [section 2E](#) of the Academies Act 2010.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

Children We Care For are registered pupils that are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services functions, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours
- **Previously Children We Care For** are registered pupils that fall into either of these categories:
- They were cared for by a local authority but ceased to be as a result of any of the following:
 - A child arrangements order, which includes arrangements relating to who the child lives with and when they are to live with them
 - A special guardianship order
 - An adoption order

- They appear to the governing board to have:
 - Been in state care in a place outside of England and Wales because they would not have otherwise been cared for adequately, and
 - Ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted

Personal Education Plan (PEP) is part of a Children We Care For care plan that is developed with the school. It forms a record of what needs to happen and who will make it happen to ensure the child reaches their full potential.

Virtual School Head (VSH) is a local authority officer responsible for promoting the educational achievement of their authority's Children We Care For, working across schools to monitor and support these pupils as if they were in a single school. The VSH is also responsible for providing information and advice to schools, carers, parents and guardians in respect of previously Children We Care For.

4. Identity of our Designated Teacher

Our Designated Teacher is **Mrs Vikki Bennett**

You can contact Vikki by emailing vbennett@sphcs.co.uk

Our Designated Teacher takes lead responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For at our school. They are your initial point of contact for any of the matters set out in the section below.

Mrs Olivia Franklin is the 'Children We Care For' Admin Assistant.

You can contact Olivia by emailing ofranklin@sphcs.co.uk

5. Role of the Designated Teacher

5.1 Leadership responsibilities

The Designated Teacher will:

- Act as a central point of initial contact within the school for any matters involving Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For
- Promote the educational achievement of all Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For on roll by:
 - Working with Virtual School Heads
 - Promoting a whole school culture where the needs of these pupils matter and are prioritised
- Take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand:
 - The things which can affect how Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For learn and achieve
 - How the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils
- Contribute to the development and review of whole school policies to ensure they consider the needs of Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For
- Promote a culture in which Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For are encouraged and supported to engage with their education and other school activities

- Act as a source of advice for teachers about working with Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For
- Work directly with Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For and their carers, parents and guardians to promote good home-school links, support progress and encourage high aspirations
- Have lead responsibility for the development and implementation of Children We Care For PEPs
- Work closely with the school's designated safeguarding lead to ensure that any safeguarding concerns regarding Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For are quickly and effectively responded to
- Involve carers, parents and guardians of previously Children We Care For in decisions affecting their child's education

5.2 Supporting Children We Care For

The Designated Teacher will:

- Make sure Children We Care For PEPs meet their needs by working closely with other teachers to assess each child's specific educational needs
- Have overall responsibility for leading the process of target-setting in PEPs
- Monitor and track how Children We Care For attainment progresses under their PEPs
- If a child is not on track to meet their targets, be instrumental in agreeing the best way forward with them in order to make progress, and ensure that this is reflected in their PEP
- Ensure the identified actions of PEPs are put in place
- During the development and review of PEPs, help the school and relevant local authority decide what arrangements work best for pupils
- Ensure that:
 - Children We Care For's PEPs are reviewed before the statutory review of their care plan – this includes making sure PEPs are up to date and contain any new information since the last PEP review, including whether agreed provision is being delivered
 - PEPs are clear about what has or has not been taken forward, noting what resources may be required to further support the child and from where these may be sourced
 - The updated PEPs are passed to the child's social worker and VSH ahead of the statutory review of their care plan
- Transfer Children We Care For's PEPs to their next school or college, making sure they are up to date and that the local authority responsible for caring for them has the most recent version

5.3 Supporting both Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For

The Designated Teacher will:

- Ensure the specific needs of Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For are understood by staff and reflected in how the school uses pupil premium funding
- Work with Virtual School Heads to agree how pupil premium funding for Children We Care For can most effectively be used to improve their attainment
- Help raise the awareness of carers, parents and guardians of previously Children We Care For about pupil premium funding and other support for these children

- Play a key part in decisions on how pupil premium funding is used to support previously Children We Care For
- Encourage carers', parents' and guardians' involvement in deciding how pupil premium funding is used to support their child, and be the main contact for queries about its use
- Ensure teachers have awareness and understanding of the specific needs of Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For in areas like attendance, homework, behaviour and future career planning
- Be aware of the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) of Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For, and make sure teachers also have awareness and understanding of this
- Ensure the SEND code of practice, as it relates to Children We Care For, is followed
- Make sure PEPs work in harmony with any education, health and care (EHC) plans that Children We Care For may have
- Ensure that, with the help of Virtual School Heads, they have the skills to identify signs of potential SEND issues in Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For, and know how to access further assessment and support where necessary
- Ensure that they and other staff can identify signs of potential mental health issues in Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For and understand where the school can draw on specialist services
- Put in place robust arrangements to have strengths and difficulties questionnaires (SDQs) completed for Children We Care For, and use the results of these SDQs to inform PEPs
- Put in place mechanisms for understanding the emotional and behavioural needs of previously Children We Care For

5.4 Relationships beyond the school

The Designated Teacher will:

- Proactively engage with social workers and other professionals to enable the school to respond effectively to the needs of Children We Care For and previously Children We Care For
- Discuss with social workers how the school should engage with birth parents, and ensure the school is clear about who has parental responsibility and what information can be shared with whom
- Be open and accessible to carers, parents and guardians of previously Children We Care For and encourage them to be actively involved in their children's education
- Proactively build relationships with local authority professionals, such as Virtual School Heads and SEND departments
- Consider how the school works with others outside of the school to maximise the stability of education for Children We Care For, such as:
 - Finding ways of making sure the latest information about educational progress is available to contribute to the statutory review of care plans
 - Ensuring mechanisms are in place to inform Virtual School Heads when Children We Care For are absent without authorisation and work with the responsible authority to take appropriate safeguarding action
 - Talking to the child's social worker and/or other relevant parties in the local authority regarding any decisions about changes in care placements which will disrupt the

child's education, providing advice about the likely impact and what the local authority should do to minimise disruption

- Making sure that, if a Child We Care For moves school, their new Designated Teacher receives any information needed to help the transition process
- Seek advice from Virtual School Heads about meeting the needs of individual previously Children We Care For, but only with the agreement of their carers, parents or guardians
- Make sure that for each Child We Care For:
 - There's an agreed process for how the school works in partnership with the child's carer and other professionals, such as their social worker, in order to review and develop educational progress
 - School policies are communicated to their carer and social worker and, where appropriate, birth parents
 - Teachers know the most appropriate person to contact where necessary, such as who has the authority to sign permission slips
- Where a Child Looked After is at risk of exclusion:
 - Contact the Virtual School Head as soon as possible so they can help the school decide how to support the child to improve their behaviour and avoid exclusion becoming necessary
 - Working with the Virtual School Head and child's carers, consider what additional assessment and support needs to be put in place to address the causes of the child's behaviour
- Where a previously Child We Care For is at risk of exclusion, talk to the child's carers, parents or guardians before seeking advice from the Virtual School Head on avoiding exclusion

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by **Mrs Vikki Bennett** (Designated Teacher). At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

7. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Exclusions
- SEND
- Supporting pupils with medical needs
- Pupil Premium