

St. Clement's C. of E. Academy



Children IN Care (CIC) & Children Previously in Care Policy

Amended on: September 2023

Next Review: September 2024

Children in Care and Children Previously in Care Policy

Our vision is to inspire happy, courageous, independent, curious and creative life- long learners.

We aim for all to achieve their full potential, striving both academically and socially with humility and dignity.

We believe that being anchored in Jesus Christ will guide us all with hope, compassion and wisdom in becoming successful members of a global community.

Learning for Life, Anchored in Christ

Serving the local community in the name of Christ since 1859

All children who attend St. Clement's are offered a high quality education that values every person as an individual made in the image of God and seeks to develop them to fulfil their potential both academically and spiritually. We aim to produce citizens of a global community who uphold and respect shared values, which strongly align with the Christian values of the Anglican Communion.

All individuals, representing a diverse range of backgrounds and beliefs, are welcomed wholeheartedly into our school family and are nurtured and supported by our harmonious school community. Friendship is a blessing extended to each and every one, as we develop a multi-faith community where God's love, compassion and forgiveness inform our daily lives.

Definition

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is in the Care of the Local Authority if he or she is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the Authority. This includes the following:

1. Children who are accommodated by the Local Authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents.
2. Children who are the subject of a Care Order or Interim Care Order.
3. Children who are the subject of Emergency Orders for the protection of the child.

A child who has previously been in care is one who has left care through one of the following routes:

- Subject to an adoption order
- Special Guardianship order
- Child Arrangement Order (specific to residency-living with)
- Or returned to care of their parent but not on an order.

Legal Framework

Recent legislation and guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and the Department of Health (DH) requires schools to have effective policies for supporting and promoting the education of Children in Care

Schools must:

- Ensure access to a balanced and broadly based education to all children in care and children previously in care
- Prioritise recording and improving the academic achievement of all children in care and children previously in care.
- Prioritise a reduction in the number of exclusions and trancies for all children in care and children previously in care.
- Ensure there is a designated teacher to advocate for the rights of children in care and children previously in care.
- Develop systems of communications and protocols
- Promote the attendance of children in care and children previously in care.
- Complete termly EPEPs alongside all stakeholders

Objectives

We will:

- Work alongside social workers to ensure that each looked after child has a current Personal Education Plan in place.
- Provide a climate of acceptance and challenge negative stereotypes.
- Ensure all children in care and children previously in care have the same opportunities to participate fully in the National Curriculum, careers guidance, extra-curricular activities, work experience, and enjoy the school experience fully in line with corporate parenting principles.
- Ensure discretion when addressing a child's care status and ensure there is sensitivity to the background of children in care and children previously in care, especially surrounding work on family.
- Ensure the designated teacher is provided with regular training, and that they cascade this training to school staff as appropriate.
- Seek to review all academy policies regularly in the light of local Social Inclusion guidance, Special Educational Needs Legislation, and joint Department for Education and Skills / Department of Health guidance on The Education of Children in Public Care.
- Ensure that a clear protocol for sharing of information will be followed both within school and with outside agencies.
- Endeavour to support all children in care and children previously in care educated in this academy to achieve to their fullest possible academic potential.

Roles and Responsibilities

Many children in care and children previously in care do not want school staff to be aware of their care status because it makes them feel “different”. Therefore, we will negotiate with the child to identify who should be aware of their care status. However, we do acknowledge that in some cases, such as if the child has a severe learning difficulty, this may not be possible.

The named Governor will work in co-operation with the Head Teacher and Designated Teacher as the named staff responsible for ensuring that all Children in Care have equal access to all learning opportunities in line with their peers. The Head Teacher and Designated Teacher also have specific responsibilities for supporting the rest of the staff in their training and work with children in care and children previously in care.

The named Governor at St. Clement's C. of E. Academy is Mrs Sheckler (Safeguarding Gov)

The named Governor should be satisfied that:

- the school has a coherent policy for children in care and children previously in care.
- the school's policies and procedures are reviewed in the light of social inclusion guidance and joint DH/DfE guidelines
- the designated teacher has received appropriate training
- Children in care and children previously in care have equal access to all areas of the curriculum
- the Governing body receives an annual report

The Head Teacher will:

- appoint the designated teacher
- ensure that the designated teacher has received appropriate training
- oversee the development of the policy on children in care and children previously in care.
- be responsible for all systems to support children in care and children previously in care.
- report to the governing body on an annual basis on the following:
 - the number of children in care and children previously in care in the school
 - an analysis of test scores as a discrete group, compared to other pupils
 - the attendance of pupils, compared to other pupils
 - the level of fixed term and permanent exclusions, compared to other pupils
 - the number of complaints

The Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher at St. Clement's C. of E. Academy is Mrs J. Nizamis (DHT)

The designated teacher will serve as the contact for social services and the education department and will maintain responsibility for several key areas to support children in care and children previously in care within the school. This includes serving as an advocate for all children in care and children previously in care in the school.

The designated teacher will help establish and maintain the ethos regarding children in care and children previously in care of the school by:

- maintaining and respecting confidentiality of all children in care and children previously in care and ensuring information is shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis.
- ensuring that all staff, through appropriate training, are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantages faced by children in care and children previously in care and understand the need for positive systems to support them, whilst maintaining appropriately high expectations for their educational achievements.
- acting as an advocate for children in care and children previously in care in order to allow them equal access to educational opportunities and support with important decisions affecting future life chances.

The designated teacher will set up systems to monitor and record the progress of all children in care and children previously in care. She will:

- have an overview and coordinating role for gathering and holding all information regarding children in care and children previously in care.
- maintain records regarding all children in care and children previously in care, including legal status and information regarding who should be contacted regarding matters concerning the child.
- establish a system for contacting and forwarding educational records to new schools to facilitate a smooth and speedy transfer.
- monitor the educational progress of all children in care and children previously in care and intervene, in co-operation with other agencies if required, if there is evidence of underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy, or other similar concern.

The designated teacher will facilitate effective communication by:

- building positive home-school relationships between parents/carers with regular opportunities for dialogue.
- being proactive and participating in setting goals for the child's EPEP.
- playing an active role in care planning by ensuring that the attendance of the most appropriate member of staff and/or written reports are provided to all statutory reviews of children in care and children previously in care.
- helping co-ordinate education and PEP meetings.
- serving as the named contact for colleagues in social services and education.
- ensuring effective communication between all relevant parties.
- inviting the responsible social worker to all meetings, and liaising with this social worker regarding the development of Personal Education Plans (PEP).

The designated teacher will monitor each child's achievement and ensure that they have the support they require within school:

- by meeting with the children in care and children previously in care to discuss who needs to know they are or were looked after and to ensure that the young person is informed of their role.
- by ensuring each child has a named member of staff who can provide advice and/or practical help on academic or pastoral issues.

- by ensuring each child has a Personal Education Plan.
- by requesting support from the SENCO and/or outside agencies, including the Education of children Looked After Service and Birmingham Virtual School, if a child in care OR A child previously in care requires additional academic or behavioural support.
- by working closely with the SENCO to ensure all children in care and children previously in care with special educational needs are being assessed and are getting appropriate resources to support their learning.
- by having a strategy for key stage or new school transitions.
- by ensuring all children in care and children previously in care are made to feel a part of the school environment

Personal Education Plans

Each child will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP), which their social worker will take the lead in developing. However, the school's role in this plan is crucial and at least one member of staff who knows the child well will attend the meeting to establish and subsequently review this. Other staff will contribute in writing as appropriate.

The PEP will consider:

- Pupil voice
- the child's strengths and weaknesses
- interests, both in and out of school
- developmental and educational and pastoral needs
- future plans, and how these can be supported
- issues arising for the child
- It will also identify targets that will be reviewed during the next PEP meeting.

Admission/Induction Arrangements

Children in care and children previously in care are a priority for admission and, as such, we will follow the LEA's published admission criteria.

On admission, the child will meet with the designated teacher and their named member of staff. They will discuss any relevant issues, academic or pastoral, and ensure the child is made to feel comfortable in our school. Records will be requested from the child's previous school and as soon as practicable after they are received a meeting will be held with the carer / parent, social worker, and other relevant professionals, and child as appropriate. This will provide information to inform the child's new Personal Education Plan, and ensure that communication systems are established early.

In the first PEP meeting, we will seek clarification from the social worker as to who requires school reports and who may give permission for school trips or other such activities. At this meeting any means of communication to aid the fluid exchange of information between statutory meetings will be discussed and agreed (such as a home/school book to detail any sudden significant changes in a child's circumstances.)

School Trips and Special Activities

Given the delays that Children in Care experience in getting parental consent for school trips and activities, we will aim to ensure that Children in Care enjoy the same extracurricular opportunities as other children by reserving placements for them on trips or on activities.

Complaints

If a young person, parent or social worker wishes to complain about the provision or policy, they should in the first instance raise it with the designated teacher, who will try to resolve the situation.

If the issue cannot be resolved within 10 days, the young person, carer or social worker can submit a formal complaint in writing to the Head teacher. The Head teacher will investigate the complaint and respond within 10 working days.

Any issue that remain unresolved at this stage should be addressed through a meeting in order to assess the impact of any such complaint upon the young person's education. This meeting may include the named Governor and any other outside agency that both parties deem necessary to attend. This meeting should normally be held within 10 working days of the Head teacher's response.



ST. CLEMENT'S
C.O.F.E. ACADEMY