



## **ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

*To lead those in our care to grow in their faith  
and to benefit from an enriching education*

### **POLICY ON LOOKED-AFTER CHILDREN AND PREVIOUSLY-LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN**

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#### **PREAMBLE**

Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) are a vulnerable group in society and it is nationally recognised that there is considerable educational under-achievement in this group when compared to other groups. As a Catholic School we recognise our responsibility to raise the educational standards and improve the life chances of LAC and PLAC. Usually there are just a few children in our school each year that fit in the definitions below.

#### **DEFINITIONS**

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if s/he is in their care or is provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours. They include the following: children who are accommodated by the local authority under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20); children who are the subject of a care order (section 31(1)) or interim care order (section 38); and children who are the subject of emergency orders for the protection of the child (section 44).

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 provisions 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.

#### **ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER SUPPORTING LAC AND PLAC**

This role became statutory in September 2009 under the Children and Young Person's Act 2008. The designated teacher is a senior member of staff who is able to influence decisions about teaching and learning and is in a position enabling support for the educational achievements of every LAC and PLAC.

The designated teacher in charge of LAC and PLAC pupils undertakes a statutory role and has lead responsibility for ensuring school staff are aware who our LAC and PLACs are. The designated teacher leads on how we support the educational achievement and pastoral needs of these pupils, who may be more vulnerable; more likely to face difficulties in school and more likely to lack the cultural capital which fosters educational progress. Therefore we strive to remove the barriers to learning that looked-after children may experience accessing the general activities and events the school offers to its pupils.

We will deal with information sensitively, taking care to maintain confidentiality where appropriate. We have high expectations of LAC and PLAC and set targets through a personal education plan (PEP) – led by social care, in conjunction with school staff, the virtual school, carers and other agencies if appropriate to accelerate educational and pastoral progress. The designated teacher will be pro-active in supporting transitions and planning when moving children into a new phase in their education. The Designated Teacher will wish to liaise with Virtual School Head Teacher who also has statutory responsibilities and work in a spirit of co-operative partnership with relevant professionals.

The member of staff responsible for looked-after children and previously looked-after children is Mrs Margaret Plewa

**This policy will be reviewed annually.**

*Approved by the Governing Body 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020*

*Policy reviewed on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021*