

St Philip's Catholic Primary School



Children in Care (CiC) Policy

Last updated: December 2024

Review Date: December 2025

Designated Teachers: L. Padotan

Designated Governor: S. Godber

Children in Care and Previously Children in Care

The most common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep Children in Care safe.

In particular, they should ensure that appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents, or on an interim or full care order) and the child's contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. They should also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The designated safeguarding lead should have details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child.

A previously children in care potentially remains vulnerable and all staff should have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep previously Children in Care safe. When dealing with Children in Care and previously Children in Care, it is important that all agencies work together and prompt action is taken when necessary to safeguard these children, who are a particularly vulnerable group.

At St Philip's Catholic Primary School, we believe that in partnership with Sandwell as Corporate Parents, we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of Children in Care.

Who are Children in Care?

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is looked after by a local authority if he or she is in their care or provided with accommodation for more than 24 hours by the authority. They fall into four main groups:

- children who are accommodated under a voluntary agreement with their parents (section 20)
- children who are the subjects of a care order (section 31) or interim care order (section 38)
- children who are the subjects of emergency orders for their protection (sections 44 and 46)
- children who are compulsorily accommodated – this includes children remanded to the local authority or subject to a criminal justice supervision order with a residence requirement (section 21).

The term 'in care' refers only to children who are subject to a care order by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 - they may live with foster carers, in a Children's home, in a residential school, with relatives or with parents under supervision. Children who are cared for on a voluntary basis are 'accommodated' by the local authority under section 20 of the Children Act – they may live in foster care, in a Children's home or in a residential school. All these groups are said to be 'Children in Care' - CiC. They may be looked after by our local authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

CiC reviews, involving the school, will take pCiCe up until an adoption order has been granted. However, Pupil Premium Plus funding will continue for CiC until they are 16 years old.

AIMS

1. To provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children
2. To support our Children in Care and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential, enjoy learning and take as full a part as possible in all school activities.
3. To ensure that school policies and procedures are followed for CIC as for all children.
4. To work with the Virtual School and ensure that carers and social workers of CIC pupils are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment.
5. To fulfil our schools' role as Corporate Parents to promote and support the education of our Children in Care, by asking the question, 'Would this be good enough for my child?'

Our school's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Children in Care is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education
- Promoting attendance
- Targeting support
- Having high expectations and raising aspiration
- Promoting inclusion
- Achieving stability and continuity
- Early intervention and priority action
- Listening to children
- Promoting health and well-being
- Minimising exclusions and promoting stability
- Working in partnership with carers, social workers and other professionals

IN PURSUIT OF THIS POLICY WE WILL...

- Nominate a Designated teacher for Children in Care who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them.
- Nominate a school governor to ensure that the needs of Children in Care in the school are taken into account at a school management level and to support the Designated Teacher
- Support the Designated teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend training on Children in Care

The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for Children in Care

Designated teacher (DT)

The role became statutory in September 2009 under the Children and Young Persons' Act 2008 (the 2008 Act).

The governing body of a maintained school and the proprietor of an academy must ensure that an appropriately qualified and experienced member of staff (hereafter referred to in this guidance as the 'designated teacher') undertakes the responsibilities within the school to promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children on the school's roll. They must also ensure that the designated teacher undertakes training that is appropriate to carrying out this duty.

Ideally, s/he should be a senior member of staff who has enough status and experience to advise and provide training to school staff on issues relating to CIC. They need to be able to influence decisions about the teaching and learning of these children.

Responsibilities in school:

- knowing who all the CIC are in school and ensuring that availability of all relevant details from school record-keeping systems as required.
- Attending relevant training about CIC and acting as the key liaison professional for other agencies and carers in relation to CIC
- Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how CIC should learn.
- Helping school staff understand the issues that affect the learning of CIC such as differentiated teaching strategies appropriate for individual children and in making full use of AfL.
- Making sure that CIC are prioritised in one-to-one tuition arrangements and that carers understand the importance of supporting learning at home.
- Removing the barriers to learning for CIC.
- Ensuring any CIC new to the school are welcomed positively and assessed when they start at the school to identify strengths and weaknesses in their learning. This will be used to inform planning and teaching.
- Developing personalised learning packages for CIC in conjunction with the relevant teaching staff.
- Ensuring that the CIC in their school have a voice in setting learning targets for themselves.
- Championing for CIC.
- Leading on developing and implementing the PEP within the school. The social worker is responsible for initiating the PEP process completing the front page of the PEP form.
- Monitoring the child's progress against the targets on the PEP and extending these targets if they have been achieved.
- Ensuring the child makes a smooth transition to the new school and that the child's records are transferred without delay.
- Liaising with the Virtual School in all aspects of the CIC progress and support.
- Convening urgent multi-agency meetings if a CIC is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion.
- Arranging for a mentor or key worker to whom the young person can talk to. Arranging for the CIC to be supported by its peers.
- Producing at least one annual report* to the governing body which should include: current progress, attendance and exclusions (if any), any concerns regarding behaviour, how the PEP has been implemented and whether the actions put in place are effective in addressing the learning needs of CIC, how the DesT works in partnership with the LA, training undertaken for carrying out the role effectively. The report must not mention the children's names for confidentiality reasons.
- Promoting good home-school links and the importance of education as a way of improving life chances for CIC.

For more information please see: The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for Children in Care – Statutory guidance for school governing bodies.

[The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612522/Children_in_Care_-_Statutory_guidance_for_school_governing_bodies.pdf)

Improving the Educational Attainment of Children in Care (Children in Care)

[untitled \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612522/Children_in_Care_-_Statutory_guidance_for_school_governing_bodies.pdf)

The role and responsibility of the governing body

- Support the local authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of Children in Care.
- Ensure that the DT is given the appropriate level of support in order to fulfil their role.
- In partnership with the head teacher, ensure that, through their training and development, the DT has the opportunity to acquire and keep up-to-date the necessary skills, knowledge and training to understand the respond to the specific teaching and learning needs of CIC.
- Governing bodies and the SLT should make sure that the DT role contributes to the deeper understanding of everyone in the school who is likely to be involved in supporting CIC to achieve.
- The governing body, in partnership with the head teacher, is responsible for monitoring how well the role is working. As part of this monitoring an annual report will be received from the DT.

This policy links with a number of other school policies and it is important that Governors have regard to the needs of Children in Care when reviewing them:

- Oversubscription criteria
- The school code of conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Home-school agreement
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Equality Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy

The school will champion the needs of Children in Care, raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them, in order to ensure that they achieve to the highest level possible.