



Looked After Child Policy

School Responsibility	Mr L Gilhooly / Mrs Helena Harvey
Headteacher	Mr L Gilhooly
Governor	Mrs Rebecca Keinhorst
Adopted	February 2023
Review	February 2026

ETHOS STATEMENT

The School was founded by and is part of the Catholic Church. The School is to be conducted as a Catholic School in accordance with the canon law and teachings of the Catholic Church and in accordance with the Trust Deed of the Diocese of Leeds in particular:

1. Religious education is to be in accordance with the teachings, doctrines, discipline and general and particular norms of the Catholic Church;
2. Religious worship is to be in accordance with the teachings, doctrines, discipline and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church;

And at all times the school is to serve as witness to the Catholic faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

MISSION STATEMENT

St Joseph is our patron saint and he inspires and guides us in our school mission:

- *Each one of us is part of God's family and we are all special*
- As God's children and family we love one another, pray together, play together and walk hand in hand with God
- God is our teacher and we are his gifts. He helps us learn together, work hard and do our best to make our world a better place
 - With fun, laughter and friendship we celebrate God's love
 - We respect and care for everyone and for God's wonderful world

The Academy Council of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is committed to providing quality education for all its pupils, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes.

This academy council recognises that, nationally, there is a considerable educational underachievement of children in residential and foster care, when compared with their peers, and is committed to implementing the principles and practice, as outlined in "Guidance on the Education of Looked After Children" (May 2000) and Section 52 of the Children Act 2004.

Children who are looked after it may be accommodated in care or reminded / determined as follows

Accommodation (Section 20)

This is a voluntary arrangement, because parents are ill, missing, or unable to cope, or as part of a child protection plan negotiated with the family. The parents retain parental responsibility

In Care

A child is in care only if a court has granted a care order which it will issue if it believes a child to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. A care order generally gives parental responsibility to the local authority or shares this with the parents

Remanded/Detained

A child can be reminded or determined as in the following:

- an emergency protection order
- removed by police using their powers of protection
- remanded by a court following criminal charges
- a court directing a social services department to accommodate a child (already on a supervision order for criminal behaviour) for up to six months

Looked after children may (or may not) have some or all of the following issues:

- low self-esteem
- poor education standards due to time out of school
- delayed social/emotional/cognitive development
- be bullied or bully others
- be prone to mental health issues
- be isolated with few friends
- have behaviour issues
- poor attachments to others
- have a need to be very private

This makes them an extremely vulnerable group in terms of education and future life-chances.

The Academy Council of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, is committed to ensuring that these children are supported as fully as possible and will ensure that the following are in place, and are working effectively:

- A Designated Teacher for Looked After Children
- Personal Education Plans for all Looked After Children
- All staff have a clear understanding of confidentiality and issues that affect looked after children
- Effective strategies that supports the education of this vulnerable group.

The Role and Responsibility of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher should:

- be an advocate for Looked After Children;
- when new to the school, ensure a smooth and welcome induction for the child and carer, and note any specific requirements, including care status;
- ensure that a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is completed, as soon as possible. This should be prepared with the child and the carer, in liaison with the social worker and other relevant support workers/agencies, and be linked to the Care Plan meetings, within 28 days, 3 months and 6 months and, at least, every 6 months; A flow chart showing PEP completion is found at the end of this policy
- keep PEPs and other records up to date, particularly in time to inform review meetings;
- ensure that each child in public care (if they wish) has an identified member of staff that they can talk to;
- co-ordinate support for the child in the school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary;

- ensure staff receive relevant information and training and act as an advisor to staff and governors;
- ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis;
- ensure that the child and carer(s) receive early notification of meetings, parents evenings and other events and that communication remains regular and positive.
- encourage Looked After Children to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning, where feasible;
- ensure speedy transfer of information between individuals and other relevant agencies and to a new school if and when the child transfers;
- seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded.
- ensure that any returns on looked after children are completed – as requested by the LA

The Roles and Responsibilities of All Staff

- ensure that any child in public care is supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained;
- be familiar with the and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings;
- respond positively to a child in public care's request to be the named person that they can talk to when they feel it is necessary;
- contribute to the Designated Teacher's requests for information on educational attainment and needs, as appropriate;
- as with all children, ensure that no child in public care is stigmatised in any way;
- provide a supportive climate to enable a child to achieve stability within the school setting;
- as with all children, have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of Looked After Children
- positively promote the self-esteem of Looked After Children

The Role and Responsibility of the Academy Council

The academy council of this school will:

- ensure all governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and [Guidance for Looked After Children](#);
- be aware of whether the school has Looked After Children and how many (no names);
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for Looked After Children;
- liaise with the Head Teacher to ensure that the Designated Teacher is enabled to carry out her/his responsibilities in relation to Looked After Children;
- support the Head Teacher, Designated Teacher and other staff in ensuring the needs of Looked After Children are met;
- nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body (These reports should not include any names of individual children for child protection and confidentiality reasons)
- review the effective implementation of this policy, preferably annually and at least every three years.

Confidentiality

Information on looked after children will be shared with school staff on a "need to know basis". The Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with school staff at the PEP meeting. Once this has been agreed with the social worker, carer, young person, and other parties, complete confidentiality is to be maintained.

Training

The Head Teacher or the Designated Teacher will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

Personal Education Plan (PEP) Completion

- Social worker informs school of a child becoming looked after (or a looked after children entering the school)
- Date is set for the completion of a Personal Education Plan (PEP).
- A copy of the form is sent to the school to enable completion of educational data PEP meeting takes place within 20 days, involving the social worker designated teacher (or other appropriate staff), carer and young person if appropriate.
- A date is set for the next pep meeting Personal Education Plan is taken to the child's statutory review and discussed within the wider context of the child's life.
- PEP sent by Leeds LAC team.

Admissions Arrangements

We recognise that due to care arrangements looked after children (and previously looked after children) may enter school mid-term and that it is important that they are given a positive welcome and where appropriate additional support and pre-entry visits to help them settle.

The school recognises that looked after children (and previously looked after children) are an 'excepted group' and will prioritise looked after children (and previously looked after children) in the school's oversubscription criteria following the school's Admissions Policy and DfE Admissions Code.

Monitoring

The effectiveness of this procedure will be monitored in line with the school's monitoring and reviewing of school policy/procedures.

Any questions regarding this procedure should be directed to Mrs Harvey and Mr Gilhooly who are the school's lead teachers on this issue.