

CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

WHY DO WE HAVE THIS POLICY?

Inspired by the spirit of St Julie Billiart and supported by the Sisters of Notre Dame, the staff of Notre Dame Catholic College seek to work in partnership with carers and all relevant outside agencies in order to enable all of our pupils, including those who are looked after to reach their full potential and thus make a full and responsible contribution to society.

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 subject 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 Looked After' – CLA. They may be looked after by our Local Authority or may be in the care of another authority but living in ours.

HOW DOES THE SCHOOL RESPOND?

- ❖ To ensure that education is a priority for our children who are looked after.
- ❖ To maintain confidential files in relation to each child who is looked after and share relevant information on a need to know basis with their informed consent.
- ❖ To ensure that there are high expectations for our children who are looked after in order to raise attainment.
- ❖ To raise awareness amongst all staff so that they can challenge the negative stereotyping that children who are looked after can encounter.
- ❖ To promote inclusion through changing attitudes and raising self-esteem.

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- ❖ To work in a multi disciplinary way in order to achieve continuity and stability.
- ❖ To ensure early intervention and priority action and set challenging yet realistic targets.
- ❖ To ensure that the necessary personnel and procedures are in place so that looked after children are able to communicate their concerns and feelings.
- ❖ To provide support and guidance for individual children who are looked after and to co-ordinate their pastoral needs where necessary.
- ❖ To convene urgent multi agency meetings if a child who is looked after is experiencing difficulties or is at risk of exclusion.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- ❖ There is a designated teacher, Mrs Colette Peaker, Acting Deputy Headteacher and Safeguarding Officer, who is assisted by Assistant Heads of Year, Miss Clare Wigelsworth and Mrs Joanna Littleboy, who will act as a resource and advocate for the children who are looked after in Notre Dame. The designated teacher and assistant heads of year will work in partnership with other professionals to ensure that all children who are looked after are not disadvantaged.
- ❖ The achievement and attainment of all children who are looked after will be monitored and tracked at regular intervals and additional intervention or support will be provided if deemed appropriate.
- ❖ Every child who is looked after in public care will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) which ensures:
 - access to services and support
 - parents/carers/social workers of children who are looked after are kept fully informed of their progress and attainment
 - contributes to stability
 - minimises disruption and broken schooling
 - signals particular and special needs
 - establishes clear goals
 - acts as a record of progress and achievement
 - each PEP will be reviewed every six months and will detail how the pupil premium for that child who is looked after has been spent
 - School representatives to attend child looked after reviews to contribute to the educational input

The PEP will be initiated by the social worker in partnership with the designated teacher, assistant head of year, parent or carer.

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- ❖ Detailed information and reliable data about the educational circumstances and outcomes of the children who are looked after in Notre Dame will be kept by Mrs Colette Peaker, (designated CLA Teacher). Notre Dame will share detailed information promptly in order to enable primary carers to provide the quality day to day support which good parenting provides. This will include information on attendance, admission arrangements, special educational needs, test scores and other measures of educational progress and need.

CONCLUSION

This policy will be reviewed annually to take account of changing needs of pupils and government legislation.

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