

Children Looked After (CLA) Policy

“What does the Lord ask of you? To act justly, to love
mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

(Micah 6:8)

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Statement of Intent

In our school, our Christian vision shapes all we do. All members of the school community are committed to upholding the St Michael's Church of England Christian values:

- to show love, care and kindness to all in our community
- to value what we have and to share with others
- to enable everyone to achieve their full potential

Educational achievement and subsequent life chances for looked after children are of real concern. Children and young people who are looked after require special treatment and positive discrimination in their favour in order to improve their situation.

St Michael's Church of England High School endeavours to provide positive experiences and offer stability, safety, continuity and individual care and attention for all our pupils. With this in mind, we aim to:

- encourage pupils to reach the highest standards of which they are capable and to make good progress from what they are currently already able to do;
- ensure that pupils enjoy high-quality teaching and are enjoying a curriculum which meets their needs and the requirements of legislation;
- plan realistically and use the school's resources efficiently in order to ensure the school meets the needs of the children;
- promote a positive approach in all aspects of school life;
- help pupils develop their cultural, moral and social understanding.

St Michael's Church of England High School believes that, in partnership with Sandwell Local Authority and Sandwell Virtual School, we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of children who are Looked After.

Signed by:

_____	Headteacher	Date: _____
_____	Chair of governors	Date: _____

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Children Act 1989
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- The Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- The Children and Families Act 2014

1.2. This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the school:

- Admissions Policy
- Code of Conduct and Home School Agreement
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Equality Policy - Pupils
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy

2. Introduction

2.1 St Michael's Church England High School believes that, in partnership with Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Sandwell Virtual School and other local authorities to which our current cohort belong, we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of children who are Looked After.

3. Who are our Looked After Children?

3.1 In accordance with the Children Act 1989, children and young people become 'Looked After' either if they have been taken into care by an English local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most Children Looked After (CLA) will be living in foster homes; however, a small number may be in a children's home, living with a relative or even be placed back at home with their natural parent(s).

4. Aims of the Policy:

4.1 To provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children.

4.2 To support our CLA and give them access to every opportunity to achieve their potential and enjoy learning.

4.3 To fulfil our school's role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of CLA by ensuring high expectations and our Christian ethos support equality for all.

4.4 This policy recognises the collective responsibility of local authorities and schools to achieve good parenting and sets out six principles:

- prioritising education;
- having high expectations;
- changing and challenging attitudes;
- achieving continuity and stability;
- early intervention – priority action; and
- listening to children.

4.5 In pursuit of this policy we will:

- nominate a Designated Teacher for CLA who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them;
- nominate a school governor to ensure that the needs of CLA in the school are taken into account and support the Designated Teacher in their role;
- support the Designated Teacher in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that training needs are met.

5. Role and responsibility of the Designated Teacher:

- be an advocate for CLA
- ensure a smooth and welcoming introduction for the child and carer(s) and parents where possible
- attend transition Personal Education Plans (PEPs) at primary school, wherever possible
- ensure a smooth transition into secondary school
- ensure that each CLA has an identified member of staff they can talk to
- ensure that a date is set for the completion of a PEP as early as is deemed necessary in order to support attainment and progress
- ensure that PEPs take account of any Education Health Care Plans (EHCP) or Behaviour Intervention Plans (BIPs)
- ensure entry to examinations for all CLA and identify where concessions may be required
- co-ordinate support for the child in the school and liaise with other professionals and carers as necessary
- ensure appropriate staff and the named CLA governor receives relevant information and training
- ensure confidentiality for individual children and only share personal information on a need to know basis
- provide written information to assist planning/review meetings and ensure attendance as far as possible
- encourage CLA to participate in extra-curricular activities and out of hours learning
- seek urgent meetings with relevant parties where the child is experiencing difficulties and/or is in danger of being excluded

6. Roles and responsibilities of all staff:

- as with all children, have high expectations and aspirations
- celebrate the educational and personal achievement of CLA
- ensure entry to examinations for CLA
- be familiar with the policy for CLA and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation required as part of review meetings
- liaise with the Designated Teacher where a CLA is experiencing difficulty

7. Role and responsibility of the Governing Board:

- ensure that the admissions criteria priorities CLA
- ensure all governors are aware of the legal requirements and guidance for CLA
- ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for CLA
- nominate a governor to liaise with the Designated Teacher, receive regular progress reports and provide feedback to the Governing Board

- for child protection and confidentiality reasons, ensure that information is collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity, and respect the confidentiality, of the pupils concerned
- review the effective implementation of this policy and review this at least every three years

8. Training

8.1 The Headteacher, Designated Teacher and Career Professional Development and Learning Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and best practice provided by the Department for Education.

9. Children Looked After Pupil Premium

9.1 The Coalition Government introduced the Pupil Premium in 2011 to provide additional funding for those children classed as having a deprived background, and those who have been looked after (by a local authority) for more than one day. In addition, the Service Premium was introduced for children whose parent(s) are, or have served in the armed forces since 2011.

9.2 St Michael's adopts the Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council guidelines for Pupil Premium for looked after children and we operate under the Sandwell Virtual School's procedures and policies.

9.3 As a Sandwell school, St Michael's applies the Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council policies, protocols and guidelines for all CLA in our care.

9.4 If a neighbouring local authority places a CLA at St Michael's, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council policies, protocols and guidelines will be adopted in order to maintain a consistent and streamlined approach within school.

9.5 The DfE allocates a provisioned amount and, in the 2019-20 financial year, the amount of CLA funding available is £2,300 per annum:

- £2,300 per looked after child aged between 4 and 15
- £2,300 per pupil who has left local authority care because of the following:
 - adoption
 - special guardianship order
 - child arrangement order
 - residence order

10. Use of the Children Looked After Premium

10.1 In accordance with Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council Virtual School:

- most of the CLA funding will be distributed to schools as they are best placed to decide on the interventions and support that will work for the children on their roll
- the Virtual School will withhold a proportion of the funds to enable it to target children who need additional support; typically, this is approximately £500

- schools are required to publish on their website how Pupil Premium is used for all pupils, and in each PEP it should be explained how the individual pupil is benefitting from pupil premium
- schools are not required to provide individual accounts for each CLA
- the Designated Teacher, in liaison with the Headteacher, will proportion funding as specified within appendix 1

10.2 Other authorities may have specific rules which will not allow the school to apply the Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council guidelines for allocating money for CLA under the care of other authorities. In such circumstances, the carers of the affected CLA will be informed of the procedures of the relevant authority.

11. Evaluation and Review

11.1 The effectiveness of this policy will be evaluated annually and reviewed every three years. If changes are required, this will be done as required if outside of the three-year review cycle.

Appendix 1 – 2019-20 Pupil Premium for CLA students

At St Michael’s Church of England High School, CLA are nurtured and supported both academically and pastorally in order for them to achieve their full potential. In order to support the attainment and progress of CLA, St Michael’s will use Pupil Premium for:

- a contribution towards to a pastoral support network in school, including a designated teacher, SEMH Coordinator, Assistant Head of Year (non-teaching) and Family Liaison officer;
- equipment and resources (including photocopying costs) and curriculum-based fields trips to enhance learning and aid progress;
- music lessons (where the identified CLA plays a musical instrument);
- bespoke programmes and visiting speakers brought in specifically for disadvantaged students e.g. Positively Mad, Aim Higher, Maths Watch and the Skill Show;
- tailored, in-class intervention or withdrawal for subject knowledge enhancement with an academic coach (where available and appropriate to the CLA individual need, as advised by the Designated Teacher in discussion with class teacher);
- after school extra-curricular activity or intervention programmes as published by individual departments;
- referral to SEMH Coordinator and participation within programmes such as online counselling (Kooth) service, anger management, well-being programmes, Chin-up, Keeping Safe, self-esteem and Sulp.