



**RYECROFT C. E. MIDDLE SCHOOL**

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**POLICY STATEMENT**

**CHILDREN IN CARE  
AND  
CHILDREN PREVIOUSLY IN  
CARE**

*Part of the Uttoxeter Learning Trust*



# ***The Vision of the Staff, Pupils and Governors of Ryecroft C.E. Middle School***

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*Embracing a culture where no child is left behind, we value and respect all the children that God has put in our care.*

*We enrich the lives of our children and ensure that Ryecroft is a safe, happy and inspiring place, embodying the Christian values of trust, humility and perseverance.*

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***“Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD”***

**Psalm 127:3-5**

## **Policy Objective:**

To promote the educational achievement and welfare of Children in Care (CIC) and Children Previously in Care (CPIC) on the roll of Ryecroft C.E. Middle School.

**Name of the Designated Teacher for Children in Care and Children Previously In Care:** Steve Bardon

**Name of the Designated School Governor for Children in Care and Children Previously In Care:** Carol Higgs

At Ryecroft C.E. Middle School we will create an environment where Children In Care (CIC) and Children Previously In Care (CPIC) have access to excellent educational provision and are prioritised for additional support through school-based interventions, in accordance with the '*DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018.*

We recognise that our school plays a vital role in providing a stable base for Children In Care and those Previously in Care, in promoting their academic, social and emotional development. Educational achievement and subsequent life chances for Children in Care and Children Previously in Care are of real concern. Pupils who are looked after require special treatment and additional attention in order to improve their situation. At Ryecroft we endeavour to provide positive experiences and offer stability, safety, and individual care and attention for all our pupils.

We promote staff training in their specific needs, so that all adults are sensitive to the barriers to learning that Children In Care and Children Previously in Care experience and feel able to support the children discretely and confidentially, as needs arise.

Our school community aims to champion the needs of Children In Care and Children Previously in Care to ensure they make rapid progress during their period in care.

## **Our Aims for Children in Care and Children Previously in Care:**

- to provide a safe and secure environment where education is always central to the planning and all adults understand the specific needs of Children In Care and Children Previously In Care
- to narrow the gap between the attainment of Children In Care and Children Previously In Care and their peers, ensuring **accelerated** and **rapid** progress
- to ensure that they benefit from school-based interventions, including 'Making Good Progress 121 Tuition', even if they do not meet the criteria for that intervention (*DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018*) and to use the allocated Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) to ensure effective impact

- for all Children In Care to have a minimum of three Personal Education Planning (ePEP) meetings in an academic year and for the joint planning to actively impact on each child's learning on a daily basis, to ensure accelerated and rapid progress (*DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018*)
- for all Children Previously in Care Ryecroft will use a similar ePEP system to review and plan. Virtual school will be contacted to advise and suggest strategies, funding streams, etc.
- for all adults to provide discreet, sensitive, child-led support, with one key adult identified who will form a strong relationship and take a special interest in daily life at school
- that school systems facilitate discrete support, as appropriate
- Children in Care and Children Previously in Care will be advantaged within school policies and procedures, with their needs explicitly considered and provided for (*DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018.*)
- Children In Care and Children Previously in Care and their foster families will feel part of the school community; they will be actively welcomed into the community in recognition of the particular needs of this group (*DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018*).

## **Educational Planning for Children in Care**

### **Personal Education Plans (ePEP):**

The school will ensure that every Child in Care on roll has a Personal Education Planning (ePEP) meeting that is reviewed termly, within the statutory care planning framework, and in collaboration with the social worker, carer and other relevant professionals.

*For all Children Previously in Care at our school, Ryecroft will use a similar ePEP system to review and plan. Virtual school will be contacted to advise and suggest strategies and potential funding streams.*

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

**The Head of School and Governing Body** are committed to promoting improved educational life chances for Children in Care and Children Previously in Care. They will ensure that the Designated Teacher for Children in Care has qualified teacher status, appropriate seniority in the leadership team and time and experience to fulfil this statutory role. They will monitor the role of the Designated Teacher to ensure that all Children in Care and Previously Children In Care make accelerated and rapid progress and that the whole school staff receives appropriate training.

**The Designated Teacher for Children In Care and Children Previously In Care** is Steve Bardon.

He is a qualified teacher, and will promote improved educational life chances for Children In Care and Children Previously In Care by:

- ensuring that the Children In Care and Children Previously In Care has access to quality first teaching
- tracking the progress of Children In Care and Children Previously In Care across the curriculum using data, teacher reports and book looks
- ensuring that the PP+ is used effectively and efficiently
- performing a coordinating role with school staff and outside agencies
- ensuring effective communication with the school's assigned Education Adviser from the Virtual School
- developing expertise in the field of Children In Care and Children Previously In Care
- providing and attending training and offering advice to the whole school staff
- promoting a school culture which is supportive and has high expectations for Children In Care and Children Previously In Care
- regularly reporting to the Head and Governing Body on the attainment of Children In Care and Children Previously In Care and school resource and staff training needs for working with this group
- prioritising Children in Care for school-based additional support, even when the young person does not meet the criteria (*DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018*).
- ensuring that Children In Care and Children Previously In Care are not overlooked for positions of student responsibility within the school because of their care status
- completing the annual Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) of each Children in Care as requested.

**All staff** will promote improved educational life chances for Children In Care and Children Previously In Care by:

- reading the 'school policy'
- attending training, as appropriate
- providing accurate information and data when asked by the Designated Teacher
- referring to the Designated Teacher for advice
- playing their part in creating an attachment and trauma-informed 'Children In Care-friendly' culture and securing rapid progress for Children In Care and Children Previously in Care by ensuring that they benefit from any additional school-based support available

### **Attendance:**

**School attendance procedures** reflect the specific needs of Children In Care and Children Previously In Care to ensure good school attendance. Where there is a concern about attendance or punctuality the school contacts the carer, social worker and other

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professionals including the Virtual School, as an early intervention, as outlined in the attendance policy.

### **Admissions/ Transitions:**

#### **School procedures to support Children in Care during admission and transition include:**

- prioritising Children In Care and Children Previously In Care at the point of admission
- the swift transfer of information between schools that may include school visits and at times of transition, teaching at the previous school
- early identification of staff mentor and peer buddy
- additional support and planning for Children In Care and Children Previously In Care at times of transition
- structured activities to 'say goodbye', in recognition of the impact of broken attachments and loss

### **Additional Educational Needs:**

#### **All staff endeavour to secure accelerated and rapid progress for Children in Care and Children Previously In Care with additional educational needs by:**

- having high expectations
- ensuring that they are prioritised for additional school-based support, even if they do not meet the criteria (*in line with the DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018*).
- ensuring that planning is coordinated, appropriate interventions identified and teaching to the plan is systematic; ensuring that any work undertaken by non-teaching staff has teacher over-sight (*in line with the Lamb Report, Dec '09*)
- ensuring that progress is regularly monitored and reviewed by the Lead Teacher, against the expectation of progress each academic year, as agreed in the termly Virtual School visit and ePEP

### **Special Educational Needs:**

#### **All staff endeavour to secure accelerated and rapid progress for Children In Care who have special educational needs by:**

- having high expectation of minimum levels of progress each academic year (*in line with the expectation set out in the ePEP*)
- ensuring that they are accessing school-based targeted support which is 'additional to and different from' the universal and additional needs provision (*in line with the SEN Code of Practice*)
- ensuring that all plans are coordinated, appropriate interventions identified, and teaching to the plan is systematic

- ensuring that progress is regularly monitored and reviewed, in line with the SEN Code of Practice
- ensuring that any work undertaken by non-teaching staff has teacher over-sight
- The SENCo, class teacher, designated teacher and specialists will involve parents/carers/social workers as appropriate when considering interventions to support the CIC's/ PCIC's progress.

### **Safeguarding:**

**School staff will be vigilant for any safeguarding issues which can impact particularly on Children In Care and Children Previously in Care by:** familiarising themselves with the '*School Policy Guidance for Children in Care*' and following the school's safeguarding policy and the '*DfE: Keeping Children Safe in Education*' (All staff) *September 2019*, if there are any safeguarding concerns.

### **Alternative Provision:**

**We will make every effort to ensure that any arrangements for provision alternative to daily attendance at school will be:**

- a plan that will retain the Children In Care on the roll of the school or clarify in writing which educational establishment will be responsible for essential reporting and accountable for the PP+
- an agreed part of the overall ePEP for the student
- full time (25 hours) or contribute to full time attendance and be of high quality
- meet the educational needs of the Children In Care and Previously Children In Care
- will provide the opportunity to make rapid progress in the course of study provided by the setting
- will be monitored regularly and that ePEPs will include the school and the alternative provider

### **Exclusion:**

We have reviewed the school behaviour policy in line with the statutory guidance published in February 2018 (*DfE Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children Statutory guidance for local-authority-maintained schools carrying out duties for looked-after and previously looked-after children. 28th February 2018*). We will make every effort to avoid excluding a Child in Care or a Child previously in Care, in recognition of the increased risk this poses in terms of them quickly disengaging from the school, due to their early experience of broken attachments and loss. Before acting, we will discuss the rationale for exclusion with the assigned Education Adviser from the Virtual School. If there is no option other than exclusion, then we will make every attempt to reduce the number of days of the exclusion. School procedures are in place to reduce the risk of exclusion of Children In Care and Previously Children In Care. Children In Care and Previously Children In Care with special educational needs should have exclusion as a behaviour management action as a last possible resort (*Regulation 4(1)(c) of the Equalities*

*Act 2010 which means that a Head of School could only lawfully exclude a child for a reason relating to their disability, even a disability that results in the child having a tendency to physical abuse, if reasonable adjustments have been made).*

The school will take experience of CIC and PCIC into account when implementing the school's Behaviour Policy.

Where the school has concerns about a child's behaviour, the VSH will be informed at the earliest opportunity.

**Multi-Agency Working:**

**School staff will make every effort to** engage with colleagues from the Virtual school and other agencies and facilitate their work. This will enable colleagues to successfully perform their roles and positively impact on the education and wider needs of Children In Care and Children Previously In Care.

**Pupil mental health**

CIC and CPIC are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues, which can impact their behaviour and education. At Ryecroft the Designated teacher will have awareness, training and skills regarding a child's needs and how to support them in relation to behaviour management and mental health. They will also have priority access to Mrs Hurdman (Assistant SENCO) for support and the referral process to YESS or CAHMs as required.

**Reviewing their progress:**

The Head of School Report for Governors will include data on the progress made of CICs and CPICs at Ryecroft and the Safeguarding and SEND link Governors will discuss any barriers/concerns with the DSL/Designated Teacher during their visits. The SEND link Governor will also monitor the use of PP+ use for these children

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Signed on Behalf of the Governing Body:

Chair .....

Date.....