



## **EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IN CARE POLICY**

**School Name:** St Ives School

**Dissemination:** Website and T-Drive

**Date policy approved by Governors:** 11<sup>th</sup> February 2014

**Date policy becomes effective:** Immediately

**Review date:** 10<sup>th</sup> February 2016

**Person responsible for Implementation and Monitoring:** Deputy Headteacher and Designated CIC Teacher

**Links to other relevant policies:** Pastoral, Behaviour, CP policy, Anti bullying

### **Aim:**

At St Ives School we aim to:

- Provide a safe and secure environment, which values education and believes in the abilities and potential of all children.
- Bring the educational attainments of our Children in Care in line to those of their peers - narrowing the gap
- Make sure that they have access to education appropriate to their age and ability. This includes access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Identify our schools' role to promote and support the education of our Children in Care.
- Ask the question, 'Would this be good enough for my child?'

### **Rationale:**

At St Ives School we believe that all Children in Care should have equitable access to excellent educational provision and achieve at a similar level to all Cornwall children. We as a school community aim to be champions for Children in Care and take a proactive approach to support their success, recognising that we as school have a vital role to play in promoting children and young people's social and emotional development.

### **Objectives:**

We have a Designated Teacher (DT) for Children in Care who will act as their advocate and coordinate support for them, liaising with carers, natural parents (as appropriate) and social workers on a wide variety of educational and care issues.

**Mrs Jenny Veal** (Deputy Headteacher) and **Mrs Louise Clemson** (Year 11 Leader) are the Designated Teachers and Senior members of staff responsible for our CiC.

We also endeavour to support Every Child Matters five outcomes:

**Be healthy** - helping learners to adopt healthy lifestyles, build their self-esteem, eat and drink well and lead active lives

**Stay safe** - keeping learners safe from bullying, harassment and other dangers

**Enjoy and achieve** - enabling learners to make good progress in their work and personal development and to enjoy their education

**Make a positive contribution** - ensuring that learners understand their rights and responsibilities, are listened to, and participate in the life of the community

**Achieve economic well-being** - helping pupils to gain the skills and knowledge needed for future employment.

All staff and governors are committed to ensuring improved educational life chances for Children in Care by ensuring that the relevant personnel have reasonable support and time to compete tasks and responsibilities. Also, to establish and maintain appropriate reporting and monitoring procedures both within the school and with other agencies.

Our Designated Teachers for CIC meet Statutory regulations from September 2009. Mrs Jenny Veal is a qualified teacher and Deputy Headteacher. Mrs Louise Clemson supports in this role. At St Ives School we:

- Participate in appropriate DT training and joint agency training.
- Maintain a register of all Children in Care (this includes children both from in and out of Cornwall)  
This will include a record of:
  - The contact person in the relevant Children in Care Education Support Service (CiCESS).
  - Status i.e. care order or accommodated.
  - Type of Placement e.g. foster, respite, residential, adoptive.
  - Name of Social Worker, area office, telephone number
  - Ensure statutory documentation is kept up to date and is relevant to the child's needs and ability i.e. Personal Education Plan
  - Hold daily contact and telephone numbers of those who need to be contacted in an emergency or for any other concerns. E.g. name of young person, name of parent or carer or key worker in children's home.
  - Share Child Protection / disability information if appropriate (if not appropriate to share, indicate the confidential nature of the information)
  - Relevant health information
  - Baseline information and all test results.
  - Named officers in the LA with regard to exclusion issues, attendance issues and transition issues.
  - The child is entitled to decide who attends their Children in Care Statutory Reviews (6 monthly); the school will endeavour to attend but if it is not possible we will submit a written report that promotes the continuity and stability of their personal education plan.
  - If there are safeguarding concerns for a Child in Care, contact and advice should be sought from Education Safeguarding team and Central Referral Unit

St Ives School also has a Designated Governor for CIC, Susan Woodhead. She is kept informed of:

- Number of CIC on school roll
- Number of CIC with up to date PEPs
- Overall attainment of CIC in the school / performance compared to peers
- Number of CIC with SEN and statements
- Authorised and unauthorised absence levels of CIC
- Number of CIC who have been excluded in previous 12 months
- How LA supports educational achievement of CIC

The Governing body ensures the DT has opportunity to attend training. School staff and governors are aware of the DCSF Statutory guidance March 2010

- Duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of Children in Care, under Section 52 of the Children's Act 2004
- There is a dedicated Governor or committee to champion and monitor the work of the school in supporting its Children in Care as a part of a larger group of vulnerable children
- Take a proactive approach in co-operating with, and supporting, the relevant Local Authority with regard to the education of Children in Care attending the school
- Designated teachers and staff are aware of and enabled to carry out their responsibilities effectively with the full support of the Headteacher

## **Actions/Key Themes:**

The Whole school approach to looking after our CiC can be outlined as below:

- The school celebrates the achievements of Children in Care.
- Teachers should have high expectations of the young person, encouraging achievement and ambition, as with all our students
- The young person will need to have a special, trusted adult in school who is able to take time to listen to them and have access to support and counselling in school if required.
- All teachers within the school are made aware of the needs of Children in Care and actively promote their best interests
- Adults in school will need to be sensitive to the young person's wishes over what is known and by whom regarding their care status
- Effective assessment, recording and reporting practices are established
- Ensure that systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about Children in Care
- The Designated Teacher ensures that positive messages about behaviour and achievement are shared within the school and between school, carers and outside agencies and that high educational expectations are maintained
- Support the engagement of Children in Care in out of school hours learning
- Staff work in partnership with carers and agencies and parents (where appropriate).
- Support carers to value educational achievement and improve attendance
- Teachers can help the individual begin to feel that they are fitting in and offer them a safe haven and a sympathetic ear in a crisis
- Staff are aware that being or becoming 'in Care' has a major impact on children's lives and that when considering children's learning and or behaviour, due consideration will be given
- Teachers can be aware of a variety of issues that may undermine the young person's ability to engage in the learning process including feelings of loss, rejection, isolation, confusion and low self-esteem
- Teachers need to be aware of possible unresolved feelings the young person may have about their own families and siblings, in addition to insecurity over their current homes and carers
- CIC are given access to 1:1 tuition in school to support literacy and maths and records of this are kept centrally by the Designated Teachers
- Any special educational needs / Gifted and talented abilities are quickly identified and appropriate provision is made
- Ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when Children in Care are underachieving and have early interventions to improve this
- Contact needs to be made with the Children in Care Education Support Service (CiCESS) as soon as concerns are raised
- If the child or young person has a statement of special educational need, then ensure the annual review coincides with one of the six monthly care planning reviews; dates can be obtained from the social worker
- All CiC are placed on the Record of Need and assigned a Key Worker

### **Admissions and transitions:**

- Ensure that on admission or transfer all relevant information is obtained at the outset
- Ensure that appropriate documents are forwarded, in a timely fashion, to any receiving school at point of transition where the receiving school is made known
- Make every effort to provide continuity of schooling and educational experience
- Prioritise Children in Care within school's own admissions procedures and admit students as quickly as possible recognising the importance of re-establishing school stability for Children in Care.
- Adhere to new Cornwall Council School Admission protocol (September 2010)
- Awareness of children educated out of year group Cornwall Council guide (June 2010)

#### Attendance:

- Where attendance is a problem, a first day of absence procedure needs to be established
- Inform Education Welfare service / Social Worker / CiCESS if any concerns about attendance
- Acknowledge attendance in any education meetings, celebrating success and setting realistic targets if it is a concern
- If a child is on a protection plan, ensure Social worker and Carer are contacted if child is absent from school

#### Exclusion:

- Identify any Child in Care who is at risk of exclusion and contact the Children in Care Education Support Service (CiCESS), Social Worker and relevant professionals to put proactive strategies in place to avoid the Child in Care missing days from school
- Ensure in the case of a fixed term (or permanent) exclusion that the carer (or persons holding parental responsibility) and the Social Worker have been spoken to and within one day a letter has been sent specifying the period and the reasons for the exclusion, date of return, outline of the rights of carers to make representations to the governing body where appropriate and details of arrangements made to enable the excluded pupil to continue his/her education.
- Make sure in the event of any exclusion, contact is made with the Children in Care Education Support Service (CiCESS) with details of the exclusion outlining the reasons why the child has been excluded so that an appropriate response can be made.

#### Multi-agency liaison:

- Designated teacher will liaise closely with carers, natural parents (if appropriate) and the pupil's social worker on a variety of issues, including homework, kit and equipment required. It is important that positive messages about behaviour and achievement are shared
- There should be a well planned and co-ordinated approach to meeting the young person's educational and social needs, for example, whether potentially disruptive changes in school can be prevented
- There needs to be clear understanding about the role and responsibility of school staff in relation to the young person and the roles and responsibilities of the other professionals involved
- School staff will need to share positive perceptions and high expectations of the young person with other professionals but especially with the young person
- The school should be aware of and sensitive to the appropriate role of the natural parents
- Designated teachers will ensure that requests from the LA for statistical information held by the school are completed and returned on time to comply with statutory obligations
- Encourage each child in care to access out of hours learning activities realising the positive impact this could have on their self-esteem and learning
- Support the young person to have the opportunity to participate fully in planning and decision making

#### Personal education plans (PEPs):

##### St Ives School will:

- Ensure that there is a Personal Education Plan for each child to include appropriate targets. This must be compatible with the child's Care Plan held by the Social Worker, and form part of any other school plan. E.g. Statement, Transition Plan, Pastoral Support Programme, Pathway Plan at Post 16

- Contribute to the process whereby all Children in Care have a high quality Personal Educational Plan (PEP) in place within 10 days of starting the school. This will include SMART educational targets and will be linked to the child's Care Plan and any other plan resulting from the assessment of the child (IEP, PSP, Statement of Educational Need)
- Following the writing of a PEP, any educational recommendations in that PEP will be adhered to by staff in order that any Child in Care has the opportunity to fulfil and achieve the targets set
- Support referrals for the Personal Education Allowance (PEA) for CIC who are at risk of underachieving academically through discussions at PEP meetings
- Hold a PEP meeting for every statutory care review, involving the Social worker, foster carers, young person and parent if appropriate

## **Implementation and Monitoring**

The designated teachers, Mrs Jenny Veal and Mrs Louise Clemson, will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

### **Signatures:**



Mrs. Jenny Veal (First Deputy Headteacher)



Mrs. Carolyn Webster(Chair of Governors)