

ST CUTHBERT MAYNE SCHOOL
Joint Catholic and Church of England 11-18 Comprehensive School
Dioceses of Plymouth and Exeter



St Cuthbert Mayne School
Cared for Children Policy

Approved by Senior Leadership Team: February 2026

Shared with Full Governing Body: March 2026

Next Review Date: February 2027

Introduction

As a Christian community seeking to live out and share the Good News of Jesus Christ, the Gospel underpins all our shared activity and endeavour. We recognise all students in the community, and adults as children of God. As such, each is a unique creation, gifted by God and precious. The adults in our community support and challenge each other to fulfil their responsibility to nurture and develop all of the young people in our care. We therefore choose with care the type of learning experiences we offer and the values we promote.

The purpose of this policy

Cared for Children (CfC) and Previously Cared for Children (PCfC) are among the most vulnerable groups in society. National evidence continues to show that, on average, outcomes for these children remain below those of their peers, particularly in relation to attainment, attendance, mental health and post-16 participation. Schools play a critical role in raising educational standards, promoting stability, and improving life chances for these pupils.

This policy reflects current statutory guidance and reinforces St. Cuthbert Mayne School's commitment to equity, inclusion, high aspiration and trauma-informed practice. It aligns with recent developments including strengthened safeguarding guidance, expanded Virtual School responsibilities and increased emphasis on attendance, mental health and transitions.

Cared for Children were previously termed 'looked-after children' (LAC / CLA). This terminology remains in national guidance, however, this policy uses cared for children wherever possible.

Context and Principles

Under the Children Act 1989, a child is cared for by a local authority if they are:

- Accommodated under section 20 (voluntary agreement)
- Subject to a Care Order (Section 31) or an Interim Care Order (Section 38)
- Subject to Emergency Protection Order (Section 44)

A previously cared for child is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because they are subject to an adoption order, special guardianship order or child arrangements order, or who was adopted from state care outside of England and Wales.

This policy also reflects:

- The Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- The Education Act 2011
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Statutory guidance on safeguarding, suspensions, attendance and mental health

Inclusion

This policy recognises that all pupils are entitled to a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum. Provision for cared for and previously cared for children is underpinned by:

- The Equality Act 2010
- Trauma-informed and attachment aware practice
- A commitment to anti-discriminatory and inclusive approaches

The Governing Body will ensure the school ensures appropriate provision is made to meet the academic, social, emotional and mental health needs for cared for and previously cared for children.

The Role of the Designated Teacher

The Designated Teacher must be a qualified teacher and is a statutory role. Ideally, the designated teacher should also be a senior member of staff with sufficient authority to influence whole-school practice and strategic decision-making.

Key responsibilities include:

- The Designated Teacher should take lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand the things which can affect how cared for and previously cared for children learn and achieve and how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these pupils
- Have high expectations and aspirations for all cared for and previously cared for children's learning and set targets to accelerate educational progress
- Are aware of the emotional, psychological and social effects of loss and separation (attachment awareness) from birth families and that some children may find it difficult to build relationships of trust with adults because of their experiences, and how this might affect the child's behaviour
- Understand how important it is to see cared for and previously cared for children as individuals rather than as a homogeneous group, not publicly treat them differently from their peers, and show sensitivity about who else knows about their looked-after or previously looked-after status
- Ensuring Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are high quality, timely, and outcome focused
- Using Pupil Premium Plus (PPP) effectively to accelerate progress and promote enrichment
- Supporting attendance, stability and positive transitions
- Monitoring and responding proactively to concerns relating to attendance, suspensions, exclusions and bullying
- Acting as a key point of contact for social workers, carers, parents, guardians and the Virtual School
- Maintaining confidentiality and sensitivity regarding a child's care status

Personal Education Plans (PEP)

All cared for children must have a Personal Education Plan (PEP), reviewed at least termly. The PEP is central to:

- Care planning
- Education progress
- Emotional and social development

PEPs should:

- Be child-centred and strengths-based
- Include clear academic, attendance, wellbeing and enrichment targets
- Detail how Pupil Premium Plus funding will be used and evaluated
- Reflect the child's voice

If a child moves school, the PEP must be transferred promptly.

Previously cared for children are not required to have a PEP, however, the Designated Teacher should continue to monitor progress and provide advice and support as needed.

Pupil Premium Plus (PPP)

The school will work in partnership with the Virtual School to ensure that Pupil Premium Plus funding is:

- Strategically planned
- Linked to clear outcomes
- Regularly reviewed for impact

PPP will be used to support academic progress, emotional wellbeing, attendance, enrichment opportunities and transitions.

Actions

As for all our students, St Cuthbert Mayne School is committed to helping every cared for child to achieve the highest standards they can, including out of school activities and supporting career aspirations for further and higher education. This can be measured by improvements in their achievement and attendance.

This policy links with several of St Cuthbert Mayne's school policies:

- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying
- Online Safety
- Educational Visits
- Health and Safety
- Safeguarding, Early Help and Child Protection
- Special Educational Needs

St Cuthbert Mayne will ensure that the needs of cared for and previously cared for children are reflected in all aspects of our provision, e.g. through Collective Worship and Personal, Social and Health (PSHE) education. We will raise awareness and challenge negative stereotypes about them to ensure that they live life to the full.

Attendance, Behaviour and Suspensions

The school recognises that cared for and previously cared for children may face additional barriers to regular attendance and positive behaviour. The Designated Teacher will:

- Closely monitor attendance and punctuality
- Work proactively with families, carers and professionals to remove barriers
- Ensure suspensions and exclusions are avoided wherever possible and used only as a last resort
- Ensure any suspension is carefully considered, proportionate, and followed by reintegration support

Mental Health and Wellbeing

The school acknowledges the increased vulnerability of cared for and previously cared for children to mental health difficulties. Support includes:

- Early identification of need
- Access to pastoral and wellbeing support
- Trauma-informed classroom practice
- Partnership working with external agencies where appropriate

Responsibilities of the Head Teacher

- Identify a Designated Teacher for cared for and previously cared for children
- Ensure cover arrangements are put in place should the Designated Teacher not be available to carry out these legal duties
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor and track the admission, progress, attendance and exclusions (if any) of cared for and previously cared for children and that appropriate action is taken where outcomes fall below expectations
- Ensure that all staff receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance
- Ensure that all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy
- Report to Governors on the progress, attendance and conduct of cared for and previously cared for children

These duties are delegated to the Designated Teacher.

Responsibilities of Torbay Virtual School

The role of the Virtual School under Section 20 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 places a duty on the Virtual School to the Headteacher and designated a member of staff (the Designated Teacher) as having responsibility to promote the educational achievement of cared for and previously cared for children.

To this effect, the trustees should:

- Ensure that the necessary provision is being made for any pupil who is a cared for or previously cared for child
- Ensure that the Designated Teacher(s) are given the appropriate level of support and be given the opportunity to keep up to date with relevant training
- Ensure the Designated Teacher disseminates relevant training and provides support for all members of staff that will influence teaching and learning for cared for and previously cared for children
- In partnership with the Headteacher, maintain responsibility for monitoring how well the role is working. As part of this monitoring an annual report will be received from the Designated Teacher with regard to reviewing the effective implementation of the Trust's policy

The responsibilities of all Staff

All our staff will:

- Have high aspirations for the educational and personal achievement of cared for and previously cared for children, as for all pupils
- Maintain the confidentiality of cared for and previously cared for children
- Promote stability, belonging and inclusion
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's requests for information
- Work to enable cared for and previously cared for children to achieve stability and success within the school
- Promote self-esteem for cared for and previously cared for children

- Use trauma informed approaches

Confidentiality and Data Protection

Information on cared for and previously cared for children will be shared with school staff on a 'need to know basis' in line with UK GDPR and data protection legislation. The Designated Teacher will discuss what information is shared with which school staff at the PEP meeting. Once this has been agreed by the social worker, carer, young person and other parties, complete confidentiality will be maintained and will comply with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) guidance.

Partnership Working

STCM values partnership working. In order to secure the best possible outcomes for cared for and previously cared for children, it is essential that we work with parents/carers, social workers, the Virtual School Head Teacher and other external partners to ensure we are providing the best possible life chances for both cared for and previously cared for children.

Further Information

Keeping Children Safe in Education - Statutory guidance for schools and colleges
September 2025

[Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](#)

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

[Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK](#)

The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children - Statutory guidance on their roles and responsibilities: February 2018

[The designated teacher for looked- after and previously looked-after children - GOV.UK](#)

Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children - Statutory guidance for local authorities: February 2018

[Promoting the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children - GOV.UK](#)