



Designated Teacher Policy

St John Plessington

Catholic College

2026 - 2027

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Reviewed by	Miss M Garner
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Designated Teacher Policy - Catholic Values Statement

At St John Plessington Catholic College, we believe every child is made in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27) and deserves to be nurtured, protected and valued. Guided by the words of Jesus, “Let the little children come to me” (Matthew 19:14), we offer particular care to pupils who have experienced care. The Designated Teacher role reflects our values of Compassion, Respect, Determination and Justice, and our commitment to helping every young person flourish.

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1. Aims and principles

St John Plessington Catholic College (SJP), within Holy Family Catholic Multi Academy Trust, promotes the educational achievement and inclusion of children looked after and previously looked-after children. We hold high aspirations, listen to each child, act promptly on barriers to learning and make access to the full life of the College possible.

- Promote strong attendance, stability, progress, wellbeing and successful transitions.
- Build trusted relationships with pupils, carers, parents and the professionals supporting them.
- Use the Personal Education Plan (PEP), where applicable, as a live record of educational needs, actions and progress.
- Make support for this cohort a whole-school responsibility, with clear leadership and appropriate information sharing.

2. Legal framework and guidance

This policy reflects the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 (sections 20 and 20A), section 2E of the Academies Act 2010, the Children Act 1989, and the Designated Teacher (Looked After Pupils etc.) (England) Regulations 2009. It is informed by the Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children (2018) and Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children (2018).

The College also follows current DfE guidance on school suspensions and permanent exclusions (effective 26 July 2026), the 2026–27 pupil premium conditions of grant, safeguarding guidance and the SEND code of practice. References appear in Appendix B. Relevant Trust and College policies continue to apply.

3. Definitions

3.1 Children looked after (CLA)

A child is looked after by a local authority if the child is in its care or accommodated by it for more than 24 hours under the Children Act 1989. This policy uses “CLA” as the College’s local term; national guidance commonly uses “looked-after children” (LAC). The responsible local authority remains responsible for the child’s care and appoints a Virtual School Head (VSH) to promote educational achievement.

3.2 Previously looked-after children (PLAC)

For the designated teacher duty, PLAC are children who ceased to be looked after in England or Wales because of adoption, a special guardianship order or a child arrangements order, or who were adopted from state care outside England and Wales. The College will establish eligibility sensitively with parents or guardians and handle status information confidentially.

3.3 PEP and Virtual School

A PEP is part of a CLA child’s care plan. It records the pupil’s educational needs, aspirations, targets, support, responsible adults and review of impact. The VSH supports and monitors educational achievement for the children looked after by their authority and advises schools and families on PLAC. Wider VSH strategic responsibilities do not change the statutory remit of this policy.

4. Designated Teacher and contact

Designated Teacher: Miss Michelle Garner, Assistant Principal. Contact via schooloffice@stjohnplessington.com, requesting the Designated Teacher. The College will maintain current internal contact details for the Head of Learning (HOL), Learning Coach (LC), Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and named governor. Named role holders and contact arrangements will be checked before publication and whenever staffing changes.

The DT has lead responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of CLA and PLAC pupils. Appropriate activities can be delegated, but accountability for oversight, coordination and quality assurance remains with the DT. The Trust and College will ensure the DT has the qualifications, seniority, training and time needed for the role.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 Headteacher, Trust and governing body

- Appoint and support a suitably qualified Designated Teacher, provide adequate capacity and identify a governor link.
- Champion a culture of high aspiration, inclusion and confidentiality; ensure staff training is appropriate.
- Receive proportionate, anonymised reporting on cohort numbers, attendance, progress, attainment, suspension and exclusion, PEP quality, PP+ impact and destinations; challenge gaps and agree action.

5.2 Designated Teacher leadership

- Be the central point of educational coordination and advice for CLA and PLAC, liaising with VSHs, social workers, carers, parents, guardians and College staff as appropriate.
- Ensure the pupil's voice and aspirations inform decisions; promote access to curriculum, enrichment, careers guidance and transitions.
- Keep staff informed of relevant strategies on a need-to-know basis, including the effects of trauma, disrupted education, SEND or mental health needs without making assumptions about an individual child.
- Work with the DSL and SENCO so safeguarding, SEND and educational planning connect; ensure PEP and EHC plan actions complement each other.
- Review the implementation of this policy and report to the Headteacher and governors.

5.3 PEPs and educational planning for CLA

- Lead the school contribution to each PEP, ensure pupil voice and subject evidence are gathered and set specific, ambitious, measurable targets with named actions and review dates.
- Quality assure the PEP with the responsible Virtual School and social worker, review it at least termly and in time to inform statutory care reviews, and follow the relevant local authority process and deadlines.
- Monitor that agreed provision happens and assess its impact; convene an earlier review when attendance, progress, placement or wellbeing changes warrant it.
- Arrange timely, secure sharing of an up-to-date PEP and essential educational information when a pupil moves setting.

5.4 Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)

For CLA, the responsible local authority VSH decides the use and allocation of PP+ in consultation with the College. The DT contributes evidence of need and impact, ensuring proposed support is linked to the PEP. For PLAC, the College is responsible for evidence-informed use of PP+ to address educational needs and will seek parents' or guardians' views. PP+ is not a personal budget for each child. The College will follow the current conditions of grant and review impact rather than assume an annual rate or payment to the College.

5.5 Attendance, behaviour and exclusion

The DT, HOL and LC monitor attendance and emerging barriers, involve carers and the responsible authority promptly where needed, and agree proportionate support. Where a CLA pupil is likely to be suspended or permanently excluded, the DT contacts the responsible VSH as soon as possible to seek advice, consider further assessment and support, review implementation of the PEP and consider an interim PEP review. The social worker and carers are involved as appropriate. For PLAC at risk, the College engages the parents or guardians and DT and may seek VSH advice.

The Headteacher retains the statutory decision-making responsibility for suspension or permanent exclusion. If a CLA pupil is excluded, the College and local authority work together to arrange suitable education from the first day following the decision, record arrangements in the PEP and follow all notification, review and reintegration duties in current guidance. Any proposed managed move for CLA must involve the relevant VSH and a review of the PEP.

5.6 Whole-school and external partnership

Teachers provide high-quality teaching, contribute subject-specific evidence and targets, implement agreed strategies and raise concerns promptly. The HOL coordinates pastoral oversight; the LC provides daily support and pupil check-ins. The DSL leads safeguarding responses. The DT works with the responsible local authority, its VSH and social worker, which may differ from the local authority in which SJP is located. Information is shared securely, lawfully and only with those who need it to support the child.

6. Monitoring and review

The DT will review this policy annually with the Headteacher and governing body, and earlier if guidance or local arrangements change. Draft review: September 2026. Next review: September 2027. Approval: to be recorded following the College and Trust approval process.

Appendix A. Operational responsibilities

Role	Core contribution
Designated Teacher	Strategic and statutory oversight; PEP quality assurance; PP+ decisions and liaison; staff advice; reporting.
Head of Learning	Pastoral oversight; monitor attendance, progress and behaviour; coordinate support and escalation.
Learning Coach	Daily check-ins; practical support; pupil voice; implement agreed strategies; record and share concerns.
Subject teachers	Teaching, assessment and subject targets; implement provision and report evidence of impact.
DSL and SENCO	Lead safeguarding and SEND processes respectively; coordinate closely with the DT.
Virtual School and social worker	Local authority educational oversight and care planning; agree and review the CLA PEP and support.

Appendix B. Key guidance

- DfE designated teacher guidance (2018)
- DfE promoting education guidance (2018)
- DfE suspension and permanent exclusion guidance (effective July 2026)
- Pupil premium conditions of grant 2026 to 2027