

### JCA offer to children in care

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

### Our aims to support Children in Care

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

We as a school keep accurate records of how many children in care at some stage during the past year and in which year groups and how many children are currently in care and in which year groups. A provision map is collated with provision that these students access within the core offer from the school as well as extra pupil premium plus provision for each child.

- The young person will have a trusted adult within the inclusion team who is able to take time to listen to them and have access to support and counselling in school if required.
- There is information in SIMs in relation to who is and is not allowed to collect the child from school.
- All teachers within the school are made aware of the needs of Children in Care and actively promote their best interests.
- Adults in school are 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.
- The Child in Care Champion, alongside the inclusion team, ensures that systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about Children in Care.

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**Principal: Jon Angell**

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- The Child in Care Champion 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.
- John Cabot Academy supports the engagement of Children in Care in out of school hours learning.
- Staff work in partnership with carers and agencies and parents (where appropriate).
- John Cabot Academy supports carers to value educational achievement and improve attendance.
- Teachers 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 are 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 are 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.
- The Child in Care Champion 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.
- CIC are given access to Pupil Premium (between £1500 and £1900 per year dependant on authority) in school to support literacy and maths and any needs that require support outside of the core offer.

John Cabot academy use best practice to implement the following strategies for children in care:

### **High expectations**

- John Cabot Academy celebrates the achievements of Children in Care.
- Teachers have high expectations of the young person, encouraging achievement and ambition.
- CiC are expected to make four or more levels of progress. If it is recognised that the student is not reaching their age related expectations, this will be identified and extra provision will be put in place until the student is exceeding expectations.
- The academy has an expectation that students will attend for 96% or more.
- John Cabot will work with the virtual schools to raise aspirations and to offer visits for CiC to Further and higher education establishments.

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### **Ensure strategies for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and are involved in target setting**

- John Cabot Academy provides assessment and feedback to help the students improve their own learning.
- Students are set targets by teachers which they are aware of and where possible they set their own targets.
- Students are involved in their PEP meetings and contribute to their action plan for the year.
- CiC are encouraged to attend academic after school clubs and will liaise with foster carers to ensure that the students have access to them. This will give CiC the opportunity to ask questions and close the gaps in knowledge.
- John Cabot recognises that participation and interaction is an important part of learning and will build relationships with the student in order to encourage the CiC to actively participate.
- The inclusion team will meet the CiC student on a regular basis in order to gather the student's voice and to help them reflect on their own learning.

### **Close monitoring of progress**

- All teachers of CiC will have their status flagged on their registers and are aware of their responsibilities towards these students. All children in care have linked documents with guidance on their SIMs profile.
- All students have context sheets which enable subject teachers to monitor progress.
- The inclusion team has a great understanding of the circumstances for all children in care within their community and monitor across subjects.
- The PEP process is completed a minimum of two times a year, which allows more in depth information to be gathered regarding student progress in individual subjects.
- The John Cabot Child in Care champion will monitor progress three times a year and monitor the impact of strategies that have been implemented as part of the action plan. If any actions are not having impact or not showing progress another PEP will be held.

### **Involvement in extra-curricular activities**

- Children in care are encouraged to join extra-curricular activities by the inclusion team.
- Extra-curricular activities are publicized and signposted to foster carers .

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- Any reasonable adjustments and support will be made available to ensure that these students have access to these activities.

### **Children in care are not made to feel differently from other pupils**

- Children in Care are included in all aspects of school life.
- At John Cabot the environment and curriculum is tailored to ensure that different family circumstances are celebrated.
- Head of community mentoring and support is available for all students and any students who require extra support is given sensitively to ensure discretion. Student's personal circumstances would never be publically discussed.

### **Early intervention when concerns arise.**

- Close communication takes place between the inclusion team and teachers should any concerns occur.
- Due to the close monitoring discussed earlier, if concerns arise, intervention can be put in place quickly and effectively. The CIC champion will take the lead on this if necessary.
- PEPs will be brought forward if necessary and progress meetings will be held between school/carers and any other professionals to address need.
- Any special educational needs / Gifted and talented abilities are quickly identified and appropriate provision is made.
- 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.
- Where attendance is a problem, a first day of absence procedure will be established. John Cabot Academy will inform the Education Welfare service / Social Worker / Virtual schools if any concerns about attendance.
- Staff will 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, John Cabot Academy will ensure Social workers and carers are contacted if child is absent from school.

### **Involve carers at every opportunity**

- The Inclusion team will liaise closely with carers, birth 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.

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- There will 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.
- Heads of communities and teachers will communicate regularly with carers.
- Heads of community will help to arrange parents evening appointments if necessary.
- Email/telephone contact will take place between carers and the inclusion team at least termly.

### **Have alternative strategies to the high levels of exclusions for CiC**

- John Cabot Academy works with carers and other key professional to offer support and guidance to avoid exclusions wherever possible. John Cabot will Identify any Child in Care who is at risk of exclusion and contact the Virtual School, Social Worker and relevant professionals to put proactive strategies in place to avoid the Child in Care missing days from school.
- Where exclusions are necessary, all other routes will be explored first such as the use of the studio alternative provision within the Cabot Learning Federation.
- Where exclusions happen, John Cabot will work with the virtual schools to ensure that relevant support is put in place for these students and 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 academy council 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 Virtual school with details of the exclusion outlining the reasons why the child has been excluded so that an appropriate response can be made.

### **Admissions and transitions:**

- The Child in Care Champion will ensure that on admission or transfer all relevant information is obtained at the outset.
- John Cabot Academy will forward appropriate documents, in a timely fashion, to any receiving school at point of transition where the receiving school is made known.
- John Cabot Academy will make every effort to provide continuity of schooling and educational experience.
- In the case of planned transitions, the child in care champion will arrange for representatives from the new provision to attend the last PEP at John Cabot Academy.

### **Personal education plans (PEPs):**

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- “The PEP is the joint responsibility of the local authority and the school.”(*Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children DCSF March 2010*)
- Ensure that there is a Personal Education Plan (Early years to Yr11+) 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, New EHC plan (Sept 2014) 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.
- Hold a PEP meeting for every statutory care review, involving the Social worker, foster carers, young person and parent if appropriate.

**The Child in Care Champion will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this document.**

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