



Farnborough Road Infant School. **Young Carers Policy**

“Learning, Caring and Achieving Together”

At Farnborough Road Infant School we believe that all children have the right to an education, regardless of their home circumstances.

We acknowledge that there are likely to be Young Carers amongst our children, and that being a young carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education.

Our Young Carers Policy says how we will help any pupil who helps to look after someone at home so that we will be able to relieve some of the worries which Young Carers may have about home and their school work, and to show that we believe Young Carers' education is important.

Who are Young Carers?

Young Carers are children and young people whose lives are affected by looking after someone at home. They are carrying out tasks and responsibilities, which are additional to those appropriate for their age. The person they look after may have one or more of the following:

- Physical disability
- Mental health issues
- Learning difficulties
- Alcohol or drug misuse
- Long term illness

The person they care for may be a parent, sibling or grandparent and the care they provide may be physical and / or emotional. Young Carers' responsibilities may include:

- Personal care (washing/bathing /dressing/ feeding)
- Giving or prompting medication/ injections
- Shopping
- Housework
- Cooking
- Emotional support
- Looking after younger siblings
- Budgeting and paying bills

Young Carers can feel tired, worried and isolated. Their social life is often restricted with few opportunities for fun and after school activities.

Factors which may indicate that a young person is caring, include:

- Illness or disability in the family
- Being regularly late or absent (due to caring responsibilities at home)
- Assuming a parental role to other siblings
- Poor concentration and/ or often tired
- Personnel hygiene / dirty uniform
- Academic performance below potential
- Homework often uncompleted
- Isolation from peers or problems interacting with peers
- Not accessing out of school activities
- Mature and responsible but maybe 'letting go' and behaving immaturely when in a safe environment
- Behavioural problems (taking out their anger/ frustration)
- Being bullied
- Feeling that no one understands and that no support is available
- Low self esteem

If we believe that someone is a young carer we will be sensitive when we approach them about this, as we appreciate that they may not wish their peers to know. Information about young carers' circumstances would only be shared on a 'need to know' basis. Before passing this information on to relevant colleagues we will obtain the consent of the young carer.

Our school:

- Has a member of staff with special responsibility for young carers. This person is Jennifer Sephton
- Can provide information to our young carers and families about the local Young Carers Service. We can also put families in touch with other support services.
- Will liaise with appropriate agencies and charities
- Consider alternatives and be flexible when responding to the needs of young carers. This may include (but not limited to), access to a telephone at lunch or break times, support with homework in class, additional opportunities to read or practice spellings with members of staff in their class.
- Is accessible to parents who have mobility and communication difficulties and involves them in parents' evenings, meetings and school events.
- Respects your right to privacy and will only share information about you and your family with people who need to know to help you.
- Will consider alternatives if a young carer is unable to attend out of school activities e.g. concerts due to their caring role
- Allows young carers to telephone home during lunchtimes.
- Can give parents advice about how to get their children into school where transport is a problem.

Legislation and guidance

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Articles 28 and 29. Children and young people have the right to the best available education and to opportunities to develop their personality, mental and physical ability to their fullest potential.

The Children Act 2004

The Framework for Assessment of Children in Need and their Families, which gives guidance on Section 17 of the Act, has a section on young carers which states that effective support will require "good quality joint work between adult and children's social services as well as co-operation from schools and health workers . . . Young carers can receive help from both local and health authorities."

DFES Advice and guidance to Schools and Local Authorities on Managing Behaviour and Attendance: groups of pupils at particular risk

Young carers should not be expected to carry inappropriate levels of caring which have an adverse impact on their development and life chances. However, there are children and young people who undertake caring roles. Young carers of a sick or disabled relative at home may be late or absent from school because of their responsibilities

- In a genuine crisis, a school can approve absence for a child to care for a relative until other arrangements can be made....
- Schools should consider designating a member of staff to have responsibility for young carers. They can also contribute to schemes that support them, working with local authorities and voluntary agencies.

Also, **Effective Attendance Practice in Schools: An Overview** of attendance guidance states that schools should have "support systems in place for vulnerable groups which provide" among other things, signposting and access to external support for parents and pupils" and "training for staff on specific needs of pupils e.g. young carers".

Recognised, Valued and Supported: next steps for the carers strategy (2010)

Government strategy states that schools need to be sensitive to the individual problems faced by young carers and that The Government will draw schools' attention to effective practice in meeting the needs of pupils who are young carers, for example, through link arrangements with young carers' services. . . . Schools might find it helpful to have one member of staff to act as a link between young carers, the education welfare service, social services and young carers' services.

Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995; Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000; Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004

Between them these Acts give young carers varying rights to an assessment of their needs, which must take into account their right to an education. See the SCIE practice guide to the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004: www.scie.org.uk, commissioned by the Department of Health.

The Children's Society Young Carer's Initiative is funded by DfES to develop Key Principles of Practice in supporting young carers and their families. Key Principle 4 states: *Young carers will have the same access to education and career choices as their peers:*

Standard: Schools and colleges take responsibility to identify young carers at an early stage and ensure that they have the same access to a full education and career choices as their peers.

Performance Indicators

4.1: *Governing bodies in schools make provision for policy and practice that supports young carers and promotes good communication with their families.*

4.2 *Schools and colleges have inclusive policies that enable the identification of young carers and to deliver effective methods of supporting them to achieve their full potential whilst recognising the positives of any acquired skills and attributes.*

4.3 *Schools and colleges provide clear, accessible, up to date information regarding health issues and local community services to all pupils in school. And have procedures for referring to other agencies and sign posting the direction young carers can take in order to gain additional support for them and their family outside of school.*

4.4 *Schools and colleges are accessible to parents who are disabled or have a long-term illness. This includes ensuring that communication strategies include provision for any parent with a visual, hearing or communication impairment. (As covered in the Disability and Discrimination Act with regards to access to goods, services and facilities)*

4.5 *The curriculum promotes a fuller understanding and acceptance of, and respect for, the issues surrounding disabilities and caring as well as promoting positive images of disability and impairment.*

4.6 *Staff will have access to information and training to enable them to recognise the indications that a child has a caring responsibility as well as increasing their understanding of such responsibilities .and to ensure that any who are children in need are identified or feel able to ask for help, are listened to and offered direct services and protection, if needed.*

4.7 *There is a named member of staff to lead on young carers*

4.8 *Individual plans recognise the child/young person's specific needs as a young carer*

4.9 *Local authorities consider how best to support those parents who find it difficult to escort younger children to school.*

4.10 *Admission authorities consider the responsibilities of young carers and the impact of any family disability or illness on those young carers when setting admission criteria for their schools*

Further information

- DfES 2016 guidance on young carers in *Advice and guidance to Schools and Local Authorities on Managing Attendance: groups of pupils at particular risk*
- Teachernet guidance at www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/y/youngcarers/ and at www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/library/youngcarersandschools/ which includes case studies from teachers themselves.
- The section for education professionals at www.youngcarers.net/professionals
- The Children's Society's *Principles of Practice* for all services coming into contact with young carers and their families: www.youngcarer.com
- Young Carers Research Group Reports: *Young carers in the UK 2004* and *Young carers in schools*. www.carersuk.org/Policyandpractice/Research

This policy will be reviewed regularly.

Updated November 2023

Signed _____ **Date** _____ **Headteacher.**

Signed _____ **Date** _____ **Chair of Governors.**