



St Ives School

SUPPORTING YOUNG CARERS POLICY



Dissemination: (e.g. Website and T: Drive)

Date policy approved by Governors: April 2021

Date policy becomes effective: Immediately

Review date: April 2023

Person responsible for Implementation and Monitoring: Young Carers Lead (Mrs Wooders) and Assistant Headteacher (Mrs Mugford)

Links to other relevant policies: Safeguarding, Behaviour and Attendance Policies, Exclusion Policies

At St Ives School we strongly believe that all children have the right to an excellent education, regardless of what is happening at home. Some children may need extra support to help them get the most out of school. Our Young Carers commitment explains how we will support any student who helps to look after, and care for someone, at home.

Who is a Young Carer?

A young carer is a person who is affected by care responsibilities within the home, where the person being cared for is disabled, has a long term illness, mental health issues or difficulties resulting from substance and or alcohol use. Young carers may be primary carers i.e. caring for a parent or carer, or a secondary carer; helping to care for a sibling or older relative.

Definition of Caring

Caring responsibilities are defined not just in terms of practical support, such as carrying out practical tasks, for instance, shopping, cooking, cleaning etc. but also in terms of emotional support and the emotional impact on young people of care needs within a family.

Aim

The aim of this document is to raise the awareness of the school community about the needs of young carers and to support them by establishing a clear, whole school approach to address the issues that may arise within a school setting and ensure that all Young Carers receive the support they need to achieve their potential.

How Caring may impact on a child's education

Caring responsibilities can impact on young people's education in a number of ways.

- **Lateness-** young carers may find it more difficult to be on time for school as a result of caring duties within the home or as a result of overtiredness causing them to oversleep.
- **Tiredness-** many young carers will have interrupted sleep patterns or be over-tired as a result of having to complete household tasks.
- **Non-attendance-** some carers may miss school because they are worried about the person they are caring for, or because they are carrying out caring tasks that prevent them attending at school.

- **Late/no submission of homework and assignments**- young carers may find it more difficult to find time to complete school assignments and may not have support at home with more difficult assignments.
- **Difficulty in participation in extracurricular activities and school trips** –families of young carers will be dependent on benefits making it financially difficult to afford school trips. Young carers may also be unable or unwilling to stay after school or access other activities if they feel they need to return home to support family members.
- **Challenging behaviour**- some young carers may exhibit challenging behaviour in environments away from the home setting, to offset the fact that they have to take on adult responsibilities and behave in an adult fashion within the home. The emotional support they may need to provide at home may mean they feel anxious when away from their home.
- **Difficulties in establishing friendships or social isolation** - Young carers may find it more difficult to develop friendships outside school, as they may not find it easy to invite other children home or visit friends in their homes. As a result of financial pressure or caring responsibilities, they may also have restricted access to out of school clubs and activities that other children take for granted.
- **Poor health**- Young carers may need to carry out tasks for which they are physically ill equipped, which in turn may impact on their overall health. In addition to this, long term caring responsibilities can impact significantly on the mental health of young people. Both aspects can affect school attendance.
- **Lack of equipment or uniform** – young carers may find it more difficult to have the correct equipment for school or uniform as a result of their caring duties.
- **Managing emotional response to issues and circumstances.** – Some young carers may find difficulties in managing their emotional responses due to the support they provide to those they care for.

As a school we provide:

- A supportive environment for young carers with a whole school approach to the identification of their needs and to meeting the individual support needs of young people with caring responsibilities.
- Named members of staff with responsibility for ensuring that carers are identified and their needs met and to link with the Young Carers Project (Mrs N Wooders and Mrs P Veal).
- Contacts for support for young carers e.g. putting them in touch with the local Young Carers Service. We can also put families in touch with other support services which are linked through Team around the School meetings which further support our young carers.
- We respect families' rights to privacy and will only share information about students and their family with people who need to know how to help.
- Support for parents with mobility and/ or access issues to facilitate and maintain regular contact with the school. We also provide home visits if required.
- Support for young people in maintaining telephone access to their families during the school day. Students can use the phone in the main office to contact home if they need to.
- Personalised support and advice via Form Tutors and Pastoral Support Team to ensure all students have opportunities and access to high quality education.
- Enrichment opportunities during the school day through our varied Be Inspired programme.
- Priority access to Carers Advisor and career advice support.
- Active promotion of support and external agency support.
- Monthly group and 1-1 support from Action for Children.
- Weekly mentoring for young carers from a key adult.
- Regular lunchtime drop in sessions that provide a safe, friendly place for Young carers to go during lunchtime.
- Support during the school day to complete homework in school e.g. Priority access to IT rooms.

- Wellbeing and Mental Health support via the young carers Google classroom platform.
- Provision of a visual board displaying leaflets, posters, information and events.
- Individual adaptations to policies and school procedures if required around caring responsibilities.
- Active promotion of Young Carers week to raise awareness.

POLICY