



St Mary's CE Primary School Young Carers Policy

St. Mary's CE Primary School is committed to supporting young carers to access education. This policy aims to ensure young carers at St. Mary's School are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled.

Definition

A young carer is a child or young person who is helping to look after someone at home. Most are caring for a parent, commonly in a single parent family, but some may be taking responsibility for a sibling, grandparent or other relative. In some instances, a young carer may care for more than one family member.

The person they look after will have one or more of:

- Physical disability (including sensory disability)
- Learning disability
- Mental health problem
- Chronic illness
- Substance misuse problem

Caring Tasks

A young carer will take on additional responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development. A young carer might be providing the main care or share responsibilities with another family member. The caring tasks that a young carer has to deal with can range from:

Nursing care - giving medication, injections, changing dressings, assisting with mobility etc.

Personal intimate care - washing, dressing, feeding and helping with toilet requirements

Emotional care - being compliant, monitoring the emotional state of the person cared for, listening, being a shoulder to cry on, supporting a parent through depression and trying to cheer them up.

Domestic care - doing a substantial amount of housework, cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry etc

Financial care - running the household, bill paying, benefit collection etc

Child care - taking responsibility for younger siblings in addition to their other caring responsibilities

Possible effect on education

St. Mary's CE Primary School acknowledges that there are likely to be young carers among its pupils, and that being a young carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education.

Because of their responsibilities at home, a young carer might experience:

- Being late or absent due to responsibilities at home
- Concentration problems, anxiety or worry in school
- Emotional distress
- Tiredness in school
- Lack of time for homework
- Poor attainment
- Physical problems such as back pain from lifting
- False signs of maturity, because of assuming adult roles
- Behavioural problems (taking out their anger or frustration)
- Lack of time for extra-curricular activities
- Isolation, embarrassed to take friends home
- Limited social skills
- Bullying
- Feeling that no one understands and that no support is available
- Low self esteem

It also might be difficult to engage their parents (due to fears about child being taken into care, fears about their condition being misunderstood or their parenting skills being called into question). They may be unable to attend parents' evenings.

Support Offered

St. Mary's School acknowledges that young carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education. Through this policy, St. Mary's School is giving the message that young carers' education is important.

The designated link for young carers is Amanda Bright, who will liaise with relevant colleagues, Salford Young Carers and other relevant agencies with the consent of the young carer. All pupils and staff will be made aware of the designated link.

St. Mary's School will provide young carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private, and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers

St. Mary's School appreciates that young carers will not discuss their family situation unless they feel comfortable. The young person's caring role will be acknowledged and respected.

St. Mary's School will treat young carers in a sensitive and child-centred way, upholding confidentiality.

St. Mary's School will ensure young carers can access all available support services in school.

St Mary's School will use Pupil Premium to minimise any barriers to education and learning experienced by eligible young carers to improve wellbeing, attainment and attendance.

St. Mary's School will follow child protection procedures regarding any young carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring.

St. Mary's School will promote discussion and learning in all areas of the curriculum to facilitate fuller understanding, acceptance of and respect for, the issues surrounding illness, disability and caring.

St Mary's School will keep up to date with national and local developments and with legislation and guidance affecting young carers and their families.

Training on young carers issues is embedded in ongoing professional development for all staff.

St. Mary's School recognises that flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of young carers. Available provision includes (but is not limited to):

- Access to a telephone during breaks and lunchtime, to phone home
- Negotiable deadlines for homework/coursework (when needed)
- Access to homework clubs (where these are available)
- Lunchtime detentions rather than after school detentions (where possible)
- Arrangements for schoolwork to be sent home (when there is a genuine crisis). Any approved absence for a young carer will be time limited. (DfES 2006)
- Access for parents with impaired mobility.
- Alternative communication options for parents who are sensory impaired or housebound.
- Advice to parents if there are difficulties in transporting a young carer to school.
- The school actively seeks feedback and ideas from young carers and their families in order to shape and improve provision for young carers.
- The school uses and evaluates data effectively to identify and monitor the progress made by young carers and reviews young carers individual plans accordingly.
- The school Learning Mentor- Amanda Bright is available for young carers to speak to during break times and lunchtimes.
- After school groups for young carers are also available and are run by Salford Young carers.

For further information please contact Nicola Chipman at Salford Carers Centre by e.mail YoungCarers@salford.gov.uk , or telephone 0161 833 0217.

J. McGarry & A. Bright - June 2016

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