



# Young Carers Policy

Policy review – October 2023

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## Statement of intent

At Peters Hill Primary School we believe that all children and young people have the right to an education regardless of what is happening at home. When a child looks after someone in their family with a history of a long term physical or mental illness, a disability or alcohol/substance abuse, the young person may need some extra support to help them get the most out of school.

This Young Carers' policy will set out how we will help any pupil who looks after someone at home.

A copy of this policy will be made available to parents/carers.

Signed by:

\_\_\_\_\_ Headteacher                      Date: .

\_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Governors              Date: .

## 1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to the following legislation and guidance, including, but not limited to the:

- Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- NHS help for Young Carers
- Care Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010

1.2. This policy is designed to be used in conjunction with other school policies such as:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Anti-Bullying Policy

## 2. Defining a Young Carer

A Young Carer is a child or young person under 18 years of age who helps look after a family member who is disabled, physically or mentally unwell or has a substance misuse problem. Caring can involve physical or emotional care or taking responsibility for someone's safety or well-being. The level of responsibility assumed by a Young Carer is often inappropriate to their age and at a level beyond simply helping out with jobs at home, which is a normal part of growing up.

## 3. Identifying a Young Carer

Unless the school is advised about a child or young person's home circumstances, Young Carers' risk first being identified by negative aspects or their behaviour, work or appearance. Some Young Carers' worry about being bullied or interference in their family life and may seek to conceal their role from their peers and from teachers. Some parents may be worried about informing the school for fear of judgments being made that they are unable to care for their children properly, so parents may conceal the information.

Some of the warning signs that might indicate that a child or young person has unrecognised responsibilities are:

- Regular lateness or unauthorised absence, possibly increasing over a long period of time.
- Tiredness in school.
- Erratic response to homework with incomplete, late or non-compliance to set tasks.
- Lack of concentration, anxiety or worry.
- Under achievement
- Behavioural problems, especially inappropriate responses possibly resulting from anger or frustration.
- Few or no peer friendships but possibly a good relationship with adults. Possibly presenting as very mature for their age.
- Victim of bullying, perhaps linked to a family member's disability, state of health or substance misuse.
- Lack of interest in extra-curricular activities, especially those after school.
- Apparent parental disinterest due to non-attendance at parent's meetings.

The above may be indicators of a range of problems, some not associated with a child or young person having a caring role at home. However, in dealing with any child or young person exhibiting any of the above signs, staff should consider whether this child or young person is an unidentified Young Carer. Staff will have an assessment tool shared with them that they can use for reference.

Staff should discuss their related concerns with a member of the safeguarding team. Concerns about a child or young person who may be considered an unidentified Young Carer, should always be reported quickly and confidentially.

It is preferable to start from a positive base and all discussions should be handled with sensitivity. We will try to establish if:

- The child or young person has additional support needs which may include having parents/relatives with disabilities or long-term physical, mental health needs or substance misuse issues.
- The child or the young person has a responsibility for looking after that person over and beyond 'normal' responsibilities and at a level inappropriate to their age.
- Information gained as a result of this process will be held securely. While we will

respect the right to privacy, we would wish to establish if the family is in contact with a support service that could help reduce their reliance on the child or young person.

- Information shared can also be used to work with parents to try to identify any support gaps.
- School might be aware of any additional support avenues for the family for example, Early Help Assessment.
- Information should not be shared until we will seek consent from the child or Young Carer and their parent.

#### 4. School support for identified Young Carers

The Safeguarding Team will lead on our support for young carers working closely with the Pastoral Mentor

- The Pastoral Mentor will have responsibility for seeing Young Carers as part of our Nurture Room provision on a regular basis to check on their well-being.
- To support seeing Young Carers, or in the absence of the Pastoral Mentor, this responsibility will be with the Safeguarding Team
- Awareness raising sessions will take place including assemblies, PSHE lessons and staff training.

#### 5. School will work to respect Young Carers rights, these include:

- Young Carers have a right to be healthy and their caring role should not impact on their physical or mental well-being.
- Young Carers have the right to have time to themselves so that they can form friendships in and out of school.
- Young Carers should not feel isolated but have an avenue of support for themselves.
- Young Carers should be able to achieve their goals for the future both within school and beyond, being a Young Carer should not impact on academic success.
- Sensitivity to the needs of the Young Carer includes being careful not to ask even well-intentioned questions about how the family members are when the Young Carer is in the presence of his/her peers.
- Where possible, schools will negotiate deadlines for homework and an alternative provision for completion of homework can be arranged if necessary.

- Schools will liaise with support services to ensure that families can be advised where additional help may be available to them.
- School staff and services will be available for any child/young person, parent or family member who wishes to discuss their family circumstances so that we can help the child/young person in achieving their potential.
- Schools will take an active role in seeking to identify and provide support to hidden young carers.
- If a local authority considers that a young carer may have support needs, it must carry out an assessment under the Children Act 1989. The local authority must also carry out such an assessment if a young carer, or the parent of a young carer, requests one. Such an assessment must consider whether it is appropriate or excessive for the young carer to provide care for the person in question, considering the young carer's needs and wishes.

## 6 Review and Monitoring

Young Carers will be monitored within school to ensure the child or young person thrives and reaches their full potential.

If the family has been part of an Early Help Assessment regular monitoring will identify any further areas for support