



Queen's Hill Primary School

# Young Carer Policy

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## Statement of Intent

At Queen's Hill Nursery and 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 long term physical or mental health illness, a disability, alcohol abuse or 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.

## Definition

A Young Carer is a young person, under the age of 18, who has a caring responsibility. Caring can involve physical or emotional care, or taking responsibility for someone's safety or wellbeing. The level of responsibility assumed by a Young Carer is often disproportionate to their age and at a level beyond simply 'helping out' with jobs at home, which is a normal part of growing up.

## Identifying a Young Carer

Young Carers are a vulnerable and disadvantaged group, whose caring role may impact upon their emotional and physical well-being and/or their prospects in education and life. Identifying and supporting young carers is an effective way of improving the attainment and attendance of this pupil group. We believe that by supporting young carers and their families we can strengthen families and support parenting.

### **You are a Young Carer if you:**

- Look after a parent / guardian or a brother/ sister with additional needs
- Do practical tasks such as cooking, housework and shopping
- Carry out physical care, such as helping someone out of bed
- Provide emotional support, such as talking to someone who is distressed
- Give personal care, such as helping someone dress
- Managing the family budget and collecting prescriptions
- Help with medicines or help someone to communicate

## Issues faced by Young Carers

Unless the school is advised about a student's home circumstances, Young Carers risk first being identified as a result of negative aspects of their behaviour or work. Some Young Carers worry about bullying or interference in their family life and may seek to conceal their role from their peers and from teachers.

Some of the warning signs that may indicate that a pupil has unrecognised responsibilities are :

- Being later 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 extracurricular 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

The above may be indicators of a range of problems, some not associated with a child having a caring role at home. However, in dealing with any child or young person exhibiting any of the above signs, staff should consider asking the child or young person if they are helping to look after someone at home. Staff should also discuss their related concerns with colleagues with pastoral responsibilities for the child or young person. Concerns about a child or young person who may be considered as a yet unidentified Young Carer should be reported to the member of staff with responsibility for Young Carers. New information about identified Young Carers should also be passed to the school's Young Carers coordinator.

## Support Offered

- We (school) will take an active role in seeking to identify and provide support to Young Carers.
- Becky Suffield (Assistant Headteacher), Jenny Castell (Nurture lead) and Jayne Eastaugh (Nurture lead) will lead on our support work for Young Carers. These members of staff will be the point of contact for young carers and their families and will liaise with young carers services.
- We will provide Young Carer awareness raising sessions in assemblies, PSHE lessons and through staff training.

- We will provide Young Carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private, and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers.
- We will acknowledge and respect The young person's caring role.
- We will treat young carers in a sensitive and child centred manner.
- When possible, school staff 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.
- We will try and ensure young carers can access all available support services in school. We will either liaise with or sign-post to support services to ensure families can be advised where additional help may be available to them.
- We will follow child protection and safeguarding procedures regarding any young carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of care.
- We will promote discussion and learning in all areas of the curriculum to facilitate a fuller understanding, acceptance of and respect for the issues surrounding illness, disability and caring.

Queen's Hill Nursery and Primary School recognises that flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of young carers. Available provision may include (but it is not limited to):

- Negotiable deadlines for homework (when needed)
- Arrangements for schoolwork to be sent home (when there is a genuine crisis)
- Access arrangements 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
- Involvement in our school's Young Carers Nurture Programme

## Further support

- **Caring together** - 0345 241 0954 [hello@caringtogether.org](mailto:hello@caringtogether.org)
- **Young Carers Matter Norfolk** - 0800 083 1148 [info@carersmatternorfolk.org.uk](mailto:info@carersmatternorfolk.org.uk)