

Young Carers Policy

At Parkfield Community School we believe that all children and young people have the right to learn, enjoy and achieve, and be the best that they can be, regardless of their home circumstances.

We acknowledge that there are likely to be young carers among our pupils, and that being a young carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education. We have adopted our Young Carers Policy to show how we will relieve some of the worries, which young carers may have about home, and their school work, and to demonstrate our belief that 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 give may be physical and/or emotional.

Young carers responsibilities may include:

- Personal care (e.g. bathing, dressing, feeding)
- Giving or prompting medication/injections
- Shopping
- Housework
- 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
- Academic performance below potential and homework often uncompleted
- Isolation from peers or problems interacting with peers
- Not making use of out of school activities
- Mature and responsible but maybe 'letting go' and behaving immaturely when in a safe environment
- Behavioural problems
- Limited contact with school by parents

If we suspect that someone is a young carer, we will be sensitive when we approach them about this, as we understand they may not want their peers to know. Before passing this information on to relevant colleagues we will obtain the consent of the young carer.

As a school we will:

- ✓ Designate a member of staff with specific responsibilities for young carers (Angela Schofield) and make sure all pupils know who this is.
- ✓ Ensure that all pupils are aware of the challenges faced by young carers through assemblies and SEAL material across the school.
- ✓ Liaise with appropriate agencies i.e. Birmingham Young Carers or CASS
- ✓ Consider alternatives and be flexible when responding to the needs of young carers. This may include (but is not limited to) access to a telephone at break times, the modified use of imposition letters, negotiable deadlines for homework or opportunities to do homework at lunch times
- ✓ Ensuring parents can access school for parents' evenings etc and, if this is not possible, consider how links can be made with home.
- ✓ Consider how information on pupils' pastoral needs can be effectively passed between primary and secondary school.
- ✓ Providing specific staff training as an integral part of the annual safeguarding training and in discrete training sessions over the academic year.
- ✓ Provide facilities for young carers to meet where possible and develop a group within school if they wish, encouraging young carers to respect each other and their right to their privacy.
- ✓ Ensure that staff are aware of the warning signs which may indicate that a pupil has unrecognised responsibilities and may be a young carer.
- ✓ Develop systems to consult with young carers and their parents about the content of policies and delivery of support.
- ✓ Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of policy and support provided