



# YOUNG CARERS POLICY

## School Policy

|                             |                             |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Accountable Trust Committee | Education                   |
| Policy Area                 | Pastoral                    |
| Responsible Officer         | Headteacher                 |
| Status                      | Published                   |
| Policy Rationale            | Non-Statutory               |
| Categorisation              | School                      |
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| Publication                 | Website                     |
| Review Cycle                | Every 3 Years               |
| Next Review Date            | Spring 2025                 |

## Related Documents

|                           |                             |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| School Mandatory Policies | n/a                         |
| Trust Mandatory Policies  | n/a                         |
| Optional School Policies  | n/a                         |
| External                  | Surrey Young Carers Website |

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## **Key Contacts**

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Please note this list may be updated by the responsible officer when change arises in the organisation, without the need for committee meeting review/approval.

## 1. Introduction

At Sandfield, everyone is welcome, everyone belongs and everyone is important, we therefore aim to identify those pupils who may have a caring role. Young carers look after someone in their close family (a parent/ carer or sibling for example) who has a long-term physical or mental health problem, disability, a problem with drugs or alcohol or if they act as a translator for a parent/ carer. This may take the form of domestic chores, personal care, supervision, emotional support, or another form of assistance.

At Sandfield Primary School, in line with our 3 rules: ready, respectful and safe, we believe that all young people have the right to an education. If a young person looks after someone, we know that they may need additional support to help them get the most out of their education, and we aim to meet their needs.

Our school has a designated member of staff who has special responsibility for young carers. *Currently our designated lead is Lucy Lidstrom, Home, School Link Worker.*

## 2. Who is a Young Carer

Every school (indeed every classroom) has pupils affected by disability and illness in the family. A 'young carer' is a young person who provides care to a member of the family or a friend who has one, or a combination, of the following:

- special educational needs or disability
- a sensory impairment
- a chronic condition
- a terminal illness
- a mental health problem or illness
- a drug or alcohol addiction
- acts as a translator for a parent/ carer.

By 'care' we mean:

- **Practical:** A young carer may be helping with cleaning, cooking, laundry, \*paying bills /managing a budget and even helping to collect and give medicine. Acting as a translator.
- **Emotional:** May provide a listening ear, comforting, helping the cared for feel better about themselves, talking to someone who is distressed (e.g. low because of illness/mental health)
- **Personal:** A young carer may assist to help someone to get dressed or wash, helping to feed them
- **Physical:** A young carer may be supporting a family member with a disability to move: getting up from their seat /out of bed. Or they may be helping with shopping, such as carrying heavy bags \*Lifting and moving tasks

## Identifying a Young Carer

Whilst many young carers do well in school, the following issues are common signs pointing towards difficulties at home – *some* of which will be related to disability and illness within the family.

### Pupils may:

- Regularly arrive late for school
- Regularly miss days of school, marked as authorised or unauthorised absence
- Fail to attend 'extracurricular/ after school events', such as clubs, plays, social events due to caring commitments

*Some young carers miss school to stay close to the cared-for person*

- Appear physically neglected – missing breakfast, lacking clean uniform, etc
- Appear to be regularly tired
- Have low self-esteem
- Isolate themselves from their peers
- Regularly complain of aches and pains
- Regularly appear withdrawn or anxious
- Regularly challenge adult authority

*Some young carers struggle with switching between being the adult at home and the child at school*

- Appear more emotionally mature than their peers
- Have regular problems in concentrating upon their work
- Regularly fail to complete homework on time

### Parents may:

- *Not respond to school correspondence*

*This may be because of a communication problem*

- *Not attend parent's evening*

*This may be because of an inability to attend*

- *Are on low incomes, and unable to afford school related expenses*

### **3. Support offered.**

A Young Carer may need a little extra support to help him or her get the most out of school. Our Young Carers Policy says how we will help any pupil who helps to look after someone at home.

#### **Our school:**

- Has a member of staff with special responsibility for young carers and lets all new pupils know who they are and what they can do to help.
- Facilitates young carers awareness-raising training for staff
- Can provide both individual listening support and/ or access to small group interventions.
- Can put young carers in touch with the local Young Carers Service. We can also put families in touch with other support services.
- Is accessible to parents who have mobility and communication difficulties and involves them in parents' evenings.
- Respects your right to privacy and will only share information about you and your family with people who need to know to help you.
- Will consider alternatives if a young carer is unable to attend out of school activities e.g. detention, sports coaching, concerts, due to their caring role
- Allows young carers to telephone home during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Complies with the Disability Discrimination Act by offering disabled parents support to get their children into school.
- Uses the Pupil Premium to assist eligible young carers in their education, including accessing curriculum based trips
- Runs sessions on young carers in the PSHE programme for each year group, to help all pupils understand the issues, carers' rights and the support available, and create a 'carer-friendly' culture
- Keep the young carers page on the school's website up to date
- Involve young carers in decision making around support, groups and information