



Sir James Smith's Community School

Aspiration • Ambition • Achievement

YOUNG CARERS POLICY

March 2018

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Young Carers Policy

1.0 Background

Young carers are children and young people under 18 who help to look after a family member who is disabled, physically or mentally ill or has a substance misuse problem. Helping out around the house is a normal part of growing up, but young carers regularly carry out significant or substantial caring tasks and assume a level of responsibility which is inappropriate to their age. Caring can involve physical or emotional care, or taking responsibility for someone's safety or well being. Many young carers spend a lot of time doing household chores or looking after younger siblings in addition to helping a sick or disabled parent with tasks such as administering medication, helping someone to get up and get dressed or helping someone use the bathroom. Some young carers help parents to look after a disabled sibling. The last census found 175,000 young carers in the UK. Local research has suggested there may be up to 30 young carers in average sized secondary school.

2.0 Helping protect Young Carers education

At Sir James Smith's Community School we believe that all children and young people have the right to an education, regardless of what is happening at home.

When a young person looks after someone in their family who has a serious illness, disability or substance misuse problem, he or she may need 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.

3.0 Warning signs

Young carers are not easy to spot and many actively try to conceal their caring role from teachers, pastoral staff and peers for fear of bullying or outside interference in their families. All of the warning signs below could be indicators of another problem. However, staff noticing these signs should consider asking the pupil if they are helping to look after someone at home.

- Regular or increased lateness or absence.
- Concentration problems, anxiety, tiredness.
- Under-achievement and late or incomplete homework: may be a sudden unexplained drop in attainment.
- Few or no peer friendships; conversely the pupil may get on well with adults and present as very mature for their age.
- Victim of bullying, sometimes explicitly linked to a family member's disability, health or substance misuse problem.
- Behavioural problems, sometimes the result of anger or frustration expressed inappropriately.
- Unable to attend extra-curricular activities.
- Difficulties in engaging parents; parents not attending parents' evenings.

4.0 Enrolment

Enrolment process for new pupils and their families should attempt to establish:

- Does the pupil have parents or other family members who have disabilities or other long term physical or mental health problems?
- Does the pupil help to look after them and what impact does this have on his/ her education?
- Is the family in touch with support services that could reduce the pupil's caring role?

Young Carers Policy

- Some families may choose to keep their problems secret, but offering signposting and information about other services at an early stage may make all the difference.

5.0 Our school:

- The Year Director has special responsibility for young carers and lets all new pupils know who they are and what they can do to help. The Year Director will be supported by the Pastoral Support and Welfare Team.
- Runs a PSHE lesson/assembly on the challenges faced by young carers. Much of the bullying experienced by young carers results from the stigma associated with some disabilities and health conditions such as mental ill health or substance misuse.
- Can/will put young carers in touch with the local Young Carers Service (Kernow Young Carers Family Support Practitioner). 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 people's right to privacy and confidentiality and will only share information with people who need to know how to help Young Carers and their family
- 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.
- Can give parents advice about how to get their children into school where transport is a problem.

If you would like this in a different format please contact the school

Adopted – March 2015

Reviewed by – Jen Adams/Jon Lawrence

Reviewed – March 2018

Ratified by Governors – March 2018

Next review due – March 2019