
OUR LADY IMMACULATE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

YOUNG CARERS POLICY

At Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School, we believe that all children and young people have the right to an education, regardless of their home circumstances.

We acknowledge that there are likely to be young carers amongst our pupils, and that being a young carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education.

We have adopted our young carer policy so that we will be able to relieve some of the worries, which young carers may have about home and their schoolwork, and to show that we believe 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 provide may be physical and/or emotional.

Young Carers' responsibilities may include:

- Personal care (washing/bathing/dressing/feeding)
- Giving or prompting medication/injections
- Shopping
- Housework
- Cooking
- 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 that may indicate a young person is a carer, include:

- Illness or disability in the family
- Being regularly late or absent (due to caring responsibilities at home)

Review Date: Spring 2018

- Assuming a parental role to other siblings
- Poor concentration and/or often tired
- Personnel hygiene/dirty uniform
- Academic performance below potential
- Homework often uncompleted
- Isolation from peers or problems interacting with peers
- Not accessing out of school activities
- Mature and responsible but maybe 'letting go' and behaving immaturely when in a safe environment
- Behavioural problems (taking out their anger/frustration)
- Being bullied
- Feeling that no one understands and that no support is available
- Low self-esteem

If we believe that someone is a young carer we will be sensitive when we approach them about this, as we appreciate that they may not wish their peers to know. Information about young carers' circumstances should only be shared on a 'need to know' basis. Before passing this information on to relevant colleagues, we will obtain the consent of the young carer.

Support offered

As a school, we will:

- Designate a member of staff with responsibilities for Young Carers. This person is Dawn Finnigan (learning mentor) or Lynsey Whiteside in her absence. We will make sure all pupils know who is responsible.
- Provide information to the young person about Young Carers and what information and support is available
- Liaise with appropriate agencies/charities
- Consider alternatives and be flexible when responding to the needs of Young Carers. This may include (but not limited to), access to a telephone at lunch or break times, Detentions at lunchtime instead of after school, negotiable deadlines for homework/coursework or opportunities to do homework at lunch times.

This policy will be reviewed annually.