

## **HASLAND JUNIOR SCHOOL**

### **YOUNG CARERS POLICY**

We want children to be healthy, at the centre of everything we do so that they can make a positive contribution, have fun and enjoy growing up. We want to build a community for them that keeps them safe, supports their creativity and enables them to meet their potential.

This statement sets out our aspirations for all our pupils. Some children will need more support than others if they are to achieve their potential. We believe that young carers are amongst this group and we strive to ensure they are supported within school and by all agencies to help them live happy, safe fulfilling lives.

We have adopted our Young Carers policy so that we will be able to relieve some of the worries, which Young Carers may have about their home and their school work, and show that we believe Young Carers' education is important.

#### **Policy Development**

The Ofsted paper 'Supporting Young Carers: Identifying, Assessing and Meeting the needs of Young Carers and their Families' (Ofsted 2009) reports that council and partners should ensure that professionals within universal services are aware of the needs of young carers, so that they can be identified and supported.

The Children and Families Act 2014, gives all young carers (regardless of the amount, frequency or nature of caring activities they undertake) a right to an assessment of their needs. The assessment must take into account the wishes of the young carer. Following the implementation of the Act we as a school will:

- Be aware of possible indicators that a child is a young carer and the wide range of caring duties they may partake in, including physical and emotional support
- Actively identify any young carers and refer them to the relevant agencies for assessment
- Contribute to the assessment process, including the decision as to whether or not a young carer is a 'child in need'
- Provide individualised support for young carers taking into account their caring responsibilities and have a personalised plan in place
- Make specific arrangements at the time of transition to secondary education
- Ensure we track Young Carers looking at their progress and achievement to ensure they are reaching their potential and review each term

The Headteacher takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation.

## **What is a Young Carer?**

A young carer is anyone up to the age of 18 who is 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 of 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

The school uses the Pupil Premium for Young Carers who meet eligibility criteria to minimise any barriers to education and learning experiences to improve their wellbeing, attainment and attendance.

The school actively seeks feedback and ideas from young carers and their families in order to shape and improve provision for Young Carers

## **Factors which may indicate that a young person is caring include:**

- Illness or disability in the family
- Being 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
- 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
- Being bullied
- Experience physical problems, possibly related to lifting
- Presents as neglected e.g. poor personal hygiene, unwashed/ill-fitting clothes
- May walk to school alone, be accompanied by an older sibling or have the responsibility of escorting a younger sibling
- Have one or more parent(s) affected by alcohol or substance misuse, or with poor mental health
- Live in a family that appears to be isolated from the rest of the community
- Talk about siblings as though they have parenting responsibility for them

It might be difficult to engage parents (due to fears about their child/ren being taken into care, fears about their condition being misunderstood or their parenting skills being called into question). They may be unable to attend parents' evenings.

**Young Carers may keep their caring role hidden for a range of reason which may include:**

- Being concerned about what will happen to their parents if they tell someone
- Have been told by their parents not to tell anyone
- Be worried about the response of their peers
- Have had no opportunity to share their story
- Be unaware that help and support is available
- Not realise that they are a carer, or that their lives are any different to other children's
- Feel embarrassed by the condition of the person they are caring for.

**Identifying Young Carers:**

- If we suspect that someone is a young carer we will be sensitive when we approach them about this, as we appreciate 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.
- Staff have all received training on young carers. A survey was also undertaken to find out knowledge before and after the training. Staff also have a checklist to help identify young carers. If they suspect someone is a young carer they will pass on details to the young carers lead in school
- An assembly has been held to make children aware of young carers and know who they can speak to. There is a young carers notice board in school which signposts them of how to get help in school. There is also a hand out children can complete and put into a box for the young carer lead to see. Weekly drop in sessions are also in place and this information is listed on the young carers notice board
- Young carers are also discussed during PSHCE topics

- Children are aware that they can talk to any member of staff in school if they wish.

### **During the school enrolment process for new pupils the school will:**

- Identify parents or family members who have disabilities or other long term physical or mental health conditions
- Identify if the pupil has caring responsibilities and if this means this Young Carer has any additional needs that need to be supported
- Establish individual plans to recognise the child's/young person's specific needs as a Young Carer
- Refer/signpost Young Carers and their families to other support agencies and professionals as appropriate.

### **Support Offered**

Hasland Junior School acknowledges that young carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education. Through this policy, Hasland Junior School is giving the message that young carers' education is important.

As a school we will:

- Have a designated member of staff with specific responsibilities for young carers (Gail Nottingham). Pupils will be made aware of the designated person during the Young Carer assembly and also via the Young Carers noticeboard. The designated member of staff will liaise with relevant colleagues, Derbyshire Young Carers and other relevant agencies with the consent of the young carer.
- Have a designated governor (Katya Zafiris) who ensures the policy is implemented and feeds back to governors meetings
- We will provide opportunities for young carers to speak to someone in private, and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers
- We appreciate that young carers will not discuss their family situation unless they feel comfortable. The young person's caring role will be acknowledged and respected.
- We will treat young carers in a sensitive and child-centred way, upholding confidentiality
- We will ensure young carers can access all available support and services in school
- We will follow child protection procedures regarding any young carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring
- We will promote discussion and learning in all areas of the curriculum to facilitate fuller understanding, acceptance of and respect for, the issues surrounding illness, disability and caring.

- Ensure that family's privacy is protected and the school will only share information with professionals on a need to know basis in order to support pupils and their families
- The school views Young Carers as any other pupil, but understands that they have the additional pressure of caring responsibilities.

Hasland Junior School recognises that flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of young carers. Available provision includes (but is not limited to):

- Give information to the young person about young carers and about the information and support available such as carers trust, babble website, Derbyshire Young Carers etc
- Consider alternatives and be flexible when responding to the needs of the young carers. This may include access to telephone home during breaks or lunchtime, negotiable deadlines for homework or opportunities to do homework during homework clubs at lunchtimes.
- A dedicated lunchtime each week for carers to see the designated member of staff if they wish to.
- A worry box for them to put in any concerns or worries
- Including issues on caring within the PSHCE curriculum to develop a holistic understanding of caring needs and responsibilities
- Supporting parents with mobility and/or access issues to facilitate and maintain regular contact with the school
- Provide 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

### **Transition support is in place for young carers**

- The school offers support to the pupil and their family during the transition process, sharing agreed information with their new school lead for Young Carers and their families

### **Monitoring and Review**

The Governing Body will monitor this policy at least annually or earlier if required by legislation. This policy will be shared with staff and also put on the website for the school community to access. It will also be referenced within our school prospectus.