

# Windmill Primary School Young Carers Policy

Windmill Primary School is committed to supporting young carers to access education. This policy aims to ensure young carers at Windmill School are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled.

## Definition

A young carer is a child or young person whose life is impacted by the responsibility of care for an adult or sibling in their family with:

- A long-term illness including mental illness
- Disability
- Substance misuse

## Caring Tasks

A young carer will take on additional responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development. A young carer might be providing the main care or share responsibilities with another family member.

A young carer may do some or all of the following:

**Nursing care** - giving medication, injections, changing dressings, assisting with mobility or physiotherapy etc.

**Personal intimate care** - washing, dressing, feeding and helping with toilet requirements

**Emotional care** - being compliant, monitoring the emotional state of the person cared for, listening, being a shoulder to cry on, supporting a parent through depression and trying to cheer them up.

**Domestic care** - doing a substantial amount of housework, cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry etc

**Financial care** - running the household, bill paying, benefit collection, prescription collection etc

**Child care** - taking responsibility for younger siblings.

**Interpreting:** Helping with communication, due to a hearing or speech impairment, reading letters.

## Possible effect on education

Windmill Primary School acknowledges that there are likely to be young carers among its pupils, and that being a young carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education.

Because of their responsibilities at home, a young carer might experience:

- Being late or absent due to responsibilities at home
- Concentration problems, anxiety or worry in school
- Emotional distress
- Tiredness in school
- Lack of time for homework
- Poor attainment
- Physical problems such as back pain from lifting
- False signs of maturity, because of assuming adult roles
- Behavioural problems (taking out their anger or frustration)
- Lack of time for extra-curricular activities
- Isolation, embarrassed to take friends home
- Limited social skills
- Bullying
- Feeling that no one understands and that no support is available
- Low self esteem

It also might be difficult to engage their parents (due to fears about child 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.

## Support Offered

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

The designated Pastoral Leads for young carers will liaise with relevant colleagues, Spurgeons Young Carers and other relevant agencies with the consent of the young carer. All pupils will be made aware of the designated links.

Windmill Primary School will provide young carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private, and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers

Windmill Primary School appreciates that young carers will not discuss their family situation unless they feel comfortable. The young person's caring role will be acknowledged and respected.

Windmill Primary School will treat young carers in a sensitive and child-centred way, upholding confidentiality.

Windmill Primary School will ensure young carers can access all available support services in school.

Windmill Primary School will follow child protection procedures regarding any young carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring.

Windmill Primary School will promote discussion and learning opportunities in all areas of the curriculum to facilitate fuller understanding, acceptance of and respect for, the issues surrounding illness, disability and caring.

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

- Negotiable deadlines for homework/coursework (when needed)
- Access to homework clubs (where these are available)
- Arrangements for schoolwork to be sent home (when there is a genuine crisis). Any approved absence for a young carer will be time limited. (DfES 2006)
- Access for parents with impaired mobility.
- 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.
- Referrals to other agencies for additional support e.g. Spurgeons
- Opportunities for young carers to meet and talk with others

Policy last reviewed: Autumn 2024

Next review date: Autumn 2027