

Mountfields Lodge Primary School (academy)



Young Carers Policy

Aim High, Reach for the Sky

Young Carers Policy

What is a 'Young Carer'?

A Young Carer is defined as "...a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person (of any age) except where that care is provided for payment, pursuant to a contract, or as voluntary work." (Section 96; Children and Families Act 2014) This relates to care for any family member who is physically or mentally ill or disabled, or misuses drugs, alcohol or other substances.

This policy reflects the responsibilities laid on schools to work with Local Authorities in identifying and meeting the needs of pupils who are Young Carers, in accordance with the Care Act 2014 and the Children's Act 1989. It includes the insertions made in the Children and Families Act 2014 which introduce new measures to identify and support Young Carers.

From April 2015, all Young Carers will be entitled to an assessment of needs by their Local Authority, and a further transition assessment will be carried out as Young Carers reach adulthood. This provision works alongside measures in the Care Act 2014 for the assessment of adults, to enable a 'whole-family approach'.

Mountfields Lodge Primary School believes that identifying and supporting Young Carers contributes to improving the attainment in school and consequently the life-chances of this group of pupils. By supporting Young Carers we can support parents and strengthen families.

We are aware that pupils in our school may have caring roles at home. We will work to ensure that all pupils have equal access to education and that no child is left to take on inappropriate or excessive caring responsibilities. We recognise that a Young Carer may need extra support to help them make the most of opportunities at school and beyond.

We aim to support Young Carers through a whole-school approach, set out in a policy stating the measures we will take in accordance with current legislation and relevant Leicestershire County Council (Local Authority) policies and guidance.

Who is eligible for services from the Local Authority in Leicestershire?

- Children and young people who meet the above criteria
- who are undertaking age-inappropriate care (what they do and the degree to which they do it)
- who are disadvantaged as a result of their care role
 1. reduced access to education
 - attendance
 - punctuality
 2. low self-esteem
 3. fewer opportunities to develop and maintain friendships
 4. difficulties with emotional and behavioural development
 5. impact on physical and mental well-being
 - tiredness
 - feelings of anxiety
 - stress

- low mood
6. fewer opportunities for participation in age-appropriate social activities

How are Young Carers identified?

We recognise that helping around the house is a normal part of growing up for many children. However, a Young Carer is said to be a person under 18 who assumes a level of responsibility which is often inappropriate to their age. They may:

- prepare meals and drinks
- carry out domestic tasks such as cleaning, laundry, shopping
- manage the family budget such as paying bills, collecting benefits
- look after brothers and sisters
- undertake physical care such as lifting, helping a parent on the stairs
- help with personal care such as washing, dressing, toileting needs
- administer medicines, change dressings, collect prescriptions
- help with treatment programmes such as physiotherapy
- offer emotional support, perhaps staying at home to keep the person company
- interpret for someone who has a hearing or speech impairment or because English is not the family's first language

What we will do:

We will have in place a policy to encourage practice that identifies and supports young carers. The policy will be reviewed once every 3 years and updated accordingly.

We will maintain a record of Young Carers and pupils thought to be carers in accordance with the school data policy. Figures will be submitted to the Local Authority on a termly basis to aid planning and provision for this group of pupils, but names of individuals will not be submitted.

We will communicate openly with families and take into account their feedback to inform our policies and practices.

We will have a named senior member of staff with lead responsibility for Young Carers – a Young Carers' Champion – and recognise this role within continuing professional development.

- The Young Carers' Champion will be the main point of contact for all issues pertaining to Young Carers and will support colleagues to understand the challenges they face. They will raise awareness among all school staff, ensuring that the whole school is committed to meeting the needs of all Young Carers.
- The Young Carers' Champion will ensure that Young Carers have access to members of staff they can talk to, who understand their circumstances and respect confidentiality.
- Contact details for the Young Carers' Champion in all schools in Leicestershire will be included on a database of centrally-held information

We will develop individual pupil plans (IPPs) offering support and adapting school arrangements as needed.

We will monitor and evaluate data pertaining to this group of pupils, examine the progress they have made and review IPPs accordingly each term.

Pupils may be offered support through a bespoke plan which could include

- referral to First Response for a detailed assessment of need
- referral to the Young Carers ID card scheme
- information about relevant agencies and websites which could signpost opportunities for further support
- information about local services and support groups

School policies such as those for attendance, behaviour, keeping safe, afford recognition to the needs of Young Carers.

We will ensure efficient means of communicating the needs of a Young Carer to those members of staff who need to be informed, including support staff.

We will build and maintain a directory of local services and groups which offer support and respite for Young Carers.

We will develop ways in which the positive aspects of caring are recognised within our school community, challenging stereotypes and discrimination arising from perceptions of disability and illness and promoting positive images of those who live with disabilities or health issues. This may be through the curriculum or awareness events such as special assemblies.

Other agencies have a role to play in supporting Young Carers and we will endeavour to engage them on behalf of our Young Carers.

We will be sensitive to the child's need for confidentiality and uphold their standing in the school community.

We will follow child protection and safeguarding procedures where a Young Carer is deemed to be at risk of harm from inappropriate caring responsibilities.

We recognise that every Young Carer's situation is different and that flexibility is required when responding to their needs. We also acknowledge that family members may have disabilities, illness or other issues which do not result in a child becoming a Young Carer and so take care to be wary of making assumptions.