

# Young carers policy

Retford Oaks Academy

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## Contents

Statement of intent .....	3
1. Legal framework .....	3
2. Definition .....	3
3. Issues faced by young carers .....	4
4. Identifying young carers .....	4
5. Young carers and the academy .....	5
6. Providing support .....	5
7. Monitoring and review .....	5

## **Statement of intent**

At Retford Oaks Academy, we aim to provide a community for pupils which keeps them safe, supports their creativity and enables them to meet their full potential.

The academy is committed to supporting young carers' access to a full education. This policy will be implemented by all staff members in order to ensure young carers at our academy are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled.

## **1. Legal framework**

1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation and guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2011
- Equality Act 2010
- Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004
- Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Care Act 2014
- The Young Carers (Needs Assessments) Regulations 2015
- DfE (2011) 'Improving support for young carers – family focused approaches'
- DfE (2016) 'The lives of young carers in England'

## **2. Definition**

2.1. A young carer is aged 5-18 years old who provides regular and ongoing care to a family member who is physically or mentally ill, has a disability, or misuses substances.

2.2. A young carer will take on additional responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development.

2.3. Young carers may be primary carers, such as caring for a parent, or a secondary carer, such as helping to care for a sibling.

2.4. A young carer becomes vulnerable when the level of caregiving and responsibility to the person in need of care becomes excessive or inappropriate for that child and risks jeopardising their emotional or physical wellbeing, educational achievement and life chances.

### **3. Issues faced by young carers**

- 3.1. Caring responsibilities can impact on young people's education in several different ways including, but not limited to, the following:
- Lateness
  - Tiredness
  - Non-attendance
  - Late or no submission of homework and assignments
  - Not participating in extra-curricular activities and academy events
  - Experiencing bullying or isolation
  - Underachieving academically
  - Poor education or career choices
- 3.2. Young carers may exhibit challenging behaviour in environments away from home.
- 3.3. Many young carers may be unable to develop friendships outside of the academy, restrict the development of a pupil's social skills.
- 3.4. Some young carers carry out tasks for which they are physically ill equipped, which can impact on their overall health. Long-term caring responsibilities can also impact significantly on the mental health of young people, which like their physical health, can lead to poor attendance.
- 3.5. Financial support maybe available in line with the Pupil Premium assessment.

### **4. Identifying young carers**

- 4.1 During the academy enrolment process for year 6 pupils and in year transfers, the academy will
- Clarify whether the pupil has caring responsibilities.
  - Identify whether the young carer has any additional needs that need to be supported, e.g., any ARNA, SEND or social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs.
- 4.2 Young carer status will be updated regularly throughout the academic year by
- Microsoft forms questionnaire completed by all students
  - Information received by outside agencies or parent/carers.
- 4.3 Where appropriate, a young carer may be referred to the LA or other support agencies for a needs assessment.

- 4.4 The Young carer lead will update information on Sims regularly to, filtering to Class charts where young carer information is accessible to all staff. Regular updates will be shared when necessary to all staff during Inset or briefings.

## **5. Young carers and the academy**

- 5.1. The young carer lead is the main point of contact for young carers in the academy. This appointed person is responsible for:
- Ensuring that young carers have the same access to a full education and career choices as their peers.
  - Promoting and coordinating the support young carers need.
  - Liaising with other agencies as appropriate, including adult services.
- 5.2. It is important that staff members can effectively identify young carers and that young carers feel that they can ask for help.
- 5.3. To ensure that the young Carer Lead will provide suitable CPD training for staff.
- 5.4. The academy aims to create a welcoming and friendly environment for all pupils, in which young carers feel comfortable to discuss their situation.
- 5.5. The academy will signpost information, ensuring that all pupils are aware of this information.
- 5.6. Tutor time, assemblies and where relevant, the curriculum, will be used to promote a full understanding, acceptance of, and respect for, young carers.
- 5.7. Staff members will not discuss a young carer's personal situation and related arrangements in front of their peers.
- 5.8. The academy will follow safeguarding and child protection procedures regarding any pupil who they believe to be at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring.

## **6. Providing support**

- 6.1. The young carer lead will meet with young carers on a regular basis and will liaise with teachers regarding difficulties, such as attendance, detentions, communication home or deadlines.
- 6.2. The young carer lead will ensure that existing individual pupil plans recognise the pupil's specific needs as a young carer and signpost where necessary to outside agencies.

## **7. Monitoring and review**

- 7.1. The Young carer Line Manager and the young carer lead will continually monitor and review practice to ensure this policy is implemented correctly.
- 7.2. Staff will all be aware of other relevant academy policies which will be implemented alongside this policy.