

# Young Carers Policy



## Acresfield Primary School

**Last Updated:** February 2019

**Date of Governing Body Approval:** March 21<sup>st</sup> 2019

**Committee Responsible for Review:** Community

**Signed:** [Chair of Governors] 

**Signed:** [Headteacher]



## **Introduction**

This Young Carers Policy has been jointly produced by Cheshire Young Carers and Acresfield Primary School

## **Commitment**

Acresfield Primary School is committed to supporting young carers' emotional, educational and personal development to enable them to aspire and achieve in education regardless of complexities of their personal needs and home circumstances.

This policy sets out how we will live up to our commitment to increasing young carers' participation in education and supporting young carers with special education needs in conformity with Ofsted's Common Inspection Framework (September 2015) on monitoring young carers progress in education, the provisions of The Children and Families Act 2014 (Section 96) and The Children Act 1989 (Section 17ZB amended).

## **Definition of a young carer**

A young carer is a child or young person under the age of 18 living with and providing regular significant personal, physical or emotional care support to another family member, assuming a level of responsibility which would usually be associated only with an adult.

A child or young person can be caring for any of the following reasons:

- Parent or sibling with mental health problems
- Parent or sibling with a learning or physical disability
- Parent or sibling with an entrenched alcohol or substance misuse problem
- Parent or sibling with a chronic or terminal illness

## **Young Carers and the effect on their education**

Being a young carer can have a serious adverse effect on a child/young person's education. Because they struggle to balance their care responsibilities at home with expectations at school, a young carer is likely to regularly experience any one or more of the following:

- Being late or absent due to fulfilling care responsibilities at home
- Concentration problems in the classroom
- Emotional distress – anxiety, anger, fear, worry, self-doubt
- Mental and/or physical fatigue or tiredness
- Lack of time to complete coursework/homework on time or at all
- Academic underachievement relative to peers
- Physical problems such as back pain from lifting or other physical care duties
- False signs of maturity linked to assuming adult roles and responsibilities
- Attitudinal/Behavioural problems e.g. isolation; challenging; disruptive; disengaged
- Lack of time for extra-curricular activities at Academy/School/College\* or at home
- Aloof/Isolated - embarrassed to take friends home
- Limited social skills and missing on 'normal' childhood/adolescent life experiences
- Bullying – victim or perpetrator
- Feeling that no one understands or cares about them and that no support is available
- Low self-esteem and a feeling of being incompetent (often unjustified)

### **Quotes from young carers:**

“I worry about my dad all day when I am at school and find it hard to concentrate in class”  
Tom age 10

“I need someone to talk to at my high school about my home life and how caring for my mum affects me” Jenny age 16

“I think about my mum all the time when I am at school; I feel sad but can’t tell my friends”  
Amy age 8

“My teachers don’t understand how hard it is for me to do my best in school and at the same time look after my little brother who has got cerebral palsy at home” Jack age 14

### **Support offered**

Acresfield Primary School undertakes that the following support is available for all young carers within the school.

- Acresfield Primary School has an identified primary young carers link/representative Kate Roberts. A second named person in Kate Roberts’ absence is Chloe Carberry (**REF Safeguarding Policy**).
- There is a full role description of the young carers link/representative provided in the appendix to this policy
- All staff are made aware of who their young carers representatives are and the internal reporting/referral process to these persons (**REF Safeguarding Policy**).
- We have an internal effective reporting system between all staff and the young carers’ representatives. (**REF Safeguarding Policy**).
- Any child/young person who is identified as a young carer whilst at the school will be referred to appropriate services subject to his/her consent and his/her family.
- Acresfield Primary School has a procedure for identifying young carers on enrolment into the school. (**REF- Questionnaire can be found in school enrolment pack**).
- When a young carer leaves the school either to proceed into further education or to another peer education centre, details of their caring role and home situation will be passed on to the next academy/school/college subject to the consent of the young carer and his/her family.
- Acresfield Primary School will be flexible with occasional late attendance due to a young carer’s caring role; where this is a regular occurrence support will be put into place in line with school policy. (**REF Attendance Policy**).
- Acresfield Primary School will make every effort to ensure that the root cause of any lateness is made apparent to staff and that appropriate support is sourced. (**REF Attendance Policy**).
- Acresfield Primary School will at all times be flexible with regards to young carers issues and their needs, upholding confidentiality will always be a key objective.

- Acresfield Primary School acknowledges that young carers will not be obliged to discuss their family situation unless they feel comfortable. A young person's caring role will be acknowledged and respected.
- Acresfield Primary School will ensure young carers can access all available pastoral and other support services at school.
- Acresfield 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.
- Acresfield Primary School will provide access to a phone during breaks and lunchtime for young carers to call home, as necessary.
- Acresfield Primary School will seek to negotiate reasonable deadlines with young carers for completion and submission of homework (when needed).
- Acresfield Primary School will ensure that young carers have access to a homework club/homework support.
- Acresfield Primary School will make arrangements for young carers' course/home work to be sent home electronically, by hand or by post (when there is a genuine crisis) N.B This will be agreed with young carers and have a set time limit.
- Acresfield Primary School will provide access for parents with impaired mobility. **(REF Equal Opportunities Policy).**
- Acresfield Primary School will provide alternative communication options for parents of young carers who are sensory impaired or are housebound; this will include alternative communication options for parents' evenings.
- Appropriate provisions will be put into place for young carers whose parents do not drive due to illness or disability. (Following safe guarding procedures at all times).
- Acresfield Primary School will always report any cases of a child/young person who may be carrying out an inappropriate caring role which is causing immediate concern for their safety. **(REF- Safeguarding Policy).**
- Acresfield Primary School will work in partnership with Cheshire Young Carers to ensure that a high quality standard of support for young carers is achieved at all times.
- Acresfield Primary School will commit to accessing and providing training for staff about young carers and their issues. **(REF Safeguarding Policy).**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the community committee and Cheshire Young Carers.

Next review date: Spring 2021



## Appendix 1

### Cheshire Young Carers Education Support Programme Young Carers Link/Representative Role Description

The role description of a school's young carers link/representative should fit well with its Young Carers Policy and ensure it adheres to what this policy states.

The key responsibilities of a school's Young Carer link/representative, whose identity should be disclosed in the Young Carer Policy, are as follows:

- To have completed training provided by Cheshire Young Carers to help identify and support young carers in education.
- To ensure that a school's Young Carers Policy is complete, circulated among and adhered to by staff, governors, children and parents.
- To ensure that all young people, staff and parents are aware that they are the nominated Young Carers link/representative at the school.
- To ensure that they make themselves available for young carers at appropriate times and offer support in a non-judgemental manner.
- To ensure that the school has appropriate procedures in place for reporting any concerns about a child who may be caring for a parent, sibling or guardian in the home.
- To ensure that support is in place at the school for young carers to overcome barriers to education to allow them the same equal opportunities as their peers.
- To take all reasonable steps to engage with parents of young carers who may be suffering from an illness or disability and contact Cheshire Young Carers for advice and support if establishing contact or finding communication is proving difficult.
- To participate in Team Around the Family (TAF) processes where necessary and make clear to the TAF agency representatives of the nature of the child's caring role.
- To refer all cases of children at the school who are caring for someone and needing support to Cheshire Young Carers, subject to the consent of both young carer and his/her parents or guardians.
- To ensure that all cases of inappropriate caring putting a child's own physical or mental health at risk is reported to CART.
- To ensure that the school issues the young carer enrolment questionnaire to parents or guardians of all new intake to identify any potential young carers being admitted to the education centre.
- To embed a supportive environment for young carers within the school to enable them to thrive in education and be able to achieve despite their circumstances at home.
- To inform families about the role and service provided by Cheshire Young Carers