

Young Carers Policy



Adswood Primary School

Ratified by Governing Body on:	January 2025
<i>M. Smart</i> Head Teacher	<i>J. Dancy</i> Chair of Governors
Governing Body Review Date:	January 2027

1 Definition and Aims

Young carers are children and young people who provide care to another family member. The level of care they provide would usually be undertaken by an adult and as a result of this they take on a level of responsibility that is inappropriate to their age and development. This is likely to have a significant impact on their childhood experiences. The person they look after will have one or more of the following:

- Physical disability
- Sensory disability
- Learning disability
- Mental health problem
- Chronic illness
- Substance misuse problem

Our school is committed to enabling young carers to access education and support. This policy aims to ensure young carers at this school are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education and other services to which they are entitled.

The school takes a proactive approach to identifying young carers by:

- Referring to lists of children on child protection and looked-after children plans, to identify pupils who are living with adults experiencing mental ill health or addiction problems.
- Checking School Census data on pupils with disabilities, to identify sibling carers on the roll.
- Asking feeder schools/early-years providers to inform the school if a pupil has already been identified as a young carer.
- Checking whether any young carer status has been recorded on the Common Transfer File (sent to the new school via the Department for Education) when a pupil transfers to your school from another, and checking and including this information when transferring a pupil.
- Asking other schools attended by siblings to tell you when the sibling has been identified as a young carer.
- Establishing information sharing protocols with the school nurse, young carer services and health and social care services to ensure that, with appropriate consent, the school is informed when they identify young carers attending, or about to start your school.

2 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. The caring tasks that a young carer has to deal with can range from:

- **Nursing care** giving medication, injections, changing dressings, assisting with mobility 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. In cases where a young carer is supporting an adult with drug/alcohol misuse problem, they will often take a leading role in trying to keep that person safe.
- **Domestic care** doing a substantial amount of housework, cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry etc.
- **Financial care** running the household, bill paying, benefit collection etc.
- **Child care** taking responsibility for younger siblings in addition to their other caring responsibilities.
- **Communication** communicating on behalf of the adult or family with **& Interpreting** agencies/services and interpreting for a language or sensory impairment.

The school understands the needs of families of young carers.

- Ensuring the school is accessible and welcoming to parents with disabilities and/or illness, offering additional support to enable them to attend parent's evenings or other school events. Home visits will be considered where appropriate.
- Offering additional support to remove any communication barriers with parents, so that parents are able to be fully engaged with the education of their child.
- Considering how best to support those parents who find it difficult to escort younger children to school.

3 Potential Effects on Education

Adswood Primary 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 access to education and attainment. Because of their responsibilities at home, a young carer might:

- Have erratic or poor school attendance
- Arrive late at school
- Decline in academic achievement
- Not complete homework
- Not attend out of school activities or school trips
- Lack motivation
- Have back problems, aches and pains patterns of being generally unwell
- Appear withdrawn, isolated from peers, have difficulties socialising
- Show, anxiety, depression, anger, self harming behaviour
- Have poor concentration (due to worrying about the person who is cared for)
- Have poor home/ school relationship
- Have parents who do not attend parents evening or lack of overall contact with school
- Have false signs of maturity, assuming an adult role in social situations or have difficulty enjoying childhood activities 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). School may need to make alternative arrangements for communication about attainment.

The school reduces barriers to education and learning and supports the wellbeing of young carers by:

- Using pupil progress meetings and the internal management system to identify changes in attendance and attainment and consider whether these may be due to a potential caring role.
- Offering support to the pupil and their family during the transition process, sharing agreed information with their new school/college/university lead for young carers and their families.
- Identifying young carers at risk of falling into the not in education, employment or training category and taking appropriate actions to address this.
- Signposting and/or undertaking whole family work that aims to support parents/siblings in order to prevent or reduce a caring role.

4 Support Offered

Adswood Primary acknowledges that young carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education and opportunities offered through the life of a school. Through this policy, school is giving the message that young carers' education and school experience is important. The designated school lead for young carers is Mrs Smart, who will liaise with relevant colleagues, Stockport Young Carers and other relevant agencies with the consent of the young carer. All pupils will be made aware of the designated link. Adswood Primary will ensure that appropriate information is shared with school staff in order that there is an awareness of the young carer's situation.

We will provide young carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private, and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers. The 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.

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

We will ensure young carers can access all available support services in school and other appropriate services/agencies e.g. Stockport Young Carers - they offer 1-1 and group sessions.

We will follow safeguarding 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.

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

- Access to a telephone during breaks and lunchtime, to phone home
- Negotiable deadlines for homework/coursework (when needed)
- Access to homework clubs
- Arrangements for schoolwork to be sent home (where there is a genuine crisis).
- 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
- Access to the Pastoral Team when needed for additional support
- Separate arrangements for getting to and leaving school if needed
- Access to after school clubs if requested
- Additional transition opportunities when moving to secondary school for both young carer and their parents if needed