

## **Young Carer Policy – St. Benedict’s Catholic School**

### **Young Carer - Definition**

Someone aged 5-24 years old who cares for or is emotionally impacted by a family member who has a physical illness, disability, mental health condition or is someone who misuses drugs or alcohol. Often the person they look after will be a parent, sibling or someone who lives in the same house.

### Examples of Physical Care

- Doing jobs around the house such as cleaning, cooking and collecting medications.
- Giving someone physical help such as helping someone to get dressed.
- Looking after siblings due to parent’s condition

### Examples of Emotional Impact

- Giving Emotional Support to those being cared for.
- Being concerned for those being cared for.
- Worrying about the future.
- Having to make choices and decisions that other children their age do not.

Suffolk Family Carers support young carers in the following categories.

- Young Carers (aged 5-15s)
- Young Adult Carers (aged 16-25s)

Through the support at St. Benedict’s young carers are:

- Appropriately identified and added onto the school information system.
- Given appropriate support and guidance in school.
- Monitored closely through various teams within school (e.g. Pastoral team, attendance team and young carer lead Mrs J Bourne.
- Able to maintain privacy as a young carer if they wish.

### **Identifying a Young Carer**

It is important to recognise and identify young carers as soon as possible to lessen the impact early on.

The school aims to take a holistic approach in understanding a pupil’s home circumstances and may also suggest support for a pupil if they may be considered a young carer.

Many young carers are identified during Primary School and this information is then passed onto St. Benedict’s Catholic School, which supports their transition into high school.

If the school are not made aware young carers are at risk of only being identified through negative aspects of their behaviour and work. This can lead to underachievement in school or low wellbeing / mental health. All staff should have an awareness of signs that a student may have a caring role so that young carers can be identified.

Young Carers may meet the definition of a “child in need” under the Children Act 2004 and may be entitled to an assessment from Children and Young People’s Services. In the event of any young carers being considered to be at risk of harm the schools safeguarding policy will be followed.

### **Signs that a Student is in a caring role**

- Regular lateness or unauthorised absences. This may happen periodically.
- Tiredness during the school day, lack of concentration or low motivation.
- Regularly appearing anxious or worried. This may be linked to particular circumstances such as not wanting to be away from home.
- Under achievement in lessons or exams.
- Apparent parental disinterest e.g. not turning up for events or responding to letters.
- Apparent lack of interest in extracurricular activities such as after school clubs.
- Homework is regularly incomplete or late.
- Behavioural problems, especially inappropriate responses to situations.
- Good relationships with adults and appearing mature for their age.
- On pupil premium or receiving free school meals.
- Change in hygiene or appearance.
- Low mood or poor mental health.

### **Additional Support for Young Carers at St. Benedict’s Catholic School**

At St. Benedict’s Catholic School we recognise each student is individual and will benefit from bespoke support, we offer the following:

- A member of staff who is the young carer lead in school and who is known to pupils and staff as a person of contact. This lead will help make referrals to Suffolk Family Carers and be an additional point of support to young carers in school. They will work alongside the inclusion team to monitor and support students that have been identified as young carers.
- Half termly drop ins which allows students to meet other carers in school and access both information and support.
- Collaboration with Suffolk Family Carers and our relevant link worker to help facilitate meetings in school between students and the charity, and to ensure students have the opportunity of support in the community.
- Attendance intervention via the school attendance team.
- A visual display which offers information and details of further support. The school will also look to raise the profile of young carers through assemblies, Staff CPD and PSHE lessons.
- Access to school wide interventions such as specific support interventions (e.g. anger management), academic catch up sessions or counselling.

- Liaison and reasonable adjustment for those who are unable to attend out of school activities such as detentions and events.
- Liaison with teachers to make reasonable adjustments in times of need.
- Reasonable adjustment to accommodate parental liaison.

### **Leadership and Management**

At St. Benedict's Catholic School **Mrs J Bourne** is the current named lead for Young Carers.

**Website for Suffolk Family Carers:** [Suffolk Family Carers | Established Charity Helping Family Carers](#)

### **Intended Outcomes**

Pupils

- To be understood by staff and feel supported in school.
- Access and equal opportunity will be upheld.
- To be aware of our young carer community in school and understand the definition of a young carer.

Staff

- Will be aware of the needs of young carers in the school community.
- Will be aware of the difficulties young carers face and their role in providing support to each individual.

Parents

- Will be aware of the support in place for young carers through school.

### **Appendix**

#### **Children Act 2004**

Most young carers will meet the definition of a 'child in need' under the Children Act 2004 and may be entitled to an assessment from Children's Services. In the event of any young carers being considered to be at risk of significant harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed.

#### **Equality Act 2010**

Young carers' have protected characteristics as defined by the Act because they are associated with a family member who has a disability or illness and cannot be discriminated against because of this.

#### **Children and Families Act 2014**

The Act has a section on Young Carers' and, in conjunction with the adults focused Care Act, seeks to make sure that Young Carers get the support they need. Local authorities are expected to try and identify Young Carers so they can be offered support.