



ALSOP HIGH SCHOOL



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Young Carers Policy

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Our Young Carers Policy

Introduction

This Young Carers policy has been developed to recognise, promote and support students. This policy is endorsed and fully supported by school Governors.

At Samuel Ward Academy we believe that all Young People have the right to an education regardless of what is happening at home. When a young person looks after someone in their family who has a serious illness, disability or substance misuse problem, he or she may need extra support to help to ensure they achieve their potential and it is imperative that this is recognised and understood.

Definition

A Young Carer is a student under 16 years of age who helps to look after a family member who is disabled, physically or mentally ill or has a substance misuse problem. At Samuel Ward Academy we recognise that caring can also involve physical and emotional care, or taking responsibility for someone's safety or well-being. The level of responsibility assumed by a young carer is often inappropriate to their age and at a level beyond simply helping out with jobs at home, which is a normal part of growing up; as such it may impact on the education of the young person. A Young Adult Carer (YAC) is someone between the ages of 16-24 who is also covered by the same policy.

Identifying a young carer

Unless the school is advised about a student's home circumstances, a young carer can first be identified by negative aspects of their behaviour or work in school. Some young carers worry about appearing different to their peers due to bullying or interference in their family life and may seek support to conceal their role from their peers and from teachers.

Some of the warning signs that a student is in a caring role are:

- *Regular lateness, or unauthorised absence, possibly increasing periodically.*
- *Tiredness during the school day*
- *Lack of homework completed or poor quality*
- *Lack of concentration, anxiety or worry*
- *Under-achievement for potential capability*
- *Behavioural problems*
- *Lack of interest in extra-curricular activities, especially after school*
- *Apparent parental disinterest, delays in response, non-attendance to parents evenings/information evenings.*
- *Poor Hygiene/Physical appearance*
- *Being the victim of bullying*

Support Offered

If we believe that a student is a young carer we will be sensitive when we approach them about this, as we appreciate they may not want their peers to know.

At Samuel Ward Academy we recognise that each Young Carer is an individual and therefore they require access to an array of support.

As a school we will:

- Work towards the Young Carers Schools Award which involves meeting with our designated SYC support worker to promote and encourage achievement for all our students.
- Respect the young person's right to privacy. Wherever possible, staff will talk to young carers in private unless the carer asks for a friend to be present.
- Designate two members of staff with specific responsibility for Young Carers
- **Mr J Pilkington is Alsop High's link person for Young Carers, and in case of his absence Jan Duckworth (Mentor)**
- Half termly support groups run by the lead workers. All students including YACs will be invited.
- Provide a visual board displaying leaflets, posters, information, events, and newsletters. Raise the profile of young carers through assemblies, staff CPD, Young Carers Day
Issue a Young Carers Identity card to all students who are Young Carers.
- Consideration of communication with home at times of stress or worry- e.g. the opportunity to call home during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Involve young carers in decision making around support groups, drop-ins and web page. some autonomy when deciding on how they would like things to see
- Liaise with subject teachers to make reasonable adjustments at times of need around deadlines for homework
- Monthly young carer drop-ins run by our YC champion- to provide a safe, friendly place for Young Carers to go during lunchtime.
- Sign post to other agencies if and where possible
- Keep the **YC** page on the schools website up to date
- Provide Extra-curricular activities to engage with other Young Carers.