

Fairholme Primary School



Young Carers Policy

Young Carers Policy

Introduction

At Fairholme Primary School we believe all young people have a right to an education, regardless of their situation at home. When a young person has a caring responsibility, they may need extra support to help them get the most out of school. This policy outlines how we will seek to identify, raise awareness of and offer support to any pupil who looks after someone at home. Our school values of **respect, responsibility, kindness, honesty, self-belief** and **aspiration** are key to our inclusive school ethos. We know that Young Carers often have extra responsibilities and work hard to ensure that these do not limit their self-belief or aspiration.

Definition

We define a Young Carer as a young person who helps to look after a relative with a disability, illness, mental health condition, or drug or alcohol problem. Young Carers may provide physical care, personal care, help with medication, practical tasks, or provide emotional support. We also include children whose life at home is impacted by family members who have additional needs, for example, those whose parent(s) struggle with mental health, siblings with EHCPs or medical needs and so on.

Supporting Young Carers

We work closely with the Carers Trust and The Children's Society, taking part in the Young Carers In Schools programme to support and celebrate Young Carers at our school.

<https://youngcarersinschools.com>

Through this programme, we work to achieve the following:



Young carers attend and enjoy school and reach their full potential.



Improve young carers' wellbeing and ensure they are better prepared for independent lives



Young carers to have the same life opportunities as other children.



Parents and carers are supported to enable their children to attend school



Enable schools to identify and support young carers.



A school culture is created which is fully accessible, and understands and respects disability and caring.

At Fairholme Primary School, we raise awareness of Young Carers amongst staff, as well as providing support and training for staff to identify Young Carers and understand the responsibilities and experiences they may face and the impact these may have on their lives. There are many ways in which our school develops awareness of and supports Young Carers, including the following:

- We have an identified member of staff with special responsibility for young carers, ensuring all children understand who this is, including new families, and how staff can help. Our Family Engagement Officer, Mrs Jo Bird, is the Young Carers operational lead and Miss Catherine Bridger (Deputy Headteacher) is the Senior Leadership Team lead.

- Information and training are provided to all staff, at least annually, on how to identify Young Carers and options for signposting to relevant support.
- We proactively identify Young Carers amongst our student population, and raise awareness of the issues they face as well as the support that is available (for example during regular class time, assemblies, PSHE/Circle Time sessions, celebration/awareness weeks).
- Our Young Carers group meets weekly during school time (currently Wednesday afternoons); this provides a safe and confidential space for peer support, overseen by a member of staff, allowing Young Carers in the school to provide emotional support to each other.
- We make referrals to the Young Carers Project, where appropriate and with the family and young person's permission.
- Our school web site provides information, signposting and support for Young Carers, available for current and prospective families.
- We ensure that information about Young Carers, and our approach to supporting them, is available to prospective families at open days, parents' evenings, admission meetings and through our school application processes.
- Our Accessibility Plan and Equality Policy outline how our school is accessible and how we make information accessible to families who have mobility or communication difficulties.
- We actively look for creative solutions and alternatives when a child's caring role means a child may struggle to attend extra-curricular activities such as clubs or residential trips.
- Staff are aware that caring commitments can sometimes affect a child's attendance or punctuality at school and we work hard to provide support and alternatives to ensure Young Carers continue to attend well at school.
- We work hard to ensure we do not make assumptions about family members with disabilities, mental and physical health conditions or who struggle with substance misuse, nor label young people and their families.
- We respect the right of young people to privacy and only share information about them and their family with people who need to know. Home situations and caring roles are not discussed in front of their peers unless they ask for this.
- Young Carers are treated in a sensitive and child-centred way, upholding confidentiality. The young person's caring role is acknowledged and respected.
- We actively seek and encourage Young Carers to be involved in the life of our school, to join our Young Carers group and to share their views and opinions on the school's provision for Young Carers.
- We work with other professionals and agencies to provide the best possible support for Young Carers. This may include the School Nursing Service and other medical professionals, Family Support Workers, Early Help, local Young Carers projects and charities that support Young Carers amongst others. We also work closely with Brentford Community Sports Trust, who can provide support for Young Carers after school and during school holidays.
- We understand the importance of providing additional support at transition points, and work hard to ensure that where, for example, children transfer to a new school, relevant information is shared to enable the new school to be aware of and understand the child's caring commitments and to encourage a smooth transfer to a new setting.

Further information can also be found in the Appendix to this policy.

Other relevant policies

This Young Carers Policy should also be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies and information, including but not limited to:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Equality Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Young Carers leaflet (see Appendix)

Reviewed and agreed: February 2024

Appendix

Information to support Young Carers

Further information about and for Young Carers can be found on our school web site.

Other sources of information include:

The Young Carers In Schools Programme

<https://youngcarersinschools.com>

The Carers Trust

<https://carers.org/how-your-school-can-support-young-carers/young-carers-in-schools>

The Children's Society

<https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work/supporting-young-carers>

Brentford Community Sports Trust – support for Young Carers

<https://www.brentfordccst.com/en/young-carers>

<https://book.brentfordccst.com/health-and-specialist-support/support-for-young-carers/>

Hounslow and Richmond Community Healthcare NHS Trust

<https://healthiertogether.hrch.nhs.uk/wessex-updated-content-jan-2022/young-cares-supporting-loved-ones>

Honeypot – national Young Carers charity

<https://www.honeypot.org.uk>

Action For Children – support for Young Carers

<https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/our-work-and-impact/children-and-families/young-carers/>

Information on the Fairholme web site can be found here

<https://fairholme.hounslow.sch.uk/wellbeing/young-carers>

Barnardos

<https://www.barnardos.org.uk/get-support/young-carers>

Childline – advice for Young Carers

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/home-families/family-relationships/young-carers/>

We also publish a leaflet about Young Carers which is given to all new families, is available on our school web site and which is available in paper form from our school office.

We work closely with the Hounslow Young Carers Project, who can also provide support outside school. Leaflets about Hounslow Young Carers are available in school, or you can find more information on their web site at <http://www.hounslow.gov.uk/youngcarers>

For more information about Young Carers, try some of these web sites:

The NHS offers advice and support - <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/Pages/who-can-help-young-carers.aspx>

Barnardo's offers help and support for Young Carers http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/young_carers.htm

Young Carers In Schools helps schools to support Young Carers <https://carers.org/young-carers-schools>

If you would like to become more involved in helping us to support our Young Carers, please get in touch.



Young Carers



**Identifying & supporting
Young Carers at Fairholme**



Young Carers are children and young people who take on practical and/or emotional caring responsibilities. It is not always easy helping or caring for someone, especially if you are a young person.

This family member may be a parent, sibling or grandparent.
The person they look after may be:

- Very ill
- Disabled
- Elderly

Or have:

- Learning disabilities
- Mental health issues
- Alcohol or drug addiction or other serious health concerns.

We are committed to identifying and supporting these children, and know young carers may need a little extra support to enjoy and do well at school. Our Young Carers have set up their own support group in school, which they run themselves (with a little extra help), which enables them to talk to other children in a similar position, complete homework, learn cooking skills and much more!

If you think your child might be a Young Carer, or could be affected by any of the issues we've highlighted, please let us know by filling in this form and returning it to the school office in a sealed envelope, marked for the attention of Miss Bridger, our safeguarding lead teacher, or Jo Bird who helps our children run a Young Carers group in school. Any information that is given to us will be treated sensitively and no information will be shared without your knowledge.

For more information, or further support, please complete and return this form to the school office:

Child's name: _____

Class: _____

Does your child have parents or other family members who have a long-term illness or disability, or who are affected by mental ill-health or substance misuse?

Yes No

If you wish you can give further details here (optional)

Would you like more information about the types of support that school provides to young carers?

Yes No

Please provide a name and telephone number or email address so that we can contact you.

If you would like to find out more, or have any questions please contact Miss Bridger or Jo Bird at school on 0208 890 2584.