



Young Carers Policy

2023-2024

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1.0 Policy Statement

At Ellesmere Park High School we are aware that pupils in our school may well have caring roles at home. We are committed to and fully recognise our responsibilities for supporting young carers. This policy has been developed to ensure all adults are working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of young carers. We will ensure timely and effective identification of students who are taking on a caring role. We believe that all children and young people should have equal access to education, regardless of what is happening at home.

2.0 Scope

This policy is a guide to all staff, outlining Ellesmere Park High's approach to identifying, assessing and supporting young carers. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

This policy is written with regard to the Children and Families Act 2014 – Section 96, the Care Act 2014 – section 63, and the Care act 2014 – section 64. The Government recognises that schools have a vital role to play and are ideally positioned to identify young carers and to initiate support.

To reinforce this Ofsted recognises young carers as a vulnerable and disadvantaged group. It has strengthened its guidance in The Common Inspection framework: Education, Skills and Early Years (Ofsted 2015) stating that “in making judgements inspectors will pay particular attention to young carers”.

3.0 Policy Aims

- To provide staff with the framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of young carers.
- To ensure consistent good practice across the school by increasing understanding and awareness of, and communication about young carers.
- To ensure students with caring responsibilities are identified and supported so they can play a full and active role in school life, remain healthy, and achieve their academic potential.
- To enable staff to understand how and when to request a statutory young carers assessment via the Early Help Assessment Tool.
- To encourage students who are impacted by parental ill-health, disability or substance misuse to self-identify so school are able to signpost them and their parents/ carers for specific support.

4.0 Key Staff Members

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to identify young carers. Michael Bird (Deputy Head) is the school's senior lead whilst Suzanne Calderwood (Head of Safeguarding and Wellbeing) is the operational lead within school.

Both will lead and have special responsibility for young carers and their families. The Young Carer leads have direct communication with Salford Young Carers (The Gaddum Service) and other associated external services to provide support for the young carers and their families.

Other key members of staff who have specific roles to play:

- Pastoral Staff
- Form Tutors
- SENCO
- PSHE Co-ordinator

5.0 Raising awareness of young carers

Who are they?

A young carer is defined in law as a 'person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person'. This includes 'providing practical or emotional support' (Children and Families Act 2014).

What do young carers do?

The tasks and level of caring undertaken can vary according to the nature of the illness or disability, the level of frequency of need of care, and the structure of the family as a whole.

Young carers often take on a practical and/ or emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult.

These can include:

- Practical tasks – cooking, housework and shopping.
- Physical care – lifting or helping someone use the stairs.
- Personal care – dressing, washing, helping with toileting needs.
- Emotional support – listening, calming, being present.
- Managing the family budget, collecting benefits and prescriptions.
- Medication management.
- Looking after younger siblings.
- Helping someone communicate.

How does caring impact a child or young persons life?

Providing care and support for a family member may affect a young person in different ways, such as; their physical health, emotional wellbeing, socialisation and their environment. Young carers can experience traumatic life changes such as bereavement, family break-up, losing income and housing, or seeing the effects of an illness or addition on the person they care for. As a result, caring responsibilities could have a significant impact on a pupil's learning.

Young carers may be hidden for many reasons and school will strive to help identify and support those students and their families. School staff will take into account possible indicators that a child or young person may be a young carer and work sensitively to identify.

6.0 Support at School and supporting parents

The whole school is committed to meeting the needs of young carers so that they are enabled and encouraged to attend and enjoy school and have equal access to their education as their peers. The school views young carers as any other pupil but understands that they have the additional burden of caring responsibilities and recognise that families may have different needs.

- During the school enrolment process for new pupils, the school will identify whether parent(s) or family members have disabilities or other long-term physical or mental health problems and if the pupil helps to look after them and if this has an impact on their education. This will be part of the Year 6 transition process or as part of a midyear entry to Ellesmere Park High School.
- We understand that circumstances at home may change for our students and an annual audit will be carried out with students and their parents/ carers. Pupils who are young carers will be identified along with any additional needs they may have.
- The right to pupil's and families' privacy will be respected and the school will only share information with professionals and agencies on a "need to know basis" in order to support pupils and families.
- Information about support available for young carers and how to access it will be made clearly available to both pupils and families.
- The school recognises that young carers and their families need to receive coordinated support by the school, working in partnership where appropriate with general practitioners, young carers' services, behaviour and education support teams.
- Young carers will be referred or signposted to other support agencies and professionals as appropriate, including the local young carers' service.
- The school will use and evaluate data effectively to identify and monitor the progress made by young carers.
- The school will aim to offer support to improve attendance and pupil's well-being.
- School will look at adaptations of start times to support morning routines, if necessary.
- Pupil premium funding will be used where possible to minimise any barriers to education and learning experienced by an eligible young carer.
- The school will look to provide a weekly drop-in session and a termly meeting specifically for young carers to share personal experiences and support one another, regularly recording student voice.
- The school will look to offer every young carer a key member of staff for support and assistance.
- The school adheres to the *Disability Discrimination Acts (1995, 2005)* and is accessible to parents with disabilities and/or illness, offering additional support to enable them to attend parents' evenings or other school events.
- Home visits will be considered where appropriate.
- The school will offer additional support to remove any communication barriers with parents, so that parents are able to be fully engaged with the education of their child.
- The school will identify those young carers at risk of falling into the Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) category and take appropriate actions to address this.

- The school will offer support to the young person and their family during the transition process, sharing agreed information with their new school/college lead for young carers and their families.
- Relevant aspects of the curriculum, such as The National Healthy Schools Programme, PSHCE will be used to encourage positive approaches by all teachers and staff working with young carers.
- The school will use the curriculum to promote a full understanding, acceptance of, and respect for, issues such as caring, disability and impairment, for example, embedding the challenges faced by young carers into PSHCE lessons curriculum.
- The school will consider alternatives if a young carer is unable to attend out of school activities, such as sports coaching or concerts, due to their caring role. The school will also consider lunch time detentions rather than after school ones.
- The school will allow young carers to use a telephone to call home during breaks and lunchtimes so as to reduce any worry they may have about a family member.

We recognise that some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health and this includes young carers. In Salford, there is a range of organisations and groups offering support, including the iThrive partnership (a group of providers specialising in children and young people's mental health and wellbeing) and the Gaddum Centre.

7.0 Whole school approach

At Ellesmere Park High we are committed to creating an inclusive and supportive environment for all students, including young carers. Our aim, to identify and support young carers and provide access to support for their families by working collaboratively with all members of the school community. Thus reducing stigma, promoting self-identification and addressing all challenges. Training on young carers' issues will be embedded in ongoing professional development for all staff, enabling both teaching and non-teaching roles to identify and support young carers. Enabling them to feel valued, supported and empowered to reach their full potential.

We will ensure all appropriate policies reflect the needs of young carers and have mechanisms in place to monitor how many students are taking on caring roles.