St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School

YOUNG CARERS POLICY

Policy agreed	October 2026
Date for review	October 2029

Introduction

Young Carers look after someone who has a long-term physical or mental health problem, disability or a problem with drugs or alcohol. This may take the form of domestic chores, personal care, supervision, emotional support, or another form of assistance.

At St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School, we believe that all young people have the right to an education. If a young person looks after someone, we know that they may need additional support to help them get the most out of their education, and we aim to meet their needs. Our school has a designated member of staff who has special responsibility for young carers. Currently our designated lead is Mrs. Walsh (Headteacher).

Who is a young carer

Every school (indeed every classroom) has pupils affected by disability and illness in the family. A 'young carer' is a young person who provides care to a member of the family or a friend who has one, or a combination, of the following conditions:

- a physical or learning disability
- a sensory impairment
- a chronic condition
- a terminal illness
- a mental health problem or illness
- a drug or alcohol addiction

By 'care' we mean:

- Practical. A young carer may be helping with cleaning, cooking, laundry, paying bills/ managing a budget and even helping to collect and give medicine
- Emotional. May provide a listening ear, comforting , helping the cared for feel better about themselves, talking to someone who is distressed (e.g. low because of illness / mental health)
- Personal. A young carer may assist to help someone to get dressed or wash, helping to feed them
- Physical. A young carer may be supporting a family member with a disability to move: getting up from their seat / out of bed. Or they may be helping with shopping, such as carrying heavy bags, lifting or moving tasks

Identifying a young carer

Whilst many young carers do well in school, the following issues are common signs pointing towards difficulties at home – *some* of which will be related to disability and illness within the family.

Pupils may:

- Regularly arrive late for school
- Regularly miss days of school, marked as authorised or unauthorised absence

- Miss school to stay close to the cared-for person
- Appear physically neglected – missing breakfast, lacking clean uniform etc.
- Appear to be regularly tired
- Regularly complain of aches and pains
- Regularly appear withdrawn or anxious
- Regularly challenge adult authority
- Struggle with switching between being the adult at home and the child at school
- Appear more emotionally mature than their peers
- Have regular problems in concentrating upon their work
- Regularly fail to complete homework on time

Parents may:

- Not respond to school correspondence
- Have a communication problem
- Not attend parent's evening (due to an inability to attend)
- Are on low incomes, and unable to afford school related expenses (perhaps due to a disability or illness related unemployment)

Support Offered

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 a little extra support to help them get the most out of school. Our school will provide support to those pupils who look after someone at home.

Our school:

- Has a member of staff with special responsibility for young carers and lets all new pupils know who they are and what they can do to help
- Provides young carers awareness-raising training for staff
- Provides both individual listening support and a support group for young carers
- Can put young carers and their families in touch with the local Young Carers Service
- Is accessible to parents who have mobility and communication difficulties and involves them in parents' evenings
- Respects pupils' right to privacy and will only share information about them and their families with those who need to know to help them
- Will consider alternatives if a young carer is unable to attend out of school activities
- Will allow young carers to telephone home if needed
- Complies with the Disability Discrimination Act by offering disabled parents support to get their children into school
- Use the pupil premium or other funding sources where needed to assist eligible young carers in their education, including accessing curriculum based trips
- Runs sessions on young carers within PSHE sessions or assemblies, to help all pupils to understand the issues, carers' rights and the support available, and create a 'carer-friendly' culture
- Keep the young carers page on the website up to date
- Involve young carers in decision making around support, groups and information.