



# THE HERMITAGE and THE OAKTREE SCHOOLS

## Young Carer Policy

Person Responsible: Executive Headteacher / Welfare Leaders

Date Adopted: Autumn Term 2023

Date of last review: Autumn Term 2023

Date of next review: Autumn Term 2024

*This policy functions as a practice guide and will therefore be reviewed whenever issues arise which generate new ways to articulate our approach, and otherwise annually.*

This policy is based on legislation and advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#)
- [The Children and Families Act 2014 and the Care Act 2014](#)

### Young Carer Definition:

A young carer is defined in section 96 of the Children and Families Act 2014 as: 'A person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person of any age. That can be a parent or sibling, grandparent or friend. It can include help for physical or mental illness, frailty in old age, a disability or because of substance misuse.'

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, taking on a role that would usually be expected of an adult in the household:

- Domestic tasks (e.g. regular/daily, cooking, cleaning, shopping)
- Personal care (e.g. helping with mobility, washing, dressing, giving medicine)
- Emotional support and supervision (e.g. watching over someone, providing company and a 'listening ear')
- Sibling care: Looking after an ill or disabled sibling (or a non-disabled sibling where an ill or disabled parent is unable to provide this care)
- Financial management: (e.g. helping with budgeting, paying bills)
- Self-care: Looking after themselves, where an ill or disabled parent is unable to provide this care
- Communication support (e.g. interpreting, answering phone or door)

### **Policy Aims:**

Caring responsibilities can raise a number of barriers to learning for many young people. These barriers can manifest whilst a pupil is in infant school, and can persist into adulthood, restricting opportunities to access further and higher education, and employment.

Many young carers turn up for school late or miss whole days for a number of reasons related to their home circumstances: they are staying home to be close to the person they look after; they are experiencing stress-related illness; they have transportation difficulties; or there is an established pattern of problems at school. Some also miss out on school trips and clubs. Problems with schoolwork can result from emotional stress or physical fatigue, leading to lack of concentration and inability to process information. Lack of time to complete homework or revise because of their caring responsibilities is also a common difficulty.

Some young carers have problems interacting with school staff and their fellow pupils. How they deal with stress varies widely – some may be withdrawn, and some may be disruptive. Some young carers challenge the authority of staff (a sign that they may be struggling with changing between their adult role at home and being a child again at school).

Some parents with disabilities and health problems have difficulties in attending parent evenings or review meetings, or in reading standard letters and reports from the school, which reduces their positive involvement in their child's education.

At the Hermitage and The Oaktree School we believe that all young people have the right to an education and should be treated equally. 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 with respect.

### **Our School:**

- Is sensitive towards Young Carers' needs, and aims to show discretion. We respect pupils' privacy and will only share information about their circumstances with people who need to know, in order to provide help and to ensure safety. Pupils and parents are consulted before information is shared, in line with our GDPR policy.
- Expects all pupils to arrive at school on time and attend school every day.
- Office Staff and SLT monitor attendance. In exceptional circumstances absence may be authorised by the Executive Headteacher should an emergency situation arise. Please always speak to us if this occurs.
- Employs a HSLW who offers support to Young Carers and their families.
- Has links with local services providing support to families with care needs, including local Young Carer services.
- Provides flexibility on homework, if required. Please speak to us if you require this support.
- Realises Young Carers may feel tired, worried and in some cases isolated from other children who enjoy and experience a variety of social activities.
- Provides a support group for young carers to meet together regularly and provides access to HSLW, Inclusion Leader/SENCo and ELSA.
- Provides individual listening support for young carers e.g. HSLW, Inclusion Leader/SENCo and ELSA all known to the Young Carers, who they know they can approach. ( A Worry Box is available in each classroom)
- Provides assistance for disabled parents in getting their children to school in exceptional circumstances.
- Assists parents with disabilities and health problems in accessing parents' evenings, school events etc in a way that meets their needs.
- Where required, assist eligible young carers in their education, including accessing curriculum-based trips enabling them to have equal access to education and enrichment experiences.
- Ensures Young Carer's attainment and progress is monitored through Pupil Progress meetings and appropriate interventions implemented.
- Consider alternatives if pupils are unable to attend after- school activities (e.g. clubs) due to their caring role. Please speak to us if this is an issue.

## **Roles and Responsibilities:**

Executive Headteacher – Mrs Clare Spires  
Deputy Head Teacher - Mrs Gilly Condon (The Hermitage School)  
Deputy Head Teacher - Mrs Juliet Larsen (The Oaktree School)  
Inclusion Leader/SENCo – Mrs Claire Preece (The Hermitage School)  
Inclusion Leader/SENCo - Miss Rachel Harrison (The Oaktree School)  
Home School Link Worker and Young Carer Co-ordinator – Mrs Jackie Jones  
ELSA – Mrs Susan Baulcott (The Hermitage School)  
ELSA – Mrs Carol Blackwell (The Oaktree School)

## **The Role of the Governors:**

The Local Governing Committee (LGC) has the responsibility for ensuring that there is a written statement of general principles of good behaviour and pupil welfare. Together with the Executive Headteacher, the LGC is responsible for reviewing the policy in terms of effectiveness and impact. The LGC has the responsibility to ensure all other school policies promote equality.

## **The Role of the Executive Headteacher:**

It is the responsibility of the Executive Headteacher, under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, to implement the Behaviour and Wellbeing Policy consistently throughout the school. It is also the responsibility of the Executive Headteacher to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all the children.

## **The school agrees to:**

- Treat all children fairly and consistently.
- Build relationships which reflect a positive and respectful culture, where children are safe and they feel safe.
- Use emotional coaching to support and promote children's resilience, leading to positive attitudes towards their learning.
- Show children how to be thoughtful, kind and caring.
- Develop positive and secure relationships with key members of staff.
- Be available to listen and encourage the children to be open about their caring role.
- Help pupils to recognise and protect themselves from online abuse or bullying and misuse of social media.
- Encourage children to understand their role in the wider community.
- Communicate effectively with parents.
- Communicate work done in school and the progress of children.
- Listen openly to children's/parents' problems and concerns connected with school, work or relationships.
- Make available all relevant school policies for information to all stakeholders.
- Raise awareness of our Young Carers in our schools.
- Refer Young Carers to Surrey Young Carers for registration.
- Share Young Carer newsletters with our Young Carers.
- Includes a lesson on Young Carers for each year group which follows on and supports the annual Young Carers Assembly. This helps all pupils understand the issues, carers' rights and the support available.
- Maintain a Young Carers Register.

## **Parents/Carers agree to:**

- When possible, engage with Surrey Young Carers.
- Share any concerns or worries about their child with the school.
- Share any changes to the level of care the young carer may be giving.

**Children agree to:**

- Be the best they can be.
- Reflect our school values.
- Follow the school rules throughout the day – Ready, Respectful, Safe
- Be ready to learn and allow others to learn by following the classroom rules.

**Monitoring and Evaluation:**

Monitoring and evaluation is carried out to enhance the wellbeing within our schools. It is the responsibility of all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, to monitor and evaluate wellbeing so that pupils' self-esteem develops.

**Relationship with Other Policies**

- **Behaviour and Wellbeing Policy**
- **Antibullying Policy**
- **Equality Policy**

**Useful Links:**

Please click on the following link to find out more information on Surrey Young Carers and access their latest newsletter. <https://www.surrey-youngcarers.org.uk/>

Please click on the following link to find out more information on how we support Surrey Young Carers in schools. <https://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Supporting-young-carers-in-school-March2022.pdf>