

# NINE ACRES COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL


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We are **Articulate** We are **Passionate** We are **Persuasive** We are **Positively Influencing The World Around Us**

**'Striving for Excellence'**

## Young Carers Policy 2022-23

### Nine Acres Primary School

Approved By:	
Approval Date:	15/06/23
Review Frequency:	Every Three years
Next Review Due:	15/06/24



## **Principles of the young carer**

We recognise that many students will have caring responsibilities at some point during their time at Nine Acres Primary School, and that these responsibilities can impact a student's performance in any area of the curriculum; a whole school commitment is therefore necessary.

Nine Acres Primary School acknowledges that high standards and expectations are crucial to enhance personal and academic progress for all students, including those with caring responsibilities. We believe that all pupils should be equally valued and strive to eliminate prejudice and discrimination. We aim to create an environment whereby all students will flourish and feel safe and that seeks to remove barriers to learning and participation. The importance of enhancing positive self-esteem is also recognised, which allows opportunities for increased engagement, social development, and achievement. Therefore, additional provision for young carers is balanced with appropriate challenges to reach longer term outcomes and opposes and sympathetic acceptance of low achievement.

Nine Acres Primary School will engage with MYTIME Young Carers through their Level-Up Programme, which aims to improve the knowledge of staff in supporting and identifying young carers, and of students by educating them regarding the role which young carers may carry out outside of the school day and the impacts their role may play on day-to-day life and future choices. Additionally, children will understand the impact their decisions have on a young carer's life.

Our young carers policy takes account of findings and recommendations given by Barnardo's Still Hidden, Still Ignored; Who Cares for Young Carers? Report published in 2017, and the Children's Commissioner's Voices of England's Missing Children report, published in 2022, which both emphasise the role and accountability of school staff and procedures regarding provision for, and progress of, young carers. This guidance suggests that schools have a key part to play in the provision of holistic and effective support to young carers, and our Governing Body will ensure that we fulfil this responsibility.

Nine Acres Primary School acknowledges the need to keep up to date with advice, publications and research regarding provision for young carers, and therefore this document is subject to review at regular intervals.

This policy has been produced in collaboration with local experts, MYTIME Young Carers.

## **Definition of a young carer**

Young carers are children under the age of 18 who help to look after someone in their home or another family member. This could be a sibling, parent, both parents or a grandparent who has a disability, illness, mental health condition or who misuses substances.

Having a clear definition of the role of a young carer is important, but unfortunately, many will remain hidden from view due to the potentially negative impacts they feel speaking up or self-identification may have on their family.

From the outside, caring can look like a tiring, thankless and overwhelming responsibility, but we recognise that it can be highly rewarding and fulfilling due to the impact that these amazing young people have on their family. Not only do they possess an abundance of empathy, understanding and generosity, but they have developed practical life skills and understand the importance of a strong family unit.

To help identify and support those hidden young carers, it is vital that professionals are equipped with the understanding and knowledge to detect potential signs that a young person may have a caring responsibility. There are many potential identifiers but listed below are some of the more common signs. A young carer may show one, or many, of these identifiers:

- Attendance issues, including persistent lateness or absences, leaving school in the middle of the day, arriving late for lessons
- A lower attainment or progress score than anticipated or predicted, underperforming or not fulfilling their potential
- Poor homework record or quality
- Poor engagement both within lessons and extra-curricular activities
- Low emotional wellbeing including signs of: tiredness, worry, anxiety and low self-esteem which could lead to social isolation and trouble maintaining healthy friendships
- Displaying behavioural problems or showing sudden changes in behaviour and mood
- Being very keen to offer help and support to adults, even at the detriment of their own social time, and appearing to find interacting with adults easier than with their peers
- Reference to supporting people at home or commenting on the behaviours of people in their home
- Reporting of bullying
- Difficulty in engaging or supporting parents

### **Equality and Discrimination**

- Nine Acres Primary School aims to make reasonable steps to ensure that young carers are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other students, and to ensure equal educational and social opportunity for all.
- Nine Acres Primary School strives to maintain a climate of tolerance, understanding, respect and trust that allows all students and staff irrespective of background or personal circumstances to feel safe and be safe from any form of discrimination or emotional harm. This young carer policy is supported by other school policies including our equality policy and anti-bullying policy which can be viewed separately on the school website.

### **Aims of young carer provision**

- To raise awareness of young carers among staff and to ensure the identification of all young carers as early as possible on entry to the school and make referrals when necessary
- To foster respect and understanding towards young carers among all students
- To address any underlying inequalities between young carers and other students in a graduated and timely manner
- To improve the progress and raise the standard of achievement for young carers
- To support young carers in improving their attendance
- To ensure that young carers feel included and supported within their school community as possible, and that reasonable adjustments made to promote this

- To protect young carers from unjust treatment due to their caring role and improve coordination with other agencies and support services
- To give young carers a voice in the school community and that they are involved in decisions affecting young carer provision
- To ensure that staff recognise that flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of young carers

### **Strategies to support young carers**

A multitude of strategies can be implemented at various levels within a school to ensure that young carers are identified, supported, and enabled to succeed both academically and socially. This requires a collaborative approach where every adult is held accountable for young carers.

#### **Systems and processes**

- To include space on school application forms for parents to declare whether their child is a young carer
- To create a young carer register accessible to all members of the pastoral team and any other necessary staff
- To monitor the attendance of young carers and respond accordingly with appropriate intervention
- The school will add the pupil to the vulnerable pupils' list
- To ensure that young carers have the opportunity to contribute to the discussion around the schools' provision for young carers
- To maintain and annually review our young carer's policy

#### **Engagement with the Level-Up Programme**

To engage in MYTIME Young Carer's Level-Up Programme, where the school pledges:

- To ensure that all school staff receive training on how to identify and support young carers through CPD
- To appoint a Young Carer Champion, who is held to account by a dedicated member of SLT and an appointed Governor. The Young Carer Champion will be responsible for maintaining a young carer support group and corresponding with external agencies such as Barnardo's and YMCA to stay up to date on a young carer's circumstances and needs
- To raise awareness of young carers, to develop a culture of respect for young carers among the student community, and to encourage young carers to come forwards
- To host MYTIME young carer assemblies and PSHE lessons
- To sign up to the Level-Up and MYTIME newsletters
- To create and organise a young carer group and young carer display board visible by students and staff

### **In school support for young carers**

- To offer extra-curricular opportunities for relaxation, leisure, and social connection for young carers
- The school will provide young carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private, and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers
- To ensure young carers can access all available support services in school
- To ensure that young carers have access to the mental health support available across the school where necessary
- To make reasonable adjustments to usual School policies and show flexibility on a case-by-case basis regarding issues such as lateness to school, late homework, and poor attendance.

### **Referral and external agencies**

- The Young Carer Champion will consult with relevant colleagues, and other relevant agencies, regarding their caring responsibilities, with the consent of the parent
- The school will follow child protection procedures regarding any young carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring
- The school will promote discussion and learning in all areas of the curriculum to facilitate fuller understanding, acceptance of and respect for, the issues surrounding illness, disability and caring
- The school will refer a young carer to the local authority for an assessment

### **Guidance and further reading**

- Barnardo's Still Hidden, Still Ignored; Who Cares for Young Carers?  
[Click here for file](#)
- Children's Commissioner for England, Voices of England's Missing Children  
[Click here for file](#)