Young Carers Policy
VERSION: February 2026
NEXT REVIEW: February 2029

Aims and expectations:
We recognise that helping around the house is a normal part of growing up for many children, however we are aware that young carers regularly carry out caring tasks and assume a level of responsibility, which is often inappropriate to their age.

The definition of a young carer is as defined in section 96 of the Children and Families Act 2014; **"…a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person**" (of any age, except where that care is provided for payment, pursuant to a contract or as voluntary work). This relates to care for any family member who is physically or mentally ill, disabled or misuses substances.

The Care Act and Children and Families Act 2014 placed responsibility for identifying and supporting young carers local authority as a whole and are set out in the Children's Act 1989 (including insertions made by the Children and Families Act 2014) and under the Care Act 2014. Section 96 of the Children and Families Act 2014 introduced new rights for young carers to improve how young carers and their families are identified and supported. Since April 2015 all young carers have been entitled to an assessment of their needs from the local authority and a transition assessment as they approach adulthood. This new provision works alongside measures in the Care Act 2014 for assessing adults to enable a "whole family approach" to providing assessment and support.

To meet eligibility for a service in Leicestershire from the Local Authority, children and young people must:

- Meet this **definition** of a young carer
- Be undertaking **age inappropriate care** (in terms of what they do or the degree to which they do it)
- Be **negatively impacted** as a result of their role, i.e. their: physical/mental health, education, employment, training, Emotional and Behavioural Development, Identity Family and Social/Peer relationships

Background:
Young carers are a vulnerable and disadvantaged group, who often experience difficulties in their education. They can struggle to attend school and struggle to make good progress in school. They can experience bullying because of their caring role, may struggle building relationships and they may have few friendships. They may experience punctuality issues, concentration problems, emotional outbursts, tiredness, behavioural problems, anxiety, stress, problems with health & wellbeing, isolation, low self-esteem and low mood. Their caring role can impact upon their emotional or physical wellbeing or their prospects in education and life. Identifying and supporting young carers is an effective way of improving the attainment and attendance of this pupil group; who are specifically mentioned in Ofsted's evaluation

inspection schedule. We believe that by supporting young carers and their families, we can strengthen families and support parenting.

A young carer may do some of the following:

- Practical tasks; such as preparing meals and drinks.
- Physical care; such as lifting, helping a parent on stairs and with physiotherapy.
- Personal care; such as washing, dressing, administering medication, changing dressings, and/or helping with toileting needs.
- Domestic tasks; such as cleaning, managing the family budget, paying bills, collecting benefits and prescriptions.
- Looking after or "parenting" younger siblings.
- Emotional support; such as staying at home to keep someone or the person they care for company.
- Interpreting, due to a hearing or speech impairment or because English is not the family's first language.

Statement:
At Ashby Hill Top Primary School, we are aware that pupils in our school may have caring roles at home. We believe that children and young people should have equal access to education, regardless of what is happening at home and that **no** child should have to take on inappropriate or excessive caring responsibilities. Ashby Hill Top is committed to meeting the needs of young carers so that they are enabled and encouraged to attend, enjoy school and have equal access to education as their peers. We recognise that a young carer may need a little extra support, to help the get the most out of school.

We aim to understand the issues faced by young carers and to have a separate policy for young carers, stating how we will support them. We aim to support young carers through a whole school approach and by working with other agencies and professionals, with the understanding that support for the whole family is in the best interests of the young carer. We will continue to keep up to date with both local and national developments, legislation and guidance affecting young carers and their families.

As a school we will:

1. Have a named senior staff member with lead responsibility for young carers and we recognise this role (Young Carers Champion) within continuing professional development. The Young Carers Champion will be the main point of contact for all issues pertaining to young carers and will support colleagues to understand the challenges that young carers may face. They will have their contact details included on a database of centrally held information, containing details of young carer champions in schools throughout the country. They will ensure that young carers have access to staff they can talk to, who they feel understands their circumstances and will **not** discuss their situation in front of their peers. They will be committed to raising awareness of young carers, ensuring that the whole school is committed to meet their needs. Pupils and families will be made aware of the identity of the schools Young Carers Champion and how to access support from them.

2. Endeavour to identify young carers and to ensure that they have the same access to a full education and career opportunities as their peers. We will make a bespoke offer of support, including an action plan with a whole family approach. This support may also include:
    - A referral to First Response if we are concerned that the young carer may be a victim of neglect, abuse, cruelty or at risk of immediate or significant harm or to request an assessment.
    - A referral to the Local Authority's commissioned support service to request that a detailed assessment is undertaken (presently by Barnado's) to ascertain appropriate support.
    - A referral to Young Carers ID card scheme if deemed appropriate.
    - Signposting and/or referral to relevant agencies (for example the website https://babble.carers.org/)

- Information and advice (Adults & Communities 0116 305 0004 can provide help at home for adults)

3. Have a policy to encourage practice that identifies and supports young carers such as adapting school arrangements if needed, provision for personal tutors and private discussions and access to local young carers' support. We will monitor and evaluate data on the young carers that we have identified, to examine the progress that they have made and to review and amend the offer of support as appropriate. We will maintain a database of Young Carers that we have identified and the support that we have offered them and we may share this data with the Local Authority.

4. Promote open communication with families that supports parenting capacity and encourages the sharing of information. We will endeavour to engage the parents of young carers. It is known that they may be difficult to engage and that this may be for a variety of reasons (fear of statutory agency involvement, fears that their parenting may be called into question, fears of losing control of a situation)

5. Ensure school policies such as those for enrolment, attendance, bullying, behaviour and keeping safe, afford recognition to young carers. We will communicate messages relating to young carers, effectively, for both staff and pupils. We will advertise local young carer services. We will ensure that our staff are trained to recognise the warning signs of a young carer and to inform the Young Carers Champion if they see them.

6. Incorporate into individual pupil plans recognition and support the positive aspects of the young carers' role, as well as providing the personalised support necessary to enable young carers to attend and enjoy school. We will use Pupil Premium funding to minimise barriers to education and learning experiences by young carers.

7. We will consider scope for school staff to adopt lead professional roles within locally agreed arrangements or early help assessments.

8. Consider the role of school nurses in supporting improved health outcomes and reduce inequalities of family/child experience.

9. Use the opportunities for working together to identify key priorities for commissioning and the best use of available resources designed to secure the outcomes for Young Carers that have been identified.

10. Use feedback from young carers and their families to inform our policies and practice.

11. Encourage effective use of the curriculum, such as PHSCE to explore the roles and responsibilities of young carers. We will use PHSCE lessons as a vehicle to promote positive images of disability and mental ill health, challenging stereotypes and discrimination. We recognise that there are children and young people who are affected by family disability, health problems or substance misuse, who do not become young carers and so we are wary of making assumptions about people and labelling children, young people and their parents. We will promote discussion regarding caring and issues surrounding illness and disability, to promote a fuller understanding, acceptance and respect.

12. Treat young carers in a sensitive and child-centred way, upholding confidentiality, whilst considering a whole family approach. We will follow child protection and safeguarding procedures, regarding a young carer that is at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate caring responsibilities or an inappropriate level of care giving.

We recognise that every young carer's situation is different and that flexibility is required when responding to their needs. We can also consider; access to a telephone during breaks and a lunchtime, negotiable

homework deadlines, access to homework clubs, access for parents with mobility issues and alternative communication options for parents with sensory impairment or who are housebound.