



Leamington Community Primary School

Together we make a Difference

Young Carers Policy



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Leamington Community Primary School: Young Carers Policy

Leamington Community Primary School is committed to supporting young carers to access education. This policy aims to ensure young carers at Leamington Primary School are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled.

Definition:

Young carers are children and young people who provide care to a family member. The level of care they provide would usually be undertaken by an adult and as a result of this they take on a level of responsibility that is unusual for their age and stage of development. In some circumstances, the young carer may care for more than one family member. The person they look after will have one or more of the following:

- Chronic illness
- Learning disability
- Mental health problem
- Physical disability (including sensory disability)
- Substance misuse problem

Caring Tasks:

A young carer will take on additional responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development. A young carer might be providing the main care or share responsibilities with another family member. The caring tasks that a young carer has to deal with can range from:

- **Nursing care** - giving medication, injections, changing dressings, assisting with mobility, etc.
- **Personal intimate care** - washing, dressing, feeding and helping with toilet requirements.
- **Emotional care** - being compliant, monitoring the emotional state of the person cared for, listening, being a shoulder to cry on, supporting someone through depression and trying to cheer them up. In cases where a young carer is supporting an adult with drug/alcohol misuse problem. They will often take a leading role in trying to keep that person safe.
- **Domestic care** - doing a substantial amount of housework, cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry, etc.
- **Financial care** - running the household, bill paying, benefit collection, etc.
- **Child care** - taking responsibility for younger siblings in addition to their other caring responsibilities.
- **Communication** - communicating on behalf of the adult or family with agencies/services and interpreting for a language or sensory impairment.

Potential Impact on Education:

Leamington Community Primary School acknowledges that there are likely to be young carers among its pupils, and that being a young carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's access to education and attainment. Because of their responsibilities at home, a young carer may have issues with:

- Erratic or poor school attendance;
- Punctuality;
- Decline in academic achievement;
- Lack of engagement with homework;
- Non-attendance of out-of-school activities or school trips;
- Lack of motivation;
- Have back problems, aches and pains or patterns of being generally unwell;
- Appear withdrawn, isolated from peers, have difficulties socialising;
- Show, anxiety, depression, anger, self-harming behaviour;
- Behavioural problems due to feelings of anger or frustration;
- Have poor concentration (due to worrying about the person who is cared for);
- Have a poor home/ school relationship;
- Have parents who do not attend parents evening or lack of overall contact with school;
- Have false signs of maturity, assuming an adult role in social situations or have difficulty enjoying childhood activities.

There may also be difficulty with engaging parents due to fears about child being taken into care, fears about their condition being misunderstood or their parenting skills being called into question. School may need to make alternative arrangements for communication regarding progress and attainment.

Support:

Leamington Community Primary School acknowledges that young carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education and the opportunities offered throughout their time at school. Through this policy, school is promoting the message that young carers' education and school experience is important. The designated school lead for young carers is Iris Kelleher (Designated Safeguarding Lead), who will liaise with the Safeguarding Team, relevant colleagues and agencies with the consent of the young carer. Leamington Community Primary School will ensure that appropriate information is shared with school staff in order to ensure that there is an awareness of the young carer's situation.

The support we will offer includes:

- We will provide young carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private, and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers;

- The school appreciates that young carers will not discuss their family situation unless they feel comfortable. The young person's caring role will be acknowledged and respected;
- We will treat young carers in a sensitive and child-centred way, upholding confidentiality;
- We will ensure young carers can access all available support services in school and other appropriate services/agencies;
- We will follow safeguarding procedures regarding any young carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring;
- We 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.

We recognise that flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of young carers. Available provision includes (but is not limited to):

- Access to a telephone during breaks and lunchtime, to phone home;
- Negotiable deadlines for homework (when needed);
- Access to homework clubs;
- Arrangements for schoolwork to be sent home (when there is a genuine crisis). Any approved absence for a young carer will be reviewed carefully and time limited (DfES 2006);
- Access for parents with impaired mobility;
- Alternative communication options for parents who are sensory impaired or housebound;
- Advice to parents if there are difficulties in transporting a young carer to school;
- Access to the Inclusion Team for additional support, when needed;
- Separate arrangements for getting to and leaving school if needed;
- Access to after-school clubs, if requested;
- Additional transition opportunities when moving to secondary school for both young carer and their parents if needed.

This policy is available on our school website or at the office upon request.

Please see our Inclusion Policy for further information on how we can support a young carer through provision from our Inclusion Team.

More information can also be found here: <https://www.leafingtonprimary.com/inclusion-team/>