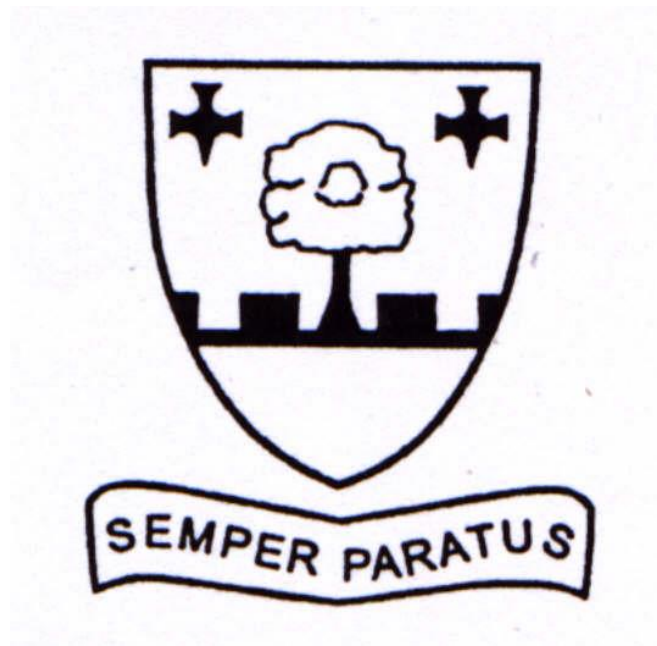


# ELMWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL



## Young Carers Policy

Issue 2

# **Elmwood Junior School**

## **Young Carers Policy**

### **Commitment**

Elmwood Junior School is committed to meeting the needs of young carers, supporting their emotional, educational and personal development to enable them to aspire and achieve in education regardless of complexities of their personal needs and home circumstances so that they can attend and enjoy school in the same way as other pupils and achieve their potential. This policy aims to raise awareness among school staff about the needs of young carers and to support them in establishing a whole school approach to address issues that may arise within a school setting. It should be implemented by all staff members in order to ensure young carers at our school are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled. This policy sets out how we will live up to our commitment and pays due regard to statutory legislation and guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

Children Act 2004

Education Act 2011

Equality Act 2010

Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004

Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000

Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995

Children and Families Act 2014

Care Act 2014

The Young Carers (Needs Assessments) Regulations 2015

DfE (2010) 'Improving support for young carers – family focused approaches'

DfE (2016) 'The lives of young carers in England'

### **Rights Respecting**

As part of our commitment to being a Rights Respecting School, all staff are aware of the need for pupils to develop acceptance of difference and diversity, and to provide them with a strong moral compass. As a rights respecting school, we ensure that our school is a safe and inspiring place to learn, where children are respected, their talents are nurtured and they are able to thrive. The school ensures that these values are embedded in daily school life and gives children the best chance to lead happy, healthy lives and to be responsible, active citizens.

### **Definition of a young carer**

- A young carer is someone who is under 18 years of age who provides regular and ongoing care to a family member who is physically or mentally ill, disabled, or misuses substances.
- A young carer will take on additional responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development.
- Young carers may be primary carers, such as caring for a parent, or a secondary carer, such as helping to care for a sibling.

- A young carer becomes vulnerable when the level of care-giving and responsibility to the person in need of care becomes excessive or inappropriate for that child and risks jeopardising their emotional or physical wellbeing, educational achievement and life chances.

**A young carer may undertake some or all of the following:**

Practical tasks

Physical care

Personal and intimate care

Emotional support

Household management

Looking after siblings

Interpretation

Administering medication

**Issues faced by young carers**

Being a young carer can have a serious adverse effect on a child's education. Because they struggle to balance their care responsibilities at home with expectations at school, a young carer is likely to regularly experience any one or more of the following:

- Being late or absent due to fulfilling care responsibilities at home
- Concentration problems in the classroom
- Emotional distress – anxiety, anger, fear, worry, self-doubt
- Mental and/or physical fatigue or tiredness
- Lack of time to complete homework on time or at all
- Academic underachievement relative to peers
- Physical problems such as back pain from lifting or other physical care duties
- False signs of maturity linked to assuming adult roles and responsibilities
- Attitudinal/Behavioural problems e.g. isolation; challenging; disruptive; disengaged
- Lack of time for extra-curricular activities at school or at home
- Aloof/Isolated - embarrassed to take friends home
- Limited social skills and missing out on 'normal' childhood life experiences
- Bullying – victim or perpetrator.
- Discrimination – families and young carers are at particular risk of discrimination because of their needs.
- Feeling that no one understands or cares about them and that no support is available
- Low self-esteem and an unjustified feeling of being incompetent
- Some families will be dependent solely on state benefits affecting their ability to afford proper school clothing and/or extracurricular activities
- Families with a young carer may be unwilling or unable to attend school functions, leading to them becoming more isolated from the school environment and unaware of issues that the young carer may be experiencing.

**Child Voice**

- "More people need to get involved in the Young Carers Community."
- "Young Carers is good because you get to express your feelings to people and you get to have loads of fun."
- "It's good to help your family/parents."

## **Identifying young carers**

During the school enrolment process for new pupils, the school will:

Identify parents or family members who have disabilities or other long term physical/mental health conditions.

Clarify whether the pupil has caring responsibilities.

Identify whether the young carer has any additional needs that need to be supported.

Establish individual pupil plans to recognise the child's specific needs as a young carer.

Where appropriate, a young carer may be referred to other support agencies for a needs assessment (with permission from the parent/carer).

The School will continuously bear in mind that where a parent has a disability, mental health or substance abuse issue, the pupil might be the carer whilst showing none of the indicative signs of a young carer.

## **Support offered by the School**

Elmwood has identified Mrs D Devecioglu as the staff member who is the main point of contact for young carers in the school. She is responsible for all matters concerning young carers. She will:

- Ensure that young carers have the same access to a full education and opportunities as their peers.
- Promote and coordinate the support that young carers need.
- Liaise with other agencies as appropriate, including adult services.
- Create a welcoming and friendly environment for all pupils, in which young carers feel comfortable to discuss their situation.
- Keep up to date with national and local developments, legislation and guidance affecting young carers and their families.

In addition the School will:

- Publish clear information regarding how pupils and their families can access support, ensuring that all pupils are aware of this information.
- Make provision for inclusive policies and practices that support young carers and promote good communication with their families.
- Respect the confidentiality of young carers and their families. Staff members will not discuss a pupil's personal situation and related arrangements in front of their peers.
- Ensure that the curriculum will be used to promote a full understanding, acceptance of, and respect for all equality issues including the situation of young carers.
- Be flexible with occasional late attendance due to a young carer's caring role and where there is a regular occurrence of lateness, provision will be put into place to find a solution complying with all current policy.

- Offer additional support in order to remove any communication barriers with parents, allowing them to be fully engaged with the education of their child.
- Monitor the attainment and achievement of young carers using targeted interventions where necessary
- Follow child protection procedures regarding any pupil it judges to be at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring.
- Consider accessibility issues to people with disabilities/illnesses, offering additional support to enable them to attend parents' evenings and other events in line with our Equalities Policy and Accessibilty Plan.
- Provide opportunities for young carers to speak to someone in private regarding their role as a young carer

### **Young Carers Club**

The school has a Young Carers club which meets weekly. It is run by a member of staff and gives young carers the opportunity to come together to socialize and discuss issues when and if appropriate. Pupils have the opportunity to shape policies and procedures.

### **Monitoring and Review**

- Mrs Devecioglu will continually monitor and review practice to ensure this policy is being implemented correctly.
- Staff will all be aware of other relevant policies which will be implemented alongside this policy.
- This policy will be reviewed by the governing body on an annual basis.

### **Data Protection**

Elmwood Junior School will collect and process all personal data and sensitive personal data in accordance with the legal obligations as set out in the General Data Protection Regulations 2018. Please see the school's GDPR Data Protection Policy for further information.