



Notre Dame Plymouth

YOUNG CARERS POLICY

At Notre Dame RC School we believe that all people and young people have the right to an education: *Head, Heart and Hands*, regardless of their personal circumstances.

We acknowledge that there are Young Carers among our students, and that being a young carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education.

We have adopted this Young Carers policy so that we are able to relieve some of the worries which young carers and their parents or family may have about home and their school work, and show that we believe Young Carers' education is important.

Identifying young Carers

Young carers are children and young people under 18 who help to look after someone at home, usually a parent, sibling or grandparent who has an illness or a disability. This can be in the form of a mental health issue, a physical disability, learning difficulties or alcohol and drug misuse. The school recognises that some Young Carers can remain 'hidden' from school and health and social care services and may need support in identifying as Young Carers; we will make particular effort to identify these students, this includes (but is not confined to):

- **Students who are BAME** - Young Carers are 1.5 times more likely to be from BAME communities.
- **Young Carers from asylum seeking families:** some families seeking asylum have unmet health and social care needs and can find themselves relying on their children to carry out the care tasks needed. This may be because they're unaware of the services available or are reluctant to involve agencies with their family in case it has a negative impact on their asylum claim.
- Students who care for siblings or parents with **drug or alcohol** addiction
- Students that care for a parent or sibling with **HIV**
- Students that care for a parent with **mental health** or **SEN** needs.

Young Carers carry out, often on a regular basis, significant or substantial caring tasks, which are additional to those appropriate for their age.

Young Carers responsibilities may include:

- Personal care (e.g. bathing, dressing, feeding)
- Giving or prompting medication / injections
- Shopping
- Housework

- Emotional support
- Looking after siblings
- Budgeting and paying bills
- Looking after their own health, washing and care

Young Carers can feel tired, worried and isolated. Their social life is often restricted with few opportunities for fun and relaxing activities outside of school.

Warning signs: which may indicate that a young person is caring include:

- Illness or disability in the family
- Being late or absent
- Assuming a parental role to siblings
- Poor concentration and/or often tired
- Academic performance below potential
- Isolation from peers
- Not making use of school activities
- Mature and responsible but 'letting go' in a safe environment
- Behavioural problems
- Limited contact with school by parents
- Being bullied
- Homework often incomplete

The school will identify Young Carers through the following means:

- We will identify Young Carers at the earliest opportunity to ensure support is in place early. Admissions forms both sent to the family/student and previous school ask if a student is a Young Carer. They also ask questions designed to 'catch' those students/families who don't self-identify. The post-16 interview process includes the same questions.
- Once at Notre Dame, students are given the information to self-identify and seek help through: having a dedicated Young Carer noticeboard, the communal TV screens and assemblies.
- Mid-way through the year all students will be sent a survey designed to identify new Young Carers.
- Staff can refer through the referral form; staff will have access to training to allow them to be confident at doing this.

If we believe that one of our students is a Young Carer we will be sensitive when we approach them about this, as we appreciate they may not want their peers to know. Before passing any information to the designated lead we will obtain the consent of the young carer.

School Commitment

As a school we offer a variety of support:

- The whole school is committed to meeting the needs of young carers
- A designated member of staff has been assigned with responsibility to young carers so that they are encouraged and supported at school
- Teachers will have access to staff training on identifying and supporting Young Carers on an annual basis.
- The school uses the pupil premium to minimise any barriers to learning
- A weekly Young carers group providing lunch and time to talk to both staff and students
- Drop in session times are available for one to one personalised support
- Information about what external support is available across the city is clearly identifiable
- Referrals to local Young Carer support
- Consideration of Young Carers needs and information is available for young carers, parents and staff
- The school is accessible and welcoming to parents with disabilities
- The school offers family / pupil support during transition processes
- The school has up to date knowledge regarding national and local developments.
- **The school offer respite trips including theatre trips, meals out and cinema experiences**

The date of the next policy review will be: **December 2021**