

## **Young Carers Policy St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School**

At St Elizabeth's we believe that all children and young people have the right to an education, regardless of what is happening at home.

When a young person looks after someone in their family who has a serious illness, disability or substance misuse problem, he or she may need a little extra support to help him or her get the most out of school. Our Young Carers Policy says how we will help any pupil who helps to look after someone at home.

Our school:

- Has a member of staff ( Mr Lowe) with special responsibility for young carers and lets all new pupils know who they are and what they can do to help.
- Runs a PSHE lesson on the challenges faced by young carers during the year.
- Can put young carers in touch with the local Young Carers Service. We can also put families in touch with other support services.
- Is accessible to parents who have mobility and communication difficulties and involves them in parents' evenings.
- Respects your right to privacy and will only share information about you and your family with people who need to know to help you.
- Will consider alternatives if a young carer is unable to attend out of school activities e.g. sports coaching, concerts, due to their caring role
- Allows young carers to telephone home during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Complies with the Disability Discrimination Act by offering disabled parents support to get their children into school.
- Local support is from - **Derbyshire Carers Association, Tel: 01773 833833**

## **Legislation and Guidance**

**UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Articles 28 and 29.** Children and young people have the right to the best available education and to opportunities to develop their personality, mental and physical ability to their fullest potential.

### **The Children Act 1989.**

The Framework for Assessment of Children in Need and their Families, which gives guidance on S. 17 of the Act, has a section on young carers which states that effective support will require "good quality joint work between adult and children's social services as well as co-operation from schools and health workers . . . Young carers can receive help from both local and health authorities." See paragraphs 3.61-3.63.

**DCSF Advice and guidance to Schools and Local Authorities on Managing Behaviour and Attendance: groups of pupils at particular risk** (replaced Circular 10/99 Social Inclusion: Pupil Support):

- "Young carers should not be expected to carry inappropriate levels of caring which have an adverse impact on their development and life chances. However, there are children and young people who undertake caring roles. Young carers of a sick or disabled relative at home may be late or absent from school because



of their responsibilities. A study in one authority suggested there may be up to 30 young carers in a secondary school.”

- “In a genuine crisis, a school can approve absence for a child to care for a relative until other arrangements can be made....”
- “Schools should consider designating a member of staff to have responsibility for young carers. They can also contribute to schemes that support them, working with local authorities and voluntary agencies.”

Also, ***Effective Attendance Practice in Schools: An Overview*** of attendance guidance states that schools should have “support systems in place for vulnerable groups which provide” among other things, signposting and access to external support for parents and pupils” and “training for staff on specific needs of pupils e.g. young carers”.

### **The National Carers Strategy (1999)**

Chapter 8 of this Government strategy states that “schools need to be sensitive to the individual problems faced by young carers” and that “The Government will draw schools’ attention to effective practice in meeting the needs of pupils who are young carers, for example, through link arrangements with young carers’ services. . . . Schools might find it helpful to have one member of staff to act as a link between young carers, the education welfare service, social services and young carers’ services.” It suggests that there may be 30 young carers in every school.

### **Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995; Carers and Disabled Children Act 2001; Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004**

Between them these Acts give young carers varying rights to an assessment of their needs, which must take into account their right to an education. See the SCIE practice guide to the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004: [www.scie.org.uk](http://www.scie.org.uk), commissioned by the Department of Health.

**The Children’s Society Young Carer’s Initiative** is funded by DCSF to develop Key Principles of Practice in supporting young carers and their families. Key Principle 4 states: *Young carers will have the same access to education and career choices as their peers:*

**Standard:** Schools and colleges take responsibility to identify young carers at an early stage and ensure that they have the same access to a full education and career choices as their peers.

### **Performance Indicators**

*4.1 Governing bodies in schools make provision for policy and practice that supports young carers and promotes good communication with their families.*

*4.2 Schools and colleges have inclusive policies that enable the identification of young carers and to deliver effective methods of supporting them to achieve their full potential whilst recognising the positives of any acquired skills and attributes.*

*4.3 Schools and colleges provide clear, accessible, up to date information regarding health issues and local community services to all pupils in school. And have*



*procedures for referring to other agencies and sign posting the direction young carers can take in order to gain additional support for them and their family outside of school.*

*4.4 Schools and colleges are accessible to parents who are disabled or have a long-term illness. This includes ensuring that communication strategies include provision for any parent with a visual, hearing or communication impairment. (As covered in the Disability and Discrimination Act with regards to access to goods, services and facilities)*

*4.5 The curriculum promotes a fuller understanding and acceptance of, and respect for, the issues surrounding disabilities and caring as well as promoting positive images of disability and impairment.*

*4.6 Staff will have access to information and training to enable them to recognise the indications that a child has a caring responsibility as well as increasing their understanding of such responsibilities and to ensure that any who are children in need are identified or feel able to ask for help, are listened to and offered direct services and protection, if needed.*

*4.7 There is a named member of staff to lead on young carers*

*4.8 Individual plans recognise the child/young person's specific needs as a young carer*

*4.9 Local authorities consider how best to support those parents who find it difficult to escort younger children to school.*

*4.10 Admission authorities consider the responsibilities of young carers and the impact of any family disability or illness on those young carers when setting admission criteria for their schools*

## **Further information**

Derbyshire Carers Association – Tel: 01773 833833

- DCSF 2006 guidance on young carers in *Advice and guidance to Schools and Local Authorities on Managing Behaviour and Attendance: groups of pupils at particular risk* ([www.dfes.gov.uk/behaviourandattendance](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/behaviourandattendance))
- Teachernet guidance at [www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/y/youngcarers/](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/y/youngcarers/) and at [www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/library/youngcarersandschools/](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/library/youngcarersandschools/) which includes case studies from teachers themselves.
- The section for education professionals at [www.youngcarers.net/professionals](http://www.youngcarers.net/professionals)
- The Children's Society's *Principles of Practice* for all services coming into contact with young carers and their families: [www.youngcarer.com](http://www.youngcarer.com)
- Young Carers Research Group Reports: *Young carers in the UK 2004* and *Young carers in schools*. [www.carersuk.org/Policyandpractice/Research](http://www.carersuk.org/Policyandpractice/Research)
- DCSF guidance on Home to School Travel and Transport 2006 <http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/DFES-00373-2007.pdf>



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[i] *Young carers in their own words*, 2000, Ed. Bibby, Becker.

[ii] Ibid

[iii] *Making it Work*, Frank, 2002, The Children's Society and The Princess Royal Trust for Carers.

[iv] *Growing up caring*, 2000, Becker and Dearden

[v] Ibid.