



St Peter & St Paul
Catholic Voluntary Academy
Pro Petro Paulo Patria

Policy Document
Status: Approved
Confidentiality level: Public

Young Carers Policy

Policy Ref No. PY 01

'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full'

John 10:10

"Our academy is a community where Jesus Christ is our role model and his message the guiding principle behind all we do.

Every member of our community is responsible for creating an environment that is caring, fair and respectful of each individual.

We develop our potential, celebrate our talents and go forward together in faith."

Christ is the foundation of everything we do and the Gospels provide us with our influence and inspiration. We are therefore committed to promoting:

The uniqueness of the individual

We believe that every person is a unique individual, created in God's image and loved by Him. We are therefore committed to treat every person with equality of esteem and the respect and dignity due to a child of God.

The search for excellence

We are called to seek perfection in all aspects of our lives. We celebrate the enrichment of the total community, which flows from diversity of age, gender, racial and social origins, abilities, culture and religion. We are therefore committed to ensure that all are to be given every opportunity to develop their talents to the full.

The education of the whole person

We offer young people the experience of life in a community founded on Gospel values and working in harmony. Through this and a variety of educational experiences and interactions we aim to prepare young people for a life working with others in communities which maybe diverse socially, culturally and religiously. We recognise that it is also important to help pupils to understand their own ethnic identity and cultural heritage as well as helping them to understand that of others irrespective of whether the academy serves or is located in an ethnically diverse community.

The education of all

We have the duty of care for all to ensure that we provide for those who are socially, academically, physically, emotionally or financially disadvantaged.

Moral principles

Our belief in the Gospel message commits us to be in the forefront of the movement for social and racial justice and harmony. We believe this is fundamental to the common good. We aim to prepare our young people to serve as witnesses to these moral and spiritual values in the wider world.

Consequently, we still strive to ensure that:

Any person recruited to the service of the academy, whether as a member of staff or as a volunteer, is made fully aware of our aims and objectives and required to support them;

Children who are admitted to the academy and their families are fully aware of our aims and objectives and undertake to support them;

All of our structures and policies are evaluated and kept under constant review in order to see that no individual is subject in any way to unlawful discrimination, whether intentional or unintentional, and to ensure that all are enabled to reach their full potential.

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Introduction

St Peter and St Paul Catholic Voluntary Academy is committed to supporting young carers to access education. It is our aim to ensure young carers at our academy are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled, in order to ensure that our children / young people achieve their potential and don't place their education in jeopardy due to their caring responsibilities.

Definition of a young carer

A young carer is someone under the age of 18 who help look after someone in their family or a friend who is ill, disabled or misuses drugs or alcohol.

Carers Trust 2015

The person they look after will have one or more of the following:

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

Our aim is to identify our young carers or our pupils at risk of becoming young carers **and ensure that they have the same access to a full education and career choices as their peers.**

Caring Tasks

Many young carers 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:

Childcare – taking responsibility for younger siblings in addition to their other caring responsibilities. Some young carers help parents look after a disabled sibling.

Domestic care – doing a substantial amount of housework, cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry etc.

Emotional care – being compliant, monitoring the emotional state of the person cared for, listening, being a shoulder to cry on, supporting a parent through depression and trying to cheer them up.

Financial care – running the household, paying bills, benefit collection, etc.

Nursing care – giving medication, injections, changing dressings, assisting with mobility etc.

Personal intimate care – washing, dressing, feeding and helping with toilet requirements.

Young carers do not form a homogenous group with clearly defined or uniform responsibilities. We understand that the amount and type of care they provide can vary enormously from one young carer to another and does not predict how far the health, well-being or education of each young carer may be affected.

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Possible effect on education

St Peter and St Paul Catholic Voluntary Academy acknowledges that there are very likely to be young carers amongst our pupils, and that being a young carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education. Statistics suggest that there are about 700,000 young carers which is about one in twelve secondary academy aged children

We recognise that because of their responsibilities at home, a young carer might experience:

Being late or absent from our academy due to responsibilities at home

Concentration problems, anxiety or worry in academy

Emotional distress

Tiredness in academy

Lack of time for homework completion

Poor attainment

Physical problems such as back pain from lifting

False signs of maturity, because of assuming adult roles

Behavioural problems (taking out their anger or frustration)

Lack of time for extra-curricular activities

Isolation, embarrassed to take friends home

Limited social skills

Bullying

Feeling that no one understands and that no support is available

Low self esteem

It might also be difficult to engage their parents (due to fears about the child / young person being taken into care, fears about their condition being misunderstood or their parenting skills being called into question). Parents may be unable to attend parents' evenings.

We recognise however that there are children and young people affected by family disability, health problems or substance misuse who do not become young carers and we are wary of making assumptions about people with disabilities or other health issues and labelling children, young people and their parents. We believe that support for young carers and their families should always aim to strengthen families and support parenting.

Possible signs that a student may have a caring responsibility

We understand that young carers are not easy to spot and may actively try to conceal their caring role from teachers, pastoral staff and peers for fear of bullying or outside interference in their families. All of the signs listed below could be indicators of another problem, but staff noticing these signs should sensitively ask the child / young person if they are helping to look after someone at home.

Regular or increased lateness

Regular or increased absence

Concentration problems

Anxiety

Tiredness

Under-achievement – there may be a sudden drop in attainment

Late or incomplete homework

Few or no peer friendships, the child / young person may get on well with adults and present as very mature for their age

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Victim of bullying. Sometimes explicitly linked to a family member's disability, health or substance misuse problem

Behavioural problems, sometimes may be the result of anger or frustration expressed inappropriately

Unable to attend extra-curricular activities

Difficulties in engaging parents, parents not attending parents' evenings.

Support Offered

St Peter and St Paul Catholic Voluntary Academy (SSPP) acknowledges that young carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education. Through this policy, our academy is giving the message that young carers' education is important.

The designated link member of staff/ teacher for young carers in our academy is **Mrs Ronette Gray**.

Mrs Gray will liaise with relevant colleagues, and other relevant agencies with the consent of the young carer. All pupils will be made aware of the designated link.

SSPP will provide young carers with opportunities to speak to someone they trust or feel comfortable with in private and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers.

SSPP appreciates that young carers may not wish to discuss their family situation unless they feel comfortable. The young person's caring role will be acknowledged and respected.

SSPP will treat young carers in a sensitive and child-centered way, upholding confidentiality. SSPP will ensure young carers can access all available support services in academy.

SSPP will follow child protection procedures regarding any young carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring or where their safety is compromised.

SSPP 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.

SSPP recognises 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 / coursework (when needed)

Access to homework clubs (where these are available)

Lunchtime detentions rather than after academy detentions (where possible)

Arrangements will be made for academy work to be sent home (when there is a genuine crisis)

Any approved absence will be time limited

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 academy.