

POLICY



LOUGHBOROUGH
Amherst School

YOUNG CARERS POLICY

This policy applies to all School departments, including EYFS

Approved By: Senior Leadership Team

Date Approved: October 2024

Point of Contact (Reviewer): Head of Preparatory School

At Loughborough Amherst School we are aware that pupils in our school may well have caring roles at home.

We believe that all children and young people should have equal access to education, regardless of what is happening at home and that no child should have to take on inappropriate or excessive caring responsibilities.

When a young person does look after someone in their family who has a serious illness, disability or substance misuse problem, they may need a little extra support to help them get the most out of school.

We aim to understand the issues faced by young carers and to have a separate policy for young carers stating how we will support any pupil who helps to look after someone at home.

We aim to support young carers through a whole-school approach and through working with other agencies and professionals, with the understanding that support for the whole family is in the best interests of the young carer.

Definition

A young carer is a child or young person under the age of 18 living with or carrying out a significant physical or emotional caring role and assuming a level of responsibility for another person, which would normally be undertaken by an adult.

They can be caring for any of the following-

- Parent or sibling suffering from mental health issues
- Parent or sibling with a physical disability
- Parent or sibling with entrenched substance misuse problems
- Parent or sibling with learning disabilities
- Parent or sibling with a chronic or terminal illness

Young Carers and the effects on their education

Being a young carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education. Because of their responsibilities at home, a young carer might experience:

- Being late or absent due to responsibilities at home
- Concentration problems, anxiety or worry in school
- Emotional distress
- Tiredness in school
- Lack of time for homework

- 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 and 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

School View

The school views young carers as any other pupil but understands that they have the additional burden of caring responsibilities.

The whole school is committed to meeting the needs of young carers so that they are enabled and encouraged to attend and enjoy school and have equal access to their education as their peers.

Support offered

Loughborough Amherst School ensures that the following support is available for all young carers within our school.

- Loughborough Amherst School has identified Kim Alderman, School Nurse, as our young carers representative. Their name and role is made known to parents annually.
- During the enrolment process for new pupils, the school will identify whether: parents or family members have disabilities or other long-term physical or mental health problems. The pupil helps to look after them and if this has an impact on their education.
- Pupils who are young carers will be identified along with any additional needs that they may have.
- The school will use and evaluate data effectively to identify and monitor the progress made by young carers.
- The school, where necessary, will aim to offer support to improve attendance and the pupil's well-being.
- The right to pupil's and families' privacy will be respected and the school will only share information with professionals and agencies on a 'need to know basis' in order to support pupils and families.
- When a young carer leaves the school, either to proceed into further education or for any other reasons, details of their caring role and home situation will be passed on to the next school subject to consent from the young carer and his/her family.
- Information about the support available for young carers and how to access it will be made clearly available to both pupils and families.
- The school recognises that young carers and their families need to receive coordinated support by the school, working in partnership where appropriate with general practitioners, young carers' services, behaviour and education support teams.
- Young carers and families will be referred or signposted to other support agencies and professionals as appropriate.
- The school adheres to the Disability Discrimination Act (1995, 2005)
- The school is accessible to parents with disabilities and/ or illness, offering additional support to enable them to end Parent / Teacher Consultations or other school events.
- The school will offer additional support to remove any communication barriers with parents, so that parents are able to be fully engaged with the education of their child.
- The School's PSHCCE programme will encourage positive approaches to support young carers. It will promote a full understanding, acceptance of and respect for issues such as caring, disability and impairment.

- The school will consider alternatives if a young carer is unable to attend out of school activities due to their caring role. This may include lunchtime detentions rather than after school ones for example.
- The school will allow young carers to use a telephone to call home during breaks and lunchtimes so as to reduce any worry they may have about a family member.

This policy should be read in line with other key policies including the Bullying Policy.

Loughborough Amherst School is committed to keeping up to date with national and local developments and with legislation and guidance affecting young carers and their families.

This document has been written using information from:

- 'Developing a school policy for young carers and their families' The Princess Royal Trust for Carers & The Children's Society
- Young carers, parents and their families: Key principles of practice
- Young Carers: Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities
- DCSF Advice and guidance to Schools and Local Authorities on Managing Behaviour and Attendance: groups of pupils at particular risk