Houghton Primary School

Working hard to achieve our best

Young Carers Policy

Date reviewed and adopted:	July 2025
Reviewed and adopted by:	Full Governing Body
Chair of governors	Briony Rice
Headteacher	Andrew Spencer
Date of next review:	Summer 2027

Introduction

Houghton Primary School is committed to supporting Young Carers to access Education and ensure that they are making good progress across the curriculum, in line with their peers. This policy aims to ensure Young Carers at Houghton Primary School are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled and achieve their very best.

Definition

Young Carers are children and young people under the age of 18 who provide care, assistance or support to another family member who is disabled, physically or mentally ill, or has a substance misuse problem. They carry out, often on a regular basis, significant or substantial caring tasks, taking on a level or responsibility that is inappropriate/ unusual to their age or development.

What support might a young carer provide?

In general, support given by young carers can be divided into physical and practical support, and emotional support.

- Physical and practical could range from 'reminding mum to take a tablet once a day' to 'helping Mum get out of bed and get washed and dressed in the morning.'
- Emotional support could range from 'keeping my brother company and talking things through with him to make sure he is feeling ok' to 'preventing further suicide attempts from mum.'

Different types of support a young carer may provide:
It is important to note this is not an exhaustive list and this will be different for every young carer.

Practical support

- Cooking and making family meals
- Food shopping
- Laundry
- Cleaning around the house
- Helping to look after a sibling
- Attending appointments
- Helping with financial issues and managing money

Physical support

- Helping carry and lift heavy things
- Helping with mobility and moving around

- Managing and administering medication
- Supporting with getting washed and dressed

Emotional support

- Talking things through
- Listening
- Reassuring the person cared for and reassuring siblings
- Worrying
- Keeping family members safe
- Helping cared for person to feel calm
- Keeping the cared for person company and making sure they are ok

Possible Impact on Education

Houghton Primary School acknowledges that there are Young Carers among its pupils, and that 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 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 also might be difficult to engage their parents (due to fears about child being taken into care, fears about their condition being misunderstood or their parenting skills being called into question). They may be unable to attend parents' evenings.

Support Offered

Houghton Primary School acknowledges that Young Carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education. Through this policy, we want to give the message that Young Carers' education is important.

A Young Carers Champion will be appointed and they will be the main contact for the Young Carers in the school. The Young Carers Champion will meet with the Young Carers on a regular basis and will liaise with the teacher responsible for Vulnerable Groups (may be Deputy Head or Head of KS1 / KS2). The Young Carers Champion will liaise with relevant colleagues and agencies with the consent of the Young Carer and parent and in conjunction with the Pastoral Lead.

Houghton Primary School will

· Provide Young Carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private, and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers.
· Appreciate that Young Carers will not discuss their family situation unless they feel comfortable. The young person's caring role will be acknowledged and respected.
· Treat Young Carers in a sensitive and child-centred way, upholding confidentiality.
· Ensure Young Carers can access all available support services in school.
· Follow child protection procedures regarding any Young Carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring.
· 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.
· Provide staff access to information and training to enable them to recognise indications that a child has a caring responsibility.
In addition, Houghton Primary School will recognise 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 telephone home.
· Negotiable deadlines for homework (when needed).
· Access to homework clubs (where these are available).
· Arrangements for schoolwork to be sent home (when there is a genuine crisis). Any approved absence for a Young Carer will be time limited, (DfES 2006).
· Access for parents with impaired mobility.
· Alternative communication options for parents who are sensory impaired or housebound.
. Opportunities to liaise with young carers from other local settings.
· Advice to parents if there are difficulties in transporting a Young Carer to school.

Succession Planning

If the Young Carers Champion leaves post a new lead will be appointed within one term.

Further Information

Further information can be found at:

http://centre33.org.uk/help/supporting-young-carers/

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