



# **Young Carers Policy**

**2024-2025**



## **OUR TRUST'S PRAYER**

Heavenly Father

Let peace, friendship and love grow in our schools

Send the Holy Spirit to give:

Excellence to our learning

Love to our actions and

Joy to our worship

Guide us to help others

So that we may all

Learn, Love and Achieve, Together with Jesus.

Amen

## Our Christian Vision is:

*'Learning and growing together to achieve our best in the love of God'*

'Learning and growing together to achieve our best in the love of God' sums up our school vision and ethos that all children will have the opportunity to experience God's love and fulfil their potential across the curriculum, valuing themselves and others, living out our Christian values in order to make a positive difference in the world. This vision underpins our behaviour policy.

## School Aims

In order to prepare today's children for tomorrow's challenges, Rainford CE Primary Schools aims to achieve the following:

- Every child will be encouraged to understand the meaning and significance of faith, experience God's love and develop the spirituality to enable them to live out our Christian values of love, joy, peace, friendship, forgiveness, perseverance and justice
- Every child will achieve their full potential through being a highly motivated, resilient and independent learner who embraces new experiences, has confidence to tackle challenges and go onto develop a lifelong love of learning.
- Every child will value themselves as a unique individual with special qualities and strengths developing self-discipline and honesty; taking responsibility for their own actions and appreciating their ability to make a positive difference in the world.
- Every child will appreciate and respect others, celebrate differences between individuals and groups and respect and care for God's creation and the environment.

- Every child will be encouraged to make healthy choices and appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

In order to do this, we will constantly reflect the Christian ethos of our school in our relationships with our children, their families, our staff, the church and the wider community.

*This policy has due regard to statutory legislation and guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:*

- Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2011
- Equality Act 2010
- Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004
- Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Care Act 2014
- The Young Carers (Needs Assessments) Regulations 2015
- DfE (2011) 'Improving support for young carers – family focused approaches'
- DfE (2016) 'The lives of young carers in England'
- Staff members will keep up-to-date with national and local developments, legislation and guidance affecting young carers and their families.

## Definition

A young carer is someone who is under 18 years of age who provides regular and ongoing care to a family member who is physically or mentally ill, has a disability, or misuses substances.

A young carer will take on additional responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development.

Young carers may be primary carers, such as caring for a parent, or a secondary carer, such as helping to care for a sibling.

A young carer becomes vulnerable when the level of care-giving and responsibility to the person in need of care becomes excessive or inappropriate for that child and risks jeopardising their emotional or physical wellbeing, educational achievement and life chances.

A young carer may undertake some or all of the following:

- Practical tasks
- Physical care
- Personal and intimate care
- Emotional support
- Household management
- Looking after siblings
- Interpretation
- Administering Education

# Difficulties Faced by Young Carers

Caring responsibilities can impact on young people's education in a number of different ways including, but not limited to, the following:

- Lateness
- Tiredness
- Non-attendance
- Late or no submission of homework and assignments
- Not participating in extra-curricular activities and school events
- Experiencing bullying or isolation
- Underachieving academically
- Poor education or career choices

Young carers may exhibit challenging behaviour in environments away from an adult fashion within the home.

Many young carers may be unable to develop friendships outside of school, due to reasons such as being unable to invite friends to their home, restricting the development of a pupil's social skills.

Some young carers carry out tasks for which they are physically ill equipped, which can impact on their overall health. Long-term caring responsibilities can also impact significantly on the mental health of young people, which like their physical health, can lead to poor attendance.

Some families will be dependent solely on various benefits, affecting their ability to afford proper school clothing and/or extra-curricular activities, such as school trips.

Families involving a young carer may be unwilling or unable to attend school functions, leading to them becoming more isolated from the school environment and unaware of issues that the young carer may be experiencing.

## Identifying Young Carers

During the school enrolment process for new pupils, the school will:

- Identify parents or family members who have disabilities or other long-term physical or mental health conditions.
- Clarify whether the pupil has caring responsibilities.
- Identify whether the young carer has any additional needs that need to be supported, e.g. any SEND or social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs.
- Establish individual pupil plans to recognise the child's specific needs as a young carer.

Where appropriate, a young carer may be referred to the LA or other support agencies for a needs

assessment. The school will continuously bear in mind that where a parent has a disability, mental health or substance abuse issue, the pupil might be the carer whilst showing none of the indicative signs of a young carer.

The school uses robust systems to ensure that Young Carers are clearly identified within internal tracking systems. Leaders evaluate data effectively in order to identify and monitor the progress made by young carers, and reviews plans accordingly to tackle the barriers that may could reduce the life choices available to a young carer. This evaluative system looks at the whole school cohort, reviewing changes in attainment progress and attendance, amongst other factors, that allows the school to consider if these changes may be due to a caring role.

## Key Staff Members

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of students, however key members of staff have specific roles to play:

- Young Carers Lead – Mrs. Rose Bradshaw
- Special Educational Needs Coordinator – Mrs. Rose Bradshaw
- Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs Emma Shawcross
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads – Mrs. Louise Thompson, Mrs. Rose Bradshaw

As the Young Carers Lead, Mrs. Rose Bradshaw is responsible for:

- Ensuring that young carers have the same access to a full education and career choices as their peers.
- Promoting and coordinating the support young carers need.
- Liaising with other agencies as appropriate, including adult services.

It is important that staff members can effectively identify young carers and that young carers feel that they can ask for help; therefore, raising awareness among staff and pupils about the issues relating to young carers and what support is available is vital.

Staff members will not discuss a young carer's personal situation and related arrangements in front of their peers.

We will ensure that staff, students and parents/carers are aware of the right to a young carers' assessment, as well as the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services., including, but not limited to, local young carers support networks, Emotional Support services and the school nurse.

Within the school (noticeboards, common rooms, toilets etc.) and through our communication channels (newsletters, websites), we will share and display relevant information about young carers and how they can access support as well as who they can talk to in school.

In order to ensure that staff members understand the issues faced by young carers, training and ongoing professional development about the matter is provided for staff and the governing board.

Staff members will keep up-to-date with national and local developments, legislation and guidance affecting young carers and their families.

The school aims to create a welcoming and friendly environment for all pupils, in which young carers feel comfortable to discuss their situation.

The school will publish clear information regarding how pupils and their families can access support, ensuring that all pupils are aware of this information.

The governing body will make provision for inclusive policies and practices that support young carers and promote good communication with their families.

The school will follow child protection procedures regarding any pupil who they believe to be at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring.

The curriculum, primarily PSHE lessons, will be used to promote a full understanding, acceptance of, and respect for, issues such as the work of young carers.

The school premises are accessible to people with disabilities and/or illnesses, offering additional support to enable them to attend parents' evenings and other school events.

Staff members will not discuss a young carer's personal situation and related arrangements in front of their peers.

The school will follow child protection procedures regarding any pupil who they believe to be at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring.

## Providing Support to Young Carers

Once identified young carers will work with the Young Carers Lead/SENCO and teachers regarding difficulties, attendance and deadlines.

Staff will ensure that existing individual pupil plans recognise the pupil's specific needs as a young carer.

The school offers support to the pupil and their family during the transition process, sharing agreed information with their new school, college or university where appropriate.

Additional support is offered in order to remove any communication barriers with parents, allowing them to be fully engaged with the education of their child.

Targeted early interventions are used in order to provide support to young carers, ensuring that they are able to reach their full potential.

The school uses and evaluates data effectively in order to identify and monitor the progress made by young carers, and reviews plans accordingly.

Young carers are provided with access to a telephone during breaks and lunches, allowing them to call home with the intention of reducing any worry they may have about a family member, where appropriate.

Where appropriate, homework and assignment deadlines for young carers will be negotiated.

Where appropriate, the school will schedule around young carers' duties, such as setting lunchtime detentions instead of after-school detentions.

Where parents are unable to physically attend parents' evening due to their disability, medical condition or substance abuse, home visits will be considered where necessary.

Young carers are provided with opportunities to speak to someone in private regarding their role as a young carer.

Staff members treat young carers in a sensitive and child-centred way, upholding confidentiality.

The school will continuously promote additional links with adult care agencies which may be able to support families and relieve care responsibilities.

The school will discuss and provide advice to parents regarding transport arrangements, where necessary, for those who find it difficult to escort their young children to school.

The school will ensure with the support from families that the relevant information related to caring status of pupils is shared with any subsequent settings that they may attend.

