



**Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School & Nursery
Young Carers Policy
December 2014**

“At Sacred Heart School we are a loving Christian family who live and learn happily together and grow in the Catholic faith.”

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to extend the partnership between school and home to enable the school to provide appropriate support to all pupils who are young carers or have a partial caring role.

Purpose

At Sacred Heart School all pupils have a right to an education in a safe environment regardless of their needs or circumstances. This policy sets out how the school will address the needs and worries young carers in our school community may face about their home life and school work.

Young carers are children and young people under 18 who help to look after a family member who is disabled, physically or mentally ill or has a substance misuse problem. Helping out around the house is a normal part of growing up, but young carers regularly carry out significant or substantial caring tasks and assume a level of responsibility which is inappropriate to their age. Caring can involve physical or emotional care, or taking responsibility for someone's safety or well being. Many young carers spend a lot of time doing household chores or looking after younger siblings in addition to helping a sick or disabled parent with tasks such as administering medication, helping someone to get up and get dressed or helping someone use the bathroom. Some young carers help parents to look after a disabled sibling.

Admissions

Our admission process for new pupils and their families will attempt to establish:

- If the pupil has parents or other family members who have disabilities or other long term physical or mental health problems.
- If the pupil helps to look after them and what impact this may have on his/ her education.
- If the family is in touch with support services that could reduce the pupil's caring role.

Some families may choose to keep their problems secret, but offering signposting and information about other services at an early stage may make all the difference.

Warning signs

Young carers are not easy to spot and many 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 warning signs below could be indicators of another problem. However, staff noticing these signs should consider asking the pupil if they are helping to look after someone at home.

- Regular or increased lateness or absence.

- Concentration problems, anxiety, tiredness.
- Under-achievement and late or incomplete homework: may be a sudden unexplained drop in attainment.
- Few or no peer friendships; conversely the pupil may get on well with adults and present as very mature for their age.
- Victim of bullying, sometimes explicitly linked to a family member's disability, health or substance misuse problem.
- Behavioural problems, sometimes the result of anger or frustration expressed inappropriately.
- Unable to attend extra-curricular activities.
- Difficulties in engaging parents; parents not attending parents' evenings.

Guidelines

The school will:

- Designate a member of staff to have special responsibility for young carers and lets all new pupils know who they are and what they can do to help. This will be the Headteacher in the first instance.
- Ensure pupils are aware of who is the Designated person for young carers.
- Provide information to relevant staff e.g. class teacher, with the consent of the family.
- Be sensitive towards young carers needs, including confidentiality.
- Provide information to pupils about young carers about advice and support available to them both within and outside school.
- Liaise with relevant agencies e.g. Hertfordshire Young Carers Project.
- Raise awareness amongst the whole school community e.g. through assemblies on the theme of young carers.
- 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. detention, sports coaching, concerts, due to their caring role.
- Allows young carers to telephone home during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Can give parents advice about how to get their children into school where transport is a problem.