

St Mary's Church of England Primary School



"Let your light shine"

Young Carers Policy

Status:	Non- Statutory
Responsible Person	Gemma Barnett and Tracey Porter SENDCo and Pastoral Lead
Responsible Governor	Chair of Governors
Ratified by the Headteacher	February 2026
Date approved by the GB	
Review Period	Annually
Review Date	February 2027

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“You are the light of the worldlet your light shine.”

Matthew 5:14

St Mary's School Vision

St Mary's CEVC Primary School and Little Oaks Nursery, provides education based on the principles and practices of the Church of England.

We work in partnership with home and church to serve and nurture all children and adults in our care. Our Christian ethos and values are at the heart of everything we do, so that everyone in our community can reach their full potential and is able to flourish for life in all its fullness.

Definition of a Young Carer

A child under the age of 18 years who provides, or intends to provide, care for another person in their family. This could be care for a parent, a sibling or grandparent. Reasons that young people care could be because of:

- A long-term illness or health condition (for example epilepsy, diabetes, cancer)
- Physical disabilities such as mobility issues or blindness
- Mental Health conditions or illness
- Misuses substances such as alcohol or drugs
- Dependent on others due to old age
- Special educational needs which include family members with ADHD, ASD etc
- Supporting siblings in any way

A young carer is aged 5-18. Signs that someone could be a young carer include not completing homework, absenteeism, lateness, inability to take part in after school activities. often tired, distracted, withdrawn or anxious.

At St Mary's Primary School, we acknowledge, recognise and value the caring responsibilities that pupils in our community have. As a school, we strive to raise the awareness of these young carers amongst staff and pupils, to provide effective support for our young carers and remove any barriers which could potentially inhibit their academic, social and personal development.

We want young carers in our school to feel seen, feel heard and feel supported. By engaging with the local Young Carers in Schools Project, we hope to improve the support in place for young carers which in the long-term, will have a positive impact on young carer's academic performance, attendance and aspirations. This policy outlines the whole school approaches and strategies that will enable young carers at St Mary's Primary School to flourish.

At St Mary's Primary School, we have high expectations of all pupils, and we believe all pupils should have equal opportunities. However, every child needs to feel safe, supported and understood to achieve self-actualisation. National statistics suggest that young carers do not always feel this way in school. A survey conducted by the Carer's Trust (2023) highlighted that over 42% of young carers 'always' or 'usually' feel stressed and 52% said they do 'not often' or 'never' get help from school to balance their work. We recognise

that that such caring responsibilities can, and will, have an impact on a child's social and emotional wellbeing and their academic performance. Therefore, we are committed to improving provision and support at St Mary's Primary School to enable young carers fulfil their potential.

By working closely with Young Carers in Schools project, we ensure that all stakeholders have a greater understanding of who young carers are, the challenges they face and how they will be supported. The process starts with our whole school universal provision being highly inclusive and one that supports the whole child.

Aims

- To raise awareness of young carers among staff
- To ensure identification of all young carers as early as possible on entry to the school
- To refer young carers to the council where appropriate
- To foster respect and understanding towards young carers among all pupils
- To address any underlying inequalities between young carers and other pupils in a graduated and timely manner
- To improve the progress and raise the standard of achievement for young carers
- To support young carers in improving their attendance
- To ensure that young carers feel included and supported within their school community and that reasonable adjustments made to promote this
- To improve the wellbeing and self-worth of young carers in the school community
- To protect young carers from unjust treatment due to their caring role and improve co-ordination with other agencies and support services
- To give young carers a voice in the school community and involve them in decisions affecting young carer provision
- To ensure that staff recognise flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of young carers
- For the young carers to develop their understanding of the value of leading a healthy lifestyle that embraces our Christian values.
- Work and play in a secure and safe environment in which they are encouraged to develop moral values and mutual respect
- Experience an exciting curriculum which fosters their enthusiasm, develops an enquiring mind and enables every child to achieve his/her full potential
- Access an education for life which promotes British Values that enable all learners to become effective and reliable members of the wider community
- Foster ambition and expectation to carry through to adult life

Whole school strategies for supporting young carers

- The whole school is committed to meeting the needs of young carers, so that they attend and enjoy school and have equal access to their education, as their peers. We will strive to achieve best practice for pupils and families.
- School leads (Gemma Barnett and Tracey Porter) have been assigned with responsibility for Young Carers and their families. Pupils will be made aware of the identity of the school's Young Carer leads and how to access support from them.
- The school has an effective referral system and strong partnership in place with the local Young Carers service.
- The school only shares information with professionals on a need-to-know basis to support pupils and their families.

- The school actively seeks feedback and ideas from young carers and their families to shape and improve provision for young carers.
- The school keeps up to date with national and local developments and with legislation and guidance affecting young carers and their families

We will monitor young carers by:

- Considering them as a separate vulnerable group
- Offer sessions to support their wellness
- Gain their feedback regularly
- Tracking young carer attendance and attainment
- Discussing young carers and their needs with staff and governors

We will create an ethos and environment that promotes respect and understanding around young carers by:

- Whole school relational policy delivered to ensure positive connections are embedded.
- Delivering assemblies on young carers annually
- Delivering PSHE lessons on young carers
- Promoting learning, acceptance and respect around illnesses and disabilities
- Have a visual presence around our school including posters
- Offering sessions every term for our Young Carers to work as part of team to share and talk about their roles, responsibilities and complete therapeutic, nurturing tasks.

We will inform and empower our staff by

- Hosting staff training on young carers annually
- Having a staff member who is an appointed Young Carer Champion
- Include young carers on transition notes

Support and adjustments for young carers

- There is a dedicated Young Carer Champion, Tracey Porter, who supports young carers. Young carers can speak to the champion at anytime
- If a young carer has incorrect or missing uniform, we will provide them with access to spare uniform discreetly
- If a young carer is struggling to complete their home learning, we will provide opportunities for the young carer to complete home learning at school (during school times) or/and amend home learning expectations, as appropriate
- Make links with other Young Carers around the community
- Pupil voice will be gathered annually.

To support young carers with their mental health, we will:

- Provide emotional support as appropriate
- If a young carer is falling behind their peers academically, we will put interventions in place as appropriate
- If a young carer is struggling with attendance, we will have open conversations with families around barriers to attendance/ punctuality and put any support that may be needed into place

To allow a young carer to connect with other young carers, we will:

- Work closely with the Young Carers in Schools Project

Safeguarding

St Mary's Primary School actively promotes the welfare and wellbeing of all pupils. Where appropriate, the school will refer a young carer to the local authority for a referral with

permission of the parents/carers. The school will follow the school's safeguarding policy regarding any young carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring.

The young carer champion will consult with relevant colleagues, and other agencies, regarding their caring responsibilities, with the consent of the young carer.

Gemma Barnett and Tracey Porter
SENDCo and Pastoral Lead

This policy was agreed by:
Morwenna Dunstan
Caroline Layton
Date: