Caister Primary Federation Young Carers Policy

At Caister Primary Federation, we aim to recognise who all our young carers are, celebrate the many skills they have acquired through their caring experiences and emphasise it's something to be proud of.

This policy aims to ensure our young carers are offered appropriate support to access the education and other services to which they are entitled.

Definition
Young carers are children and young people who provide care to another family member. The level of care they provide would usually be undertaken by an adult and because of this they take on a level of responsibility that is above their age and development. This is likely to have a significant impact on their childhood experiences.

The person they look after will have one or more of the following:

- Physical disability
- Sensory disability
- Learning disability
- Mental health problem
- Chronic illness
- Substance misuse problem

They may also be taking on a caring role if they are:

- growing up with disabled siblings,
- in a family where there has been recent serious or terminal illness diagnosed,
- coping with illness in wider family.

Caring Tasks
A young carer will take on additional responsibilities, often above their age and development. A young carer might be providing the main care or share responsibilities with another family member. The caring tasks that a young carer has to deal with can range from:

Task	Examples of care
Nursing care:	giving medication, injections, changing dressings, assisting with mobility etc.
Personal intimate care	washing, dressing, feeding and helping with toilet requirements.
Emotional care:	being compliant, monitoring the emotional state of the person cared for, listening, being a shoulder to cry on, supporting a parent through depression and trying to cheer them up. In cases where a young carer is supporting an adult with drug/alcohol misuse problem, they will often take a leading role in trying to keep that person safe.
Domestic care:	doing a substantial amount of housework, cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry etc.
Financial care:	running the household, bill paying, benefit collection, completion of financial/administrative documents etc.
Child care:	taking responsibility for younger siblings in addition to their other caring responsibilities.
Communication & Interpreting:	communicating on behalf of the adult or family with agencies or services and interpreting for a language or sensory impairment.

Possible effect on education

At Caister Primary Federation, we acknowledge that there are likely to be young carers among our students, and that being a young carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's access to education and attainment.

Because of their responsibilities at home, a young carer might:

- Have erratic or poor school attendance
- Arrive late at school
- Decline in academic achievement
- Not complete homework
- Not attend out of school activities or school trips
- Lack motivation
- Have back problems, aches and pains or patterns of being generally unwell
- Appear withdrawn, isolated from peers, have difficulties socialising
- Show, anxiety, depression, anger, self-harming behaviour
- Have poor concentration (due to worrying about the person who is cared for)
- Have poor home/ school relationship
- Have parents who do not attend parents evening or lack of overall contact with school
- Have false signs of maturity, assuming an adult role in social situations or have difficulty enjoying childhood activities

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). School may need to make alternative arrangements for communication about attainment.

Key findings from 'Hidden from view' report from the Children's Society, 2013.

1. Latest census statistics 2013 reveal there are 166,363 young carers in England, compared to around 139,000 in 2001. This is likely to be an underrepresentation of the true picture as many remain under the radar of professionals. 2. One in 12 young carers is caring for more than 15 hours per week. Around one in 20 misses school because of their caring responsibilities. 3. Young carers are 1.5 times more likely than their peers to be from black, Asian or minority ethnic communities, and are twice as likely to not speak English as their first language. 4. Young carers are 1.5 times more likely than their peers to have a special educational need or a disability. 5. The average annual income for families with a young carer is £5000 less than families who do not have a young carer. 6. There is no strong evidence that young carers are more likely than their peers to come into contact with support agencies, despite government recognition that this needs to happen. 7.Young carers have significantly lower educational attainment at GCSE level, the equivalent to nine grades lower overall than their peers e.g. the difference between nine B's and nine C's. 8. Young carers are more likely than the national average to be not in education, employment or training (NEET) between the ages of 16 and 19.
Many will be late to school and unable to complete their homework on time. When at school young carers may have difficulty concentrating due to anxiety about the person they care for. In addition to academic problems, many young carers have difficulty integrating socially within the school environment, with some being teased or bullied by their peers. In spite of these problems the majority of young carers will not be identified as such by staff in schools, partly because young carers and their families often remain silent about their caring responsibilities due to fears of the reactions of statutory agencies and peers and the stigma surrounding some health conditions, addictions and disabilities or they are unaware that help may be available.

Support Offered
Caister Primary Federation acknowledges that young carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education and opportunities offered through the life of a school.

Through this policy, our school is giving the message that Young Carers education and school experience is important. We will support Young Carers' in making the most of their educational opportunity and to enjoy the same experiences as their peers without caring responsibilities.

Caister Primary Federation will have:

- A designated member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) with responsibility for Young Carers
- At least two Young Carers Champions from Teaching/TA staff who will support Young Carers on a day-to-day basis, to provide support/advice etc. as required.
- A designated governor with responsibility for monitoring the school actions for Young Carers

As a federation we will:

- Support our Young Carers in accordance with our Young Carers Agreement
- Hold half termly meet ups that will provide Young Carers with the opportunity to meet, talk and relax together as a group
- Complete a Young Carers Passport with each Young Carer and review annually
- Regularly celebrate and raise awareness of the work of Young Carers through assemblies
- Discuss our Young Carers, when relevant, during weekly SLT safeguarding meetings
- Hold half termly meetings between designated Young Carers Champions and SLT with responsibility for Young Carers, to ensure the needs of our Young Carers are being met
- Ensure that appropriate information is shared with school staff in order that there is an awareness of the young carer's situation.
- Respect the family and Young Carer's right to privacy – we will only share information with people on a need-to-know basis. We appreciate, for example, 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 whilst being alert to any safeguarding concerns.
- Provide annual Young Carers training to all staff
- Encourage effective use of the PSHRE (Personal, Social, Health, Relationships and Economic Education) curriculum, to explore the rights of children, the roles and responsibilities of young carers, and the challenges they face. We will use PSHRE lessons to promote positive images of disability, challenging stereotypes and discrimination. We will promote discussion regarding caring and issues surrounding illness and disability, to promote a fuller understanding, acceptance and respect.
- Adopt a healthy attitude to different illnesses to try and reduce stigmas attached to illnesses such as Mental Health problems and disabilities.
- Avoid stigmatisation or labelling of pupils who are carers
- Have an awareness of attendance and punctuality being affected by caring responsibilities e.g. taking younger siblings to and from school or when caring tasks during the night cause lateness.

- Ensure that school policies, such as those for enrolment, attendance, bullying and behaviour afford recognition to young carers, as they are reviewed following our usual school cycle
- Put Young Carers and their family in touch with the local Young Carers Service and other organisations who can offer support.
- When required, organise a Young Carers Needs Assessment through Norfolk County Council and refer our Young Carers for support from Carers Matter Norfolk. We will liaise with any family support workers working with the Young Carer, as a result.
- Ensure that the whole school is committed to meeting the needs of Young Carers and that pupils have access to the appropriate information regarding the support that is available.

Additionally:

- We will provide Young Carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers.
- We 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.
- We will ensure Young Carers can access all available support services in school and other appropriate services/agencies.
- We will follow safeguarding procedures regarding any young carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring.
- We will 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.
- We 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 phone home (when needed)
- Negotiable deadlines for homework (when needed)
- Breakfast provided in times of need
- ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) sessions with our ELSA trained practitioner in times of emotional need
- Arrangements for schoolwork to be sent home (where there is a genuine crisis).
- Any absence for a young carer is monitored carefully
- Access for parents with impaired mobility
- Alternative communication options for parents who are sensory impaired or housebound
- Advice to parents if there are difficulties in transporting a young carer to school

We also recognise the need to ensure key information is passed onto relevant High Schools when our Young Carers prepare to leave Caister Junior School in Year 6. We will fill in a Transition Form with our Young Carers for them to share with to their new school.

Appendix:

YC 1 Year 6 Transition to Secondary School Form
YC 2 Young Carers Agreement
YC 3 Young Carers Passport

Adopted by Governors in July 2025