Fordbridge Community Primary School

Achieving excellence together

YOUNG CARERS POLICY

Approved by Mrs H Simcox: Date: September 2026

Date: September 2026

Reviewed by: Ms Sam Spencer: Chair of Governors

Review date: September 2027

At Fordbridge Community Primary School, we recognise that a number of our pupils have caring responsibilities at home. We are committed to identifying and supporting young carers to ensure they have equal access to education, emotional wellbeing, and opportunities to thrive.

A young carer is aged between 5 and 25 years old. Young Carers look after someone (family member or friend) who has an illness, disability, mental health condition, and alcohol/subsidence dependency. Young Carers take on practical and/or emotional caring responsibilities that would be normally expected of an adult.

We recognise that some of our pupils may be Young Carers, and we understand that their responsibilities at home can significantly affect their education and overall wellbeing. Being a young carer can present unique challenges that may hinder a child's ability to fully engage with school life and reach their academic potential.

As a result of their caring role, a young carer may:

- Have irregular or poor school attendance
- Arrive late to school
- Experience a decline in academic progress
- Struggle to complete homework consistently
- Miss out on extracurricular activities or school trips
- Show signs of low motivation or persistent tiredness
- Appear withdrawn or socially isolated, and find it difficult to build peer relationships
- Exhibit emotional distress, including anxiety, depression, anger, or self-harming behaviour
- Have difficulty concentrating, often due to worry about their family member
- Take on adult roles in social settings or struggling to enjoy age-appropriate experiences

Additionally, engaging with parents or carers of Young Carers may sometimes be challenging. Families may feel anxious about being judged or fear that their circumstances could lead to unnecessary intervention. As a school, we aim to be sensitive and flexible in our approach. We may need to explore alternative ways to communicate with families and ensure that support is provided in a way that builds trust and understanding.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy is informed by:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Care Act 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current version)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Young Carers in Schools guidance

This demonstrates a clear statutory basis.

Young carers are a potentially vulnerable group. Any concerns regarding a pupil's safety, welfare, neglect, emotional wellbeing or inappropriate caring responsibilities will be reported and managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Identifying Young Carers:

We are committed to identifying and supporting young carers as early as possible. During the school enrolment process for new pupils, we seek to identify families where a parent or family member has a disability, long-term physical or mental health condition, or issues related to substance misuse. Where appropriate, we ask whether the child has any caring responsibilities and whether they may require additional support. If a pupil is identified as a young carer, we will work with them and their family that recognises and addresses their specific needs of being a Young Carer within school. Where necessary, referrals may be made to Solihull Young Carers for a formal assessment. We also remain mindful that some young carers may not exhibit obvious signs of their role, particularly where a family member has a hidden disability, mental health condition, or substance misuse issue. Therefore, our staff are trained to remain vigilant and sensitive to the possibility of a caring role, even in the absence of typical indicators.

Young Carers in School

Our designated Young Carers Leads are:

Mrs E Beavan – Assistant Headteacher (Miss M Lake MAT LEAVE COVER)
Miss N Timmins – Assistant Child and Family Support Worker

They are the main point of contact for young carers and their families and coordinate all support and interventions. They are responsible for:

- Ensuring that young carers are given equal opportunities to access a full and balanced education, along with the same future career pathways as their peers.
- Actively promoting and coordinating the necessary support to help young carers thrive both academically and emotionally.
- Working collaboratively with external agencies, including adult services, to provide comprehensive and joined-up support for young carers and their families

Young carers will be consulted about the support they receive and encouraged to contribute to decisions affecting their education and wellbeing.

The Young Carers Leads will regularly monitor attendance, punctuality, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing data to identify emerging concerns and provide timely support.

Support offered:

At Fordbridge Community Primary School, we are committed to supporting our Young Carers through a range of targeted initiatives.

- Monthly Drop-In Sessions**:** Held in school by our designated Young Carers Leads. These provide a safe, informal space to talk, share experiences, and access support.
- Termly Young Carers Trips**:** Organised to provide respite, fun, and opportunities to build peer relationships.
- Regular Check-Ins**:** Pupils are offered emotional support, mentoring, and help with academic or pastoral concerns.
- Staff Awareness Training**:** All staff receive training to recognise and understand the needs of young carers.
- Confidentiality is respected at all times unless there is a safeguarding concern.

We are proud of the supportive, inclusive environment that we provide for Young Carers.