



Eveswell and Somerton Primary School Partnership Young Carers' Policy 2020

Eveswell and Somerton Primary Schools Policy for Young Carers

Rationale:

Eveswell and Somerton Primary Schools are committed to providing an appropriate and high quality education to all the children living in our local area. We believe that all children, including those identified as being young carers, have a common entitlement to a broad and balanced academic and social curriculum, which is accessible to them, and to be fully included in all aspects of school life.

We believe that all children should be equally valued in school. We will strive to eliminate prejudice and discrimination, and to develop an environment where all children can flourish and feel safe.

Eveswell and Somerton Primary Schools are committed to inclusion. Part of the schools' strategic planning for improvement is to develop cultures, policies and practices that include all learners. We aim to engender a sense of community and belonging, and to offer opportunities to learners who may be experiencing difficulties at home in their role as a young carer.

This does not mean that we will treat all learners in the same way, but that we will respond to learners in ways which take account of their varied life experiences and needs.

We believe that educational inclusion is about equal opportunities for all learners, whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, impairment, attainment and background. We pay particular attention to the provision for and the achievement of different groups of learners:

- Those who are young carers; those who are in families under stress; others such as those who are sick;
- Girls and boys, men and women
- Minority ethnic and faith groups, travellers, asylum seekers and refugees
- Learners who need support to learn English as an additional language (EAL)
- Learners with special educational needs
- Learners who are disabled
- Those who are gifted and talented

- Those who are looked after by the local authority
- Any learners who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion

This policy describes the way we meet the need of children who experience barriers to their learning. We believe that many pupils, at some time in their school career, may experience difficulties which affect their learning, and we recognise that these may be long or short term.

At Eveswell and Somerton Primary Schools we aim to identify these needs as they arise and provide teaching and learning contexts which enable every child to achieve to his or her full potential.

Aim of the policy

- The aim of this policy document is to raise the awareness among school staff about the needs of young carers and to support them in establishing a whole school approach to address the issues that may arise within the school setting.
- The policy will hopefully provide teachers with a range of referral routes, also enabling them to provide young carers with information and advice on where to seek assistance.

The ALNCo has attended training for The Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure 2010.

The main aims included:

- How carers are identified
- Provide carers with the information they need
- To let carers know that they may have a legal right to a needs assessment
- To signpost carers to other sources of advice and support

As a result of this training school staff are regularly updated with any young carers information and training and signposting are available for all staff.

Eveswell and Somerton Primaries are also familiar with The Young Carers in Schools Wales programme which is based on the hugely successful initiative developed in partnership with The Children's Society and Carers Trust for schools in England.

The programme has been adapted for Wales in order to:

- Ensure young carers aren't being missed in schools.
- Provide a national approach to support teaching, learning and awareness raising in schools.
- Work alongside the development of the Successful Futures curriculum, ensuring the programme provides an integral approach to supporting vulnerable learners, of which young carers make up a large majority.
- Provide a real opportunity for joint working with health, local authorities, young carers, their families and young carers services.

(Recognising and responding to the needs of the young carers is a fundamental part of the Social Services and Well-being Act and as such, is an enabler for meeting well-being outcomes for local health boards and local authorities.

The programme was officially launched at the Senedd on 6th December 2017 supported and attended by The Minister for Children and Social Care, Huw Irranca-Davies. The Cabinet Secretary for Education and the minister released a joint statement ahead of the

launch, recognising the importance of supporting young carers in schools and outlining details of a thematic review by Estyn in 2018-19).

What is a Young Carer?

A young carer is anyone up to the age of 18 who is affected by care responsibilities within the home, where the person being cared for is disabled, has a long term illness, mental health issues or difficulties resulting from substance and or alcohol use.

Young carers may be primary carers i.e. caring for a parent or carer, or a secondary carer i.e. helping to care for a sibling or older relative.

Definition of Caring

Caring responsibilities are defined not just in terms of practical support, such as carrying out practical tasks, for instance, shopping, cooking, cleaning etc. but also in terms of emotional support and the emotional impact on young people of care needs within a family.

Under reporting

Recent research has indicated an under-reporting of Young Carers in Britain. Young carers are frequently a 'hidden group of carers and less likely to be identified than adult carers due to a number of factors.

- Young people frequently hide their caring responsibilities in an attempt not to be seen as 'different' by their peers.
- Families frequently do not admit to the amount of care being provided by children and young people for fear of repercussions and a perception that agencies will judge them negatively, rather than provide support.
- Young people often feel embarrassed to talk about their caring responsibilities, particularly if the care need arises from poor mental health or substance and alcohol use.
- Agencies concerned with care for adults, who may be working with disabled adults or adults with long term health issues, may not be picking up on the needs of the family group and may not be linking effectively with agencies tasked with the provision of social care for children and young people.
- The needs of secondary carers will rarely meet the thresholds for support by statutory social care agencies, despite the fact that secondary carers are frequently subjected to the same demands emotionally and physically- as primary carers.

Possible impact on child's education

Caring responsibilities can impact on young people's education in a number of ways.

- **Lateness-** many young people may be late for school on a regular basis as a result of caring duties within the home or as a result of overtiredness causing them to oversleep.
- **Tiredness-** many young carers will have interrupted sleep patterns or be over-tired as a result of having to complete household tasks.
- **Non-attendance-** some carers will take time off school because they are worried about the person they are caring for, or because they are carrying out caring tasks that prevent attendance at school.

- **Late/no submission of homework** -many young carers will find it difficult to find time to complete school assignments and may also have no one at home who can offer assistance with more difficult assignments.
- **Lack of participation in extra-curricular activities and school trips** many families of young carers will be totally dependent on benefits and activities may be difficult to afford for many families. Many young carers will also be unable to stay at school or access other activities if they have to rush home to support family members.
- **Challenging behaviour**- some young carers will exhibit challenging behaviour in environments away from the home setting, to offset the fact that they have to take on adult responsibilities and behave in an adult fashion within the home.
- **Difficulties in establishing friendships**- many young carers will be unable to develop school friendships outside school, as they may not be able to invite other children home or visit friends in their homes. As a result of poverty or caring responsibilities, they may also have restricted access to out of school clubs and activities that other children take for granted.
- **Poor health**- many young carers are carrying out tasks for which they are physically ill equipped, which in turn impacts on their overall health. In addition to this, long term caring responsibilities can impact significantly on the mental health of young people. Both aspects can affect school attendance.
- **Poverty**- many families will be dependent solely on state benefit for their income, affecting their ability to afford clothing and materials for school and the ability to access school trips.
- **Family isolation/involvement**- parents will often be unwilling or unable to attend school functions and parents evening, thus becoming more isolated from the school environment and unaware of issues and problems their children may be experiencing.
- **Poor education/career choices**- young carers will often not achieve as well as they could at school and may have poor initial exam and teacher assessment results. They will also often feel that they are good at caring and should therefore automatically go into a care profession, without thinking through the implications of this choice.

Eveswell and Somerton Primary Schools seek to develop the following:

- A supportive environment for young carers by establishing a whole school approach to the identification of need and the establishment of an appropriate referral mechanism and network to meet the individual support needs of young people with caring responsibilities.
- Identify a named member of staff, alongside the Headteacher with responsibility for ensuring that carers are identified and their needs met.
- Ensure that school records (My Profiles) identify the support needs of individual young carers and that these support needs are reflected in records accompanying children and young people within any transition to other educational providers while ensuring that the appropriate confidentiality procedures are in place to cover the necessary information sharing.
- Inset training for staff to include training on the possible identification of young carers, issues impacting on education and support/referral mechanisms available via external agencies
- Promotion of additional links with adult care agencies, who may be able to support families and relieve care responsibilities of young people

- Offering privacy to young people when investigating frequent lateness or non-attendance at school.
- Offering young carers the facility to stay in contact with the person they are caring for during school hours by means of the most appropriate communication methods.
- Allowing appropriate leeway and extensions to young carers for completion of homework/ home learning.
- Allowing appropriate leeway with regards punctuality and attendance at school to take into account unavoidable caring responsibilities.
- Providing a trusted adult within the school setting with whom the young carer feels comfortable in addressing difficult issues arising from their situation. This may not be the same person as the named person with responsibility for carers.
- Supporting parents with mobility and/or access issues to facilitate and maintain regular contact with the school.
- Support young people in maintaining telephone access to their families during the school day.
- Including issues on caring within the PSE curriculum can help to develop a holistic understanding of caring needs and responsibilities.

Eveswell and Somerton Primary Schools will provide Key contact information if a young carer is identified as needing additional support:

- Newport Young Carers (Barnardos)
114 Lower Dock Street
NEWPORT
Gwent
NP20 2AF
Phone: 01633 251192
- Newport Families First (Preventions)
Phone 01633 851782 or
Email families.1st@newport.gov.uk.
- Caerphilly Young Carers (Barnardos) – 01633 612712
- Monmouthshire Young Carers (Crossroads) – 01495 769996
- Blaenau Gwent Young Carers (CRI) - 08000 323339
- Torfaen Young Carers - 01495 762200

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