

# OGAT Young Carers' Policy

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At Outwood Grange Academies Trust we believe that all children and young people have the right to an education, regardless of what is happening at home. When a young person looks after someone who has a serious illness, disability or substance misuse problem, he or she may need a little extra support to get the most out of their education.

### **What is a Young Carer?**

A young carer is someone under 18 who helps to look after a family member or friend, with a disability, illness, mental health condition or misuses drugs or alcohol.

### **What might a Young Carer do?**

- Practical tasks, such as cooking, housework and shopping.
- Physical care, such as helping someone out of bed.
- Emotional support, such as talking to someone who is distressed.
- Personal care, such as helping someone dress.
- Managing the family budget and collecting prescriptions.
- Helping to give medicine.
- Helping someone communicate.
- Looking after brothers and sisters.

### **How to identify a Young Carer and the possible effects on their education**

- Regular or increased lateness or absence
- Erratic or poor attendance
- Concentration problems, anxiety, tiredness or worry in school
- Emotional distress
- Physical problems, such as back pain from lifting
- False signs of maturity because of assuming adult roles
- Behavioural problems, sometimes the result of anger or frustration expressed inappropriately
- Lack of time for extra-curricular activities
- Limited social skills
- Feeling that no one understands and that no support is available
- Low self esteem
- Under-achievement and late or incomplete homework: may be a sudden unexplained drop in attainment
- Isolation; 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
- Difficulties in engaging parents; parents not attending parents' evenings. 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)

### **What is available to Young Carers at Outwood Grange Academies Trust (compulsory)**

- Each Young Carer will be given a Young Carer's Card to be stuck in their planner (Appendix A).
- The details of a designated Young Carers' space and the Young Carers' School Lead will be put in each planner, along with a list of Young Carer agencies.
- Each of our academies have a designated Young Carers' School Lead. Contact details can be found on each individual academy website.
- Each of our academies websites will include local and national Young Carer agencies which can offer support.
- Information will only be shared with professionals and agencies on a 'need to know' basis in order to support Young Carers and their families.
- Each academy will run a PSHE lesson on the challenges faced by Young Carers once a year
- 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 will ensure Young Carers can access all available support services in school and other appropriate services/agencies.
- We recognise that flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of Young Carers. Available provision may include (but is not limited to): Access to a telephone during breaks and lunchtime to phone home; Negotiable deadlines for homework/coursework (when needed); Access to homework club; Lunchtime detentions will be considered rather than after school detentions (where possible); Arrangements for schoolwork to be sent home (where there is a genuine crisis); 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; To be able to attend appointments throughout the day.

### **Best Practice for Young Carers at Outwood Grange Academies Trust (non-compulsory)**

- Each academy will have a Young Carers' Lead
- Each academy will have Young Carers' Ambassadors (one in each year group)
- After school club's will be arranged for Young Carers so they can speak to other students
- The Young Carers' Leads from each academy will meet twice a year, which would include various agencies such as the NHS, support agencies, the police etc.
- Roles are to be explained – what is a Young Carer Ambassador?
- There will be Young Carers' School Award

- Support should be put in place for the Young Carers' Leads and the Young Carers' Ambassadors

## Appendix A

### I AM A YOUNG CARER

#### TRAFFIC LIGHT SYSTEM

*This is to be shown to any member of staff if a Young Carer needs some additional assistance and they cannot communicate this verbally e.g. If a Young Carer is late to a lesson due to an incident which has happened at home. The Young Carer can point to how they feel and the correct support can be provided for them.*

#### GREEN:

I just need a couple of minutes and then I can talk. I am happy to wait in the lesson.

#### AMBER:

I need some time out. I need to wait outside of the lesson for a few minutes.

#### RED:

I need support and to access the Bridge.