

## **Helsby High School**

### **Young Carers Policy**

#### **Introduction**

This Young Carers Policy was written by young carers/expert staff from Cheshire Young Carers and the member of the Senior Leadership Team with responsibility for Welfare and Safeguarding, a representative from Helsby High School.

#### **Commitment**

Helsby High School's commitment to young carers is to support the emotional and academic needs of young carers to achieve in their education and to aspire in education as people, regardless of complexities of needs and home.

This policy explains how we will live up to our commitment

#### **Definition**

A young carer is a child or young person under the age of 18 living with or carrying out a significant physical or emotional caring role and assuming a level of responsibility for another person, which would normally be undertaken by an adult.

They can be caring for any of the following-

- Parent or sibling suffering from mental health issues
- Parent or sibling with a physical disability
- Parent or sibling with substance misuse problems
- Parent or sibling with learning disabilities
- Parent or sibling with a terminal illness

#### **Young Carers and the effects on their education**

Being a young carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education. Because of their responsibilities at home, a young carer might experience:

- Being late or absent due to responsibilities at home
- Concentration problems, anxiety or worry in school/college
- Emotional distress
- Tiredness in school/college
- Lack of time for homework
- Poor attainment
- Physical problems such as back pain from lifting
- False signs of maturity because of assuming adult roles
- Behavioural problems (taking out their anger and frustration)
- Lack of time for extra-curricular activities
- Isolation, embarrassed to take friends home
- Limited social skills
- Bullying
- Feeling that no one understands and that no support is available
- Low self esteem

## **Quotes from young carers**

"I worry about my dad all day when I am at school and find it hard to concentrate"

Tom age 10

"I need someone to talk to at school about my home life"

Jenny age 9

"I feel worried about my mum when I am at school; I feel upset and can't tell my friends"

Amy age 8

## **Support offered**

Helsby High School ensures that the following support is available for all young carers within the school.

- Helsby High School has an identified young carers representative: member of the Senior Leadership Team with responsibility for Welfare and Safeguarding. A second named person is the SENCO.
- All staff are made aware of who their young carers representative is and the reporting/referral process to this person.
- Helsby High School has an effective, internal reporting system between all staff and the young carers' representative.
- Any child/young person who is identified as a young carer whilst at Helsby High School will be referred to the appropriate services.
- Helsby High School has a procedure for identifying young carers on enrolment into the Helsby High School.
- When a young carer leaves the Helsby High School, either to proceed into further education or for any other reasons, details of their caring role and home situation will be passed on to the next school or college, subject to consent from the family.
- Helsby High School will be flexible with late attendance due to a young carer's caring role (where this is a regular occurrence, provision will be put into place, complying with all current policy.)
- Helsby High School will make every effort to ensure that the root cause of any lateness is made apparent and appropriate support is sourced. A plan of support may be put in place with the young person and parent (s) involved.
- Helsby High School will at all times be flexible with regards to young carers and their issues upholding confidentiality. The young carer will be consulted regarding who their 'young carer' status can be shared with.
- Helsby High School acknowledges that young carers will not be obliged to discuss their family situation unless they feel comfortable. The young person's caring role will be acknowledged and respected.

- Helsby High School will ensure young carers can access all available support services in school, including the counsellor.
- Helsby High School will provide young carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private, and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers.
- Helsby High School will provide access to a phone during breaks and lunchtime, for young carers to call home.
- When needed, Helsby High School will be negotiable deadlines for homework/coursework with teaching staff.
- Helsby High School will ensure that young carers have access to a homework club.
- Where applicable, Helsby High School will give detentions at lunchtimes rather than after school.
- Helsby High School will provide access for parents with impaired mobility.
- Helsby High School will provide alternative communication options for parents who are sensory impaired or are housebound; this will include alternative communication options for parents' evenings.
- Appropriate provisions will be put into place for young carers whose parents do not drive due to illness or disability.
- Helsby High School will always seek the support of relevant outside agencies, including children's social care, if they become aware of any cases of a child/young person who may be carrying out an inappropriate caring role, which is causing immediate concern for their safety.
- Helsby High School will work in partnership with the commissioned support service for Young Carers in CWAC, currently Carers 4 All, to ensure that a high quality standard of support for young carers is achieved at all times.
- Helsby High School will commit to accessing and providing training for staff about young carers and their issues.