

Appendix to Equalities Policy – Northgate High School Young Carers

Introduction

The Equalities Policy states that all students have the right to an education, regardless of context. This is especially important when a student is a carer.

When a student looks after someone in their family who has a serious illness, disability or substance misuse problem, he or she may need a little extra support to help him or her get the most out of school.

Definition:

A young carer is a student under 18 years of age who helps to look after a family member who is disabled, physically or mentally ill or has a substance misuse problem. At Northgate, we recognise that caring can involve physical or emotional care. The level of responsibility assumed by a young carer is often inappropriate to their age and at a level beyond simply helping out with jobs at home, which is a normal part of growing up; as such it may impact on the education of the young person.

Through the work of the Young Carers Group and pastoral and progress systems, students at Northgate are:

- Appropriately identified as a vulnerable group on school information systems
- Offered appropriate support and guidance in school
- Monitored closely for their progress
- Able to participate in age-appropriate activities and events
- Recognised and celebrated for their achievements
- Able to retain privacy as a *young carer* if they wish

Aims

Identifying a Young Carer

- It is important to identify and recognise young carers. Unless the school is advised about a student's home circumstances, young carers risk first being identified by negative aspects of their behaviour or work and are vulnerable to under achievement. Some young carers worry about appearing different to their peers, bullying or interference in their family life and may seek to conceal their role from their peers and from teachers. During transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3, students in Year 6 who are young carers will be identified to ensure continuing support is in place for them.

Most young carers will meet the definition of a 'child in need' under the Children Act 1989 and maybe entitled to an assessment from Children's Services. In the event of any young carers being considered to be at risk of significant harm the school's safeguarding policy will be followed.

Some of the Warning Signs that a Student is in a Caring Role are:

- Regular lateness or unauthorised absence, possibly increasing periodically
- Tiredness during the school day
- Erratic responses to homework with incomplete, late or work not being presented
- Lack of concentration, anxiety or worry
- Under-achievement for potential capability
- Behavioural problems, especially inappropriate responses possibly resulting from anger or frustration
- Fewer peer friendships than expected but good relationship with adults and appearing mature for their age
- Being the victim of bullying, perhaps linked to a family member's disability or state of health, e.g. substance misuse problem, lack of hygiene, physical appearance etc.
- Lack of interest in extra-curricular activities, especially after the school day
- Apparent parental disinterest, e.g. non-attendance at progress or information evenings, delays in responding to phone calls/letters, etc.

Additional support for Young Carers at Northgate High School

At Northgate, we recognise that each young carer is an individual and will require bespoke support from a menu which includes:

- Two members of staff with special responsibility for young carers, who are known to students and staff. These leads will put young carers and their families in touch with Suffolk Young Carers' Service. Each young carer will have an identified 'key worker' to support them at times of need.
- Young Carers Group, which allows students to access support and information and allows young carers a support forum.
- A visual display which offers informational leaflets and posters for potential Young Carers. The school will raise the profile of young carers through assemblies, tutor activities and appropriate PSHE lessons.
- Liaison and reasonable adjustment for young carers who are unable to attend out of school activities e.g. detention, concerts, etc. due to their caring role.
- Consideration of communication with home at times of stress – eg the opportunity for young carers to telephone home during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Reasonable adjustment to accommodate parental liaison around progress and pastoral issues e.g. telephone consultation for parents' evening events, parking arrangements.
- Liaison with subject teachers to make reasonable adjustment at times of need around deadlines for homework.
- Homework club.
- Extra-curricular activities to engage with other Young Carers and referrals for any trips away / financial support when appropriate.
- School counsellor .
- Attendance intervention, work support during absence.
- Students and staff made aware of support online (www.suffolkfamilycarers.org)

The school will work towards the Young Carers in Schools Award and regular liaison will take place with Suffolk Young Carers.

Leadership and Management

At Northgate High School, two teaching assistant are the named leads for Young Carers supported by the Assistant Headteacher for Progress.

The Progress Directors will monitor the academic progress of young carer and intervene as necessary at key data analysis points.

The named lead will ensure appropriate access to Continuing Professional Development and information regarding Young Carers for all staff via the Suffolk Young Carers Schools Worker.

Intended outcomes (Students, Staff, Parents)

Students

- For young carers, this appendix to the Equalities Policy will ensure they are supported in school and understood by staff
- Access and equality of opportunity will be upheld
- The publicising of young carers will raise awareness in the school community that other students in our school are young carers

Staff

- Staff will be aware of the group of Young Carers in the school, and the students will be identified via SIMs and Go 4 Schools.
- Staff will be aware of the difficulties faced by young carers, offering them extra intervention as well as reasonable adjustments for homework and detentions

Parents

- The parents of Young Carers will receive regular information and will be offered reasonable adjustments to enable effective communication
- They will know and identify the named lead and will be able to communicate via telephone and email if support is needed

Responsibility for monitoring

- The named leads will meet with the Suffolk Young Carers Schools Worker on a termly basis to review progress towards the schools award for Young Carers
- The named leads will monitor young carers attendance and behaviour in school in liaison with the Pastoral and Leadership teams.