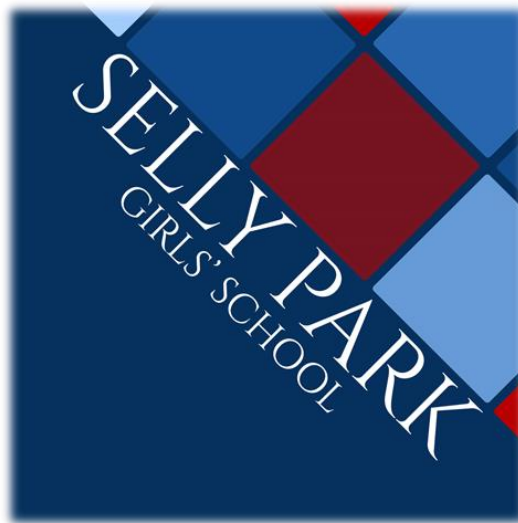


# Young Carers Policy

November 2021



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# Young Carers Policy

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## 1. Introduction

At Selly Park Girls' School 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 in their family who has a serious illness, disability or substance misuse problem, she may need a little extra support to help her get the most out of school.

The whole school is committed to meeting the needs of young carers so that they are enabled and encouraged to attend and enjoy school and have equal access to their education as their peers. This is reflected in all relevant school policies. At Selly Park Technology College we create a supportive environment that responds to each pupil's personal circumstances. Pupils and their families have the confidence to inform our school that their child has caring responsibilities.

### **Who are young carers?**

Some young children, often from an early age, take on regular or ongoing care and support for another family member (usually a parent or sibling) with a physical or mental illness, a disability, or who is struggling with substance misuse.

- The average age of a young carer is 12 years
- Over 13,000 young carers care for up to 50 hours a week
- Young carers are more likely to be bullied by their peers
- Young carers are more likely to live in low income families
- Young adult carers aged between 16 and 18 years are twice as likely to be not in education, employment, or training (NEET).

Young carers often have to assume a level of responsibility that would normally only be asked of an adult. The stress and anxiety that this can cause can leave them feeling isolated and unsupported. Many miss out on their childhood and youth as time constraints make it impossible for them to attend school or take part in leisure activities with their peers.

## 2. In Our School

- Miss C Johnson is the designated member of staff with special responsibility for young carers.
- Mr J Gibson in the SLT lead designated for the strategic overview of young carers at Selly Park.

- PSHE lessons will consider the challenges faced by young carers
- We put young carers in touch with the local Young Carers Service. We can also put families in touch with other support services.
- Arrangements can be made for families with mobility and communication difficulties to involve them in parents' evenings.
- We respect the right to privacy and will only share information about our pupils and families with people who need to know to help you.
- We consider alternatives if a young carer is unable to attend out of school activities e.g. detention, sports coaching, concerts, due to their caring role.
- Young carers may be allowed to telephone home during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Parents are given advice about how to get their children into school where transport is a problem.

### **The Children's Society:**

By definition, a young carer is someone under the age of 18 who looks after a family member or friend who has a physical or mental health condition, or misuses drugs or alcohol. They may also look after brothers, sisters or elderly relatives too.

We have worked with those as young as five years old but there could be child carers who are even younger.

Growing up should be about exploring and finding out who you are. But for young carers who have to look after a loved one, it's a little more tricky.

Having to care for someone can often mean missing school or having to bail on friends. It can put their childhood on the back burner. Many young carers, and the people around them, don't even realise they're carers.

39% said nobody in their school was even aware of their caring responsibilities  
27% of young carers of secondary school age experience educational difficulties or miss school, and where pupils are caring for someone who misuses drugs or alcohol, 40% have educational difficulties.

Young carers are four times more likely to live in households where no adults are in work. This highlights the significant number of young carers likely to be eligible for free school meals that would benefit from targeted support. **The likelihood is that there may be many Young Carers in our school, but they remain hidden.**

<https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/>

As a school we work closely with Spurgeons who are the organisation that undertakes assessments and in partnership with our school, provide support for

Young Carers and their families. They regularly come into school and work directly with our pupils and their families. More information can be found: <https://spurgeons.org/birmingham-childrens-centre-services/>

### 3. The referral processes

1. Speak to the young person in private – do not confront them in front of their peers. Explain the confidentiality rules that you operate within an age-appropriate language.
2. Establish what caring task they are performing and why. Find out how their caring role affects them: Do they struggle with schoolwork? Do they miss out on extra-curricular activities? Do they worry when they are out of contact with home? How can you help with these issues?
3. With the young person’s permission, speak to their parent/s or guardians and explain the effect that the young person’s caring role is having on their education. Are there other forms of support open to the family or another family member that could help more? Remember – few parents choose a caring role for their child: it is often the only option they are aware of and many feel very guilty about the effect their illness/disability has on their child.
4. Explain to parents and children that they may be entitled to an assessment of their needs from social services, who may be able to provide support.
5. Help the family to contact other agencies or your nearest Young Carers Project if they want you to.
6. Work out a plan with the family that is realistic and achievable and that will let the young carer attend school and get the most from their education.

Through work with Spurgeons the Eligibility Criteria for the delivery of tiers of support are as follows;

Tier 1	Low level/irregular caring role where needs can be met through universal provision e.g. access to mainstream services/telephone support and advice/online information and support and referrals or signposting to other relevant organisations. School support: *
Tier 2	Significant or regular caring role requiring additional support provided through group activities and a range of short break opportunities to develop peer support/enhance friendships/share experiences/develop skills and confidence. May also include referrals or signposting to other relevant organisations. School support:*
Tier 3	Excessive or harmful levels of caring responsibility with high levels of unmet need requiring a co-ordinated multi-agency response, lead professional required linked to FCAF. Time-limited holistic key worker

	support with young carer and their family will be provided. This tier level may also be appropriate for a life limiting diagnosis. School support:*
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#### 4. Legislation and guidance

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) states:

##### Assessment of young carers

If a local authority considers that a young carer may have support needs, it must carry out an assessment under section 17ZA of the Children Act 1989. The local authority must also carry out such an assessment if a young carer, or the parent of a young carer, requests one. Such an assessment must consider whether it is appropriate or excessive for the young carer to provide care for the person in question, in light of the young carer's needs and wishes. The Young Carers' (Needs Assessment) Regulations 2015<sup>16</sup> require local authorities to look at the needs of the whole family when carrying out a young carer's needs assessment. Young carers' assessments can be combined with assessments of adults in the household, with the agreement of the young carer and adults concerned.