Young Carers 2026

October 2026

Part of the Safeguarding Umbrella

Approved by Governing Body: October 2026

Review date: October 2027

Introduction.

At Falcon Junior School we believe that all children and young people have the right to an education regardless of what is happening at home. When a child looks after someone in their family with a history of long term physical or mental health illness, a disability or alcohol or substance abuse the young person may need some extra support to help them get the most out of school. This Young Carers' policy will set out how we will help any pupil who looks after someone at home.

Defining a Young Carer.

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. Caring can involve physical or emotional care, or taking responsibility for someone's safety or well- being. Young carers might also be defined as a young person whose own care and emotional need is significantly impacted by the needs and care of a member of the immediate family. 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.

Identifying a Young Carer.

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. Some Young Carers' worry about bullying or interference in their family life and may seek to conceal their role from their peers and from teachers.

Some of the warning signs that might indicate that a pupil has unrecognised responsibilities are:

• Regular lateness or unauthorised absence, possibly increasing.

• Tiredness in school.

• Erratic response to homework with incomplete, late or non-compliance to set tasks.

• Lack of concentration, anxiety or worry.

• Under-achievement.

• Behavioural problems, especially inappropriate responses possibly resulting from anger or frustration.

• Few or no peer friendships but possibly with a good relationship with adults and presenting as very mature for their age.

• Victim of bullying, perhaps linked to a family member's disability or state of health, e.g. substance misuse problem or due to Young Carer not being perceived by peers as dressing in the latest fashion.
• Lack of interest in extra-curricular activities, especially after school

• Apparent parental disinterest due to non-attendance at parent's meetings.

• Difficulty with completing homework tasks.

The above may be indicators of a range of problems, some not associated with a child having a caring role at home. However, in dealing with any child or young person exhibiting any of the above signs, staff should consider asking the child or young person if they are helping to look after

someone at home. Staff should also discuss their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and with colleagues with pastoral responsibilities for the child or young person.

School support for identified Young Carers'

Falcon Junior School has a named Young Carer Leads, Miss Tilney and Mrs Wagstaff, who monitors the support in place for identified Young Carers. School makes every effort to understand the particular needs and circumstance of the young carer and their family.

- Where possible, practical help will be offered to enable the young carer to attend school regularly and to take part in all school's activities.

- School seeks to support children who cannot complete homework tasks in the home environment due to their family responsibilities and supports young carers to attend extracurricular school based activities.

- Schools will liaise with support services to ensure that families can be advised where additional help may be found, this includes 'Carers Matter Norfolk' and 'BOOM! Young Carers'.

- If a parent is unable to travel to parents' meetings due to family circumstances, school staff will try to make alternative arrangements. The young carer or parent may request this.

- Schools will take an active role in seeking to identify and provide support to hidden young carers

    - School staff will have up to date training yearly to remind them of the identification and needs of young carers. This may be a stand-alone staff meeting or part of the Safeguarding yearly training.
    - Information on Young carers will be a part of the yearly assembly rota led by SLT. Regular visits from outside agencies will be encouraged
    - As part of the school pupil survey which happens yearly views on young carers will be gathered. This survey is implemented by class teachers and those with SEN are given additional support to access this.

Children Act 2004

Most young carers will meet the definition of a 'child in need' under the Children Act 2004 and may be 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 child protection procedures should be followed. Equality Act 2010 Young carers' have protected characteristics as defined by the Act because they are associated with a family member who has a disability or illness and cannot be discriminated against because of this. Children and Families Act 2014 The Act has a section on Young Carers' and, in conjunction with the adults focused Care Act, seeks to make sure that Young Carers get the support they need. Local authorities are expected to try and identify Young Carers so they can be offered support.

This policy has been agreed by Governors and SLT and will be reviewed annually.