



# **St Nicholas Catholic High School**

## **YOUNG CARERS POLICY**

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### 1. Guiding Principles

The St. Nicholas Catholic High School Young Carers Policy is rooted in the School Mission Statement which makes explicit the Christian Values on which the School is based and the sacredness and worth of each individual in the School community.

We aspire to embrace the Gospel and its values, celebrating uniqueness and diversity. Our learning, within an enterprise culture, is based upon trust and respect which define our relationships within the world family.

### 2. Rationale

St Nicholas High School has a tradition of high standards of behaviour and this policy aims to support students, parents, staff and governors in maintaining and improving those standards. Good standards of behaviour lead to better levels of achievement, enjoyment and participation in school life by all.

What makes us different as a Catholic school is that we care more about *who* a child becomes than merely *what* she or he becomes. In this way we seek to ensure that each student is not only prepared for society when they leave school but equipped to make a positive contribution for its betterment.

St Nicholas Catholic High School is committed to supporting young carers' emotional, educational and personal development to enable them to aspire and achieve in education regardless of complexities of their personal needs and home circumstances.

This policy sets out how we will live up to our commitment to increasing young carers' participation in education and supporting young carers with special education needs in conformity with Ofsted's Common Inspection Framework (September 2015) on monitoring young carers progress in education, the provisions of The Children and Families Act 2014 (Section 96) and The Children Act 1989 (Section 17ZB amended).

### 3. Introduction

This Young Carers Policy has been jointly produced by Cheshire Young Carers and St Nicholas Catholic High School.

### 4. Commitment

#### Definition of a young carer

A young carer is a child or young person under the age of 18 living with and providing regular significant personal, physical or emotional care support to another

family member, assuming a level of responsibility which would usually be associated only with an adult.

A child or young person can be caring for any of the following reasons:

- a) Parent or sibling with mental health problems
- b) Parent or sibling with a learning or physical disability
- c) Parent or sibling with an entrenched alcohol or substance misuse problem
- d) Parent or sibling with a chronic or terminal illness

## **5. Young Carers and the effect on their education**

Being a young carer can have a serious adverse effect on a child/young person's education. Because they struggle to balance their care responsibilities at home with expectations at school, a young carer is likely to regularly experience any one or more of the following:

- a) Being late or absent due to fulfilling care responsibilities at home
- b) Concentration problems in the classroom
- c) Emotional distress – anxiety, anger, fear, worry, self-doubt
- d) Mental and/or physical fatigue or tiredness
- e) Lack of time to complete coursework/homework on time or at all
- f) Academic underachievement relative to peers
- g) Physical problems such as back pain from lifting or other physical care duties
- h) False signs of maturity linked to assuming adult roles and responsibilities
- i) Attitudinal/Behavioural problems e.g. isolation; challenging; disruptive; disengaged
- j) Lack of time for extra-curricular activities at school or at home
- k) Aloof/Isolated - embarrassed to take friends home
- l) Limited social skills and missing on 'normal' childhood/adolescent life experiences
- m) Bullying – victim or perpetrator
- n) Feeling that no one understands or cares about them and that no support is available
- o) Low self-esteem and a feeling of being incompetent (often unjustified)

## **6. Support offered**

St Nicholas Catholic High School undertakes that the following support is available for all young carers within the school:

- a) St Nicholas Catholic High School has two identified primary young carers' representatives: Mrs Leanne Astbury and Miss Jodie Booth (Young Carers Training completed on 20 March 2014)
- b) There is a full role description of the young carers link/representative provided in the appendix to this policy

- c) All staff to be made aware of whom the young carers representatives are and the internal reporting/referral process to these persons.
- d) St Nicholas Catholic High School has an internal effective reporting system between all staff and the young carers' representatives.
- e) Any child/young person who is identified as a young carer whilst at St Nicholas Catholic High School will be referred to appropriate services subject to consent sought.
- f) St Nicholas Catholic High School has a procedure for identifying young carers through our pastoral support programme and request parents/carers to contact the Year Leader should they have any concerns.
- g) If requested, when a young carer leaves St Nicholas Catholic High School either to proceed into further education or to another education centre, details of their caring role and home situation will be passed on to the next academy/school/college subject to the consent of the young carer and his/her family.
- h) St Nicholas Catholic High School will be flexible with occasional late attendance due to a young carer's caring role; where this is a regular occurrence of lateness provision will be put into place to find a solution complying with all current policy.
- i) St Nicholas Catholic High School will make every effort to ensure that the root cause of any lateness is made apparent to staff and that appropriate support is sourced. Young carers will be 'first day ring back' priority when absent.
- j) St Nicholas Catholic High School will be flexible with regards to young carers' issues and their needs upholding confidentiality.
- k) St Nicholas Catholic High School acknowledges that young carers will not be obliged to discuss their family situation unless they feel comfortable. A young person's caring role will be acknowledged and respected.
- l) St Nicholas Catholic High School will ensure young carers can access all available pastoral and other support services at school.
- m) St Nicholas Catholic 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.
- n) St Nicholas Catholic High School will provide access to a phone during breaks and lunchtime for young carers to call home.

- o) St Nicholas Catholic High School will seek to negotiate reasonable deadlines with young carers for completion and submission of homework/coursework (when needed).
- p) St Nicholas Catholic High School will ensure that young carers have access to a homework club.
- q) Where applicable St Nicholas Catholic High School will apply detentions to young carers at lunchtimes rather than at the end of the day.
- r) St Nicholas Catholic High School will make arrangements for young carers' course/home work to be sent home electronically, by hand or by post (when there is a genuine crisis) N.B This will be agreed with young carers and have a set time limit.
- s) St Nicholas Catholic High School will provide access for parents with impaired mobility.
- t) St Nicholas Catholic High School will provide alternative communication options for parents of young carers who are sensory impaired or are housebound; this will include alternative communication options for parents' evenings.
- u) St Nicholas Catholic High School will always report any cases of a child/young person who may be carrying out an inappropriate caring role which is causing immediate concern for their safety.
- v) St Nicholas Catholic High School will work in partnership with Cheshire Young Carers to ensure that a high quality standard of support for young carers is achieved at all times.
- w) St Nicholas Catholic High School will commit to accessing and providing training for staff about young carers and their issues.

Reviewed by: Student Welfare & Progress Committee	Date: 2 March 2016
Ratified by Governing Body	Signed: Date:
Review of Policy Due By	Date: February 2017

## Appendix

### Cheshire Young Carers Education Support Programme Young Carers Link/Representative Role Description

The role description of St Nicholas Catholic High School Young Carers representative should fit well with its Young Carers Policy and ensure it adheres to what this policy states.

The key responsibilities of St Nicholas Catholic High School representative, whose identity should be disclosed in the Young Carer Policy, are as follows:

- To have completed training provided by Cheshire Young Carers to help identify and support young carers in education. (20 March 2014)
- To ensure that St Nicholas Catholic High School Young Carers Policy is complete, circulated among and adhered to by staff, governors, children and parents.
- To ensure that all young people, staff and parents are aware that they are the nominated Young Carers link/representative at the academy/school/college.
- To ensure that they make him/herself available for young carers at appropriate times and offer support in a non-judgemental manner.
- To ensure that St Nicholas Catholic High School has appropriate procedures in place for reporting any concerns about a child who may be caring for a parent, sibling or guardian in the home.
- To ensure that support is in place at St Nicholas Catholic High School for young carers to overcome barriers to education to allow them the same equal opportunities as their peers.
- To take all reasonable steps to engage with parents of young carers who may be suffering from an illness or disability and contact Cheshire Young Carers for advice and support if establishing contact or finding communication is proving difficult.
- To participate in Team Around the Family (TAF) or Common Assessment Framework (CAF) processes where necessary and make clear to the TAF/CAF agency representatives of the nature of the child's caring role.
- To refer all cases of children/young people at St Nicholas Catholic High School who are caring for someone and needing support to Cheshire Young Carers, subject to the consent of both young carer and his/her parents or guardians.
- To ensure that all cases of inappropriate caring putting a child's own physical or mental health at risk is reported to CART.
- To ensure that St Nicholas Catholic High School issues the young carer enrolment questionnaire to parents or guardians of all new intake to identify any potential young carers being admitted to the education centre.
- To embed a supportive environment for young carers within St Nicholas Catholic High School to enable them to thrive in education and be able to achieve despite their circumstances at home.
- If required, to inform families about the role and service provided by Cheshire Young Carers.

