

Ormiston Forge Academy

Young Carers Policy

March 2015



Approved by the Curriculum and Standards Committee under powers delegated by the Governing Body: **25th February 2015**

Review period: **March 2017**

Ormiston Forge Academy is committed to supporting young carers to access education. This policy aims to ensure that when a student, is identified as a young carers they are offered support to participate, make progress and feel happy and safe at the academy, by alleviating some of the issues and concerns that young carers may have.

A young carer is a young person who is helping to look after someone at home. Most are caring for a parent, but some may be taking responsibility for a sibling, grandparent or other relative. In some instances a young carer may care for more than one family member. The person they look after will have one or more of:

- Physical disability (including sensory disability)
- Learning disability
- Mental health problem
- Chronic illness
- Substance misuse problem

A young carer will take on additional responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development. A young carer might be providing the main care or share responsibilities with another family member. The caring tasks that a young carer has to deal with can range from:

- **Nursing care** - giving medication, injections, changing dressings, assisting with mobility.
- **Personal intimate care** - washing, dressing, feeding and helping with toilet requirements.
- **Emotional care** - being compliant, monitoring the emotional state of the person cared for, listening, being a shoulder to cry on, supporting a parent through depression and trying to cheer them up.
- **Domestic care** - doing a substantial amount of housework, cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry.
- **Financial care** - running the household, bill paying, benefit collection.
- **Child care** - taking responsibility for younger siblings in addition to their other caring responsibilities.

We acknowledges that there are likely to be young carers among its students, and that being a young carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education.

As a result of the additional responsibilities at home, a young carer might experience:

- Being late or absent due to responsibilities at home.
- Concentration problems, anxiety or worry.
- Emotional distress.
- Tiredness.
- 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 or 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.
- It also might be difficult to engage their parents (due to fears about child being taken into care, fears about their condition being misunderstood or their parenting skills being called into question). They may be unable to attend parents' evenings.

At Ormiston Forge Academy we recognise that young carers may need extra support to ensure they feel supported and have equal access to education. As part of our duty of care and commitment to young carers we will;

- Provide young carers with opportunities to speak to a mentor.
- Treat young carers in a sensitive manner.
- Uphold confidentiality.
- Ensure young carers can access all available support services in the academy.
- Follow child protection procedures regarding any young carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring.
- Promote discussion and learning in all areas of the curriculum to facilitate an understanding, acceptance of and respect for, the issues surrounding illness, disability and caring.

We also recognise that flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of young carers. Available provision includes (but is not limited to):

- Access to a telephone during breaks and lunchtime, to phone home.
- Negotiable deadlines for homework/coursework (when needed).
- Access to homework clubs
- Lunchtime detentions rather than after academy detentions (where possible).
- Access for parents with impaired mobility.
- Alternative communication options for parents who are sensory impaired or housebound.
- Advice to parents if there are difficulties in transporting a young carer to the academy.
- Home visits to discuss the progress of a young carer.
- Additional support from the family liaison team.