



# Young Carers Policy

## Definition of a Young Carer

Young Carers are pupils under 18 years of age who help to look after a family member who is disabled, physically or mentally ill or has substance misuse problems. Caring can involve physical or emotional care or taking responsibility for someone's safety or wellbeing. The level or 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 pupil'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 teachers.

## Potential Warning Signs

- Lateness
- Fatigue
- Incomplete homework
- Below-expected grades
- Behaviour problems
- Lack of concentration
- Low self-esteem
- Few friends
- Bullying
- Poor attendance
- Apparent parental disinterest.

Many young carers meet the definition of a "Child in Need" under the Children's Act 1989 and may be entitled to an assessment from Children's Services. In the event of a young carer being considered to be at risk of significant harm the school's Child Protection procedures should be followed.

## Our Pledge

At Darlington we pledge to

- Identify young carers within the school and track their progress planning supporting interventions within school time where necessary
- Have a member of staff with special responsibility for young carers – Mrs Johnson and Mrs Grant
- Incorporate the challenges faced by young carers within PSHE lessons
- Put young carers in touch with the local Young Carer's Project and other support services
- Respect the rights and privacy of Young Carers and be sensitive to confidentiality within the classroom
- Allow Young Carers to telephone home during breaks or lunchtimes, using the school phone, if they feel the need
- Provide support to the families by signposting them to available services in order to help reduce their reliance on the pupil

## Additional support and information is available from:

[www.youngcarers.net](http://www.youngcarers.net)

[www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)

[www.childrensociety.org.uk](http://www.childrensociety.org.uk)

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)