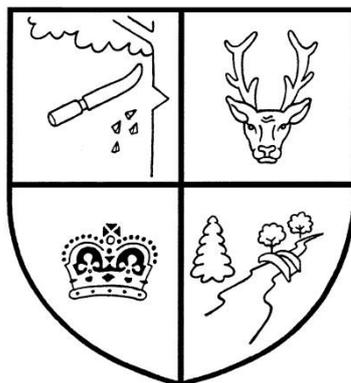


Thomas Willingale School and Nursery



Young Carer's Policy

Reviewed annually:
Written: December 2023
Review due: December 2024

Introduction

Thomas Willingale School and Nursery is committed to supporting Young Carers to access education. This policy aims to ensure Young Carers at our school are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled.

Definition

Young Carers are children aged 5-18 who look after someone in their family who has an illness, a disability, a mental health problem or a substance misuse problem.

Caring Tasks

Young Carers may have whole or shared responsibility for looking after a sibling, parent, grandparent or other relative. In some instances, a Young Carer may care for more than one family member and/or may have a disability themselves.

A Young Carer will take on additional responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development.

The caring tasks that a Young Carer has to deal with can range from:

- Nursing care - giving medication, injections, changing dressings, assisting with mobility etc.
- 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 etc.
- Financial care - running the household, bill paying, benefit collection etc.
- Child care - taking responsibility for younger siblings in addition to their other caring responsibilities.

Possible Effect on Education

Thomas Willingale School and Nursery acknowledges that there are Young Carers among our pupils and that being a Young Carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education. Young Carer might experience:

- Being late or absent due to responsibilities at home
- Concentration problems, anxiety or worry in school
- Emotional distress
- Tiredness in school
- 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.

Support Offered

Thomas Willingale School and Nursery acknowledges that Young Carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education. Through this policy, we want to give the message that Young Carers' education is important.

A Young Carer Lead will be appointed and they will be the main contact for the Young Carers in the school. The Young Carers Lead will meet with the Young Carers on a regular basis.

The Young Carer Lead will liaise with relevant colleagues and agencies with the consent of the Young Carer and parent.

Thomas Willingale School and Nursery will:

- Provide Young Carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers.
- Provide Young Carers with regular support time to gather their views.
- Provide assemblies and PSHE lessons to discuss Young Carer Roles.
- Appreciate that Young Carers will not discuss their family situation unless they feel comfortable. The young person's caring role will be acknowledged and respected.
- Treat Young Carers in a sensitive and child-centred way, upholding confidentiality.
- Ensure Young Carers can access all available support services in school.
- Follow child protection procedures regarding any Young Carer at risk of significant harm.
- Promote discussion and learning in all areas of the curriculum to facilitate full understanding, acceptance of and respect for, the issues surrounding illness, disability and caring.
- Provide staff access to information and training to enable them to recognise indications that a child has a caring responsibility. Training is delivered annually and is part of new staff induction training.

In addition, Thomas Willingale School and Nursery will 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 telephone home.
- Negotiable deadlines for homework/coursework (when needed).
- Access to homework clubs (where these are available).

- Arrangements for schoolwork to be sent home (when there is a genuine crisis).
- Any approved absence for a Young Carer will be time limited. (DfES 2006).
- 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 school.

Succession Planning

If the Young Carer Lead leaves post a new lead will be appointed within one term.

Further Information

Further information can be found on our school website.

<https://www.thomaswillingaleprimary.co.uk/community-information-and-events/>