



# St Michael with St Thomas C of E Primary School



## Young Carers Policy

**Author:** St Michael with St Thomas SLT

**Owner:** St Michael with St Thomas SLT

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*We are a rights respecting school. All our policies and procedures are written and reviewed to ensure that children's rights, as detailed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, are respected and promoted and this policy ensures:*

**Article 12:** *All children have a right to be able to give their opinion when adults are making a decision that will affect them, and adults should take it seriously.*

**Article 19:** *All children should be protected from violence, abuse and neglect, and governments should protect them.*

**Article 29:** *Education should help children use and develop their talent and abilities. It should also help children learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.*

**Article 32:** *Children should not be allowed to do work that is dangerous or might make them ill, or stop them going to school.*

**Article 37:** *No child should be punished in a way that humiliates or hurts them.*

For more information on the convention and the rights of each child visit: <http://www.unicef.org.uk/>

At St Michael with St Thomas Church of England Primary School we are committed to overcoming all barriers to learning and raising standards in all aspects of school life.

We aim to promote inclusivity as an integral aspect of our school development, permeating all our policies, in order to increase the learning and participation of all our pupils.

We recognise and value the varied life experiences and needs of our children. Our school is one in which the teaching, learning, achievements, attitudes and well being of each child matters.

We are committed to ensuring that school practice reflects our inclusive aims by utilising resources both within the school and the Local Community, by responding to diversity and by nurturing an understanding of difference with our staff and children.

\*All staff will receive training annually to ensure they are aware of the barriers Young Carers face in education, training is provided to alert staff to what signs to be aware of and to ensure they are equipped to support Young Carers to overcome these barriers. Furthermore, staff are informed who the contact is in school should they need further support. In addition all classroom staff are notified annually (updated with newly registered) which children are Young Carers in their class and full handovers are completed during transition times.\*

The school strives to establish inclusive values by having high expectations for all pupils, by valuing all children and through the sharing of the same philosophy by all staff, governors and parents alike

### **School Young Carers Policy Statement**

St Michael with St Thomas Church of England Primary School is committed to supporting young carers to access education. This policy aims to ensure young carers at St Michael with St Thomas are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled.

#### **Definition**

A young carer is a child or young person who is helping to look after someone at home. Most are caring for a parent, commonly in a single parent family, 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

#### **Caring Tasks**

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 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**

St Michael with St Thomas Church of England Primary School acknowledges that there are likely to be young carers among its pupils, and that being a young carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education.

Because of their responsibilities at home, a 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**

St Michael with St Thomas Church of England Primary School acknowledges that young carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education. The purpose of this policy is to give the message that young carers' education is important.

The designated link teacher for young carers is the Family Support Worker, who, with the consent of the young carer, liaises with relevant colleagues within Halton Council. All pupils will be made aware of the support available locally and with joint agreement will be referred to the Halton Young Carers Referral Pathway (information available on the Halton Local Safeguarding Board).

St Michael with St Thomas Church of England Primary School will provide young carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private (generally the Family Support Worker), and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers. There is a designated group to help support young carers in school, that meets at regular points during each term. We 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.

St Michael with St Thomas Church of England Primary School are committed to:

- Treating young carers in a sensitive and child-centred way, upholding confidentiality
- Ensuring that young carers can access all available support services in school
- Following child protection procedures regarding any young carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring
- Promoting discussion and learning in all areas of the curriculum to facilitate fuller understanding, acceptance of and respect for, the issues surrounding illness, disability and caring

St Michael with St Thomas Church of England Primary School recognises 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 (where these are available)
- Lunchtime detentions rather than after school detentions (where possible)
- Arrangements for schoolwork to be sent home (when there is a genuine crisis). Any approved absence for a young carer will be time limited
- 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

In writing this policy, regard was given to the **Young Carers: guidance for schools and education departments (Appendix 1)-Young Carers Initiative**