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## **Love - Trust – Peace – Friendship – Creativity**

**God teaches us we are all equal, valued and unique.** We are a small rural school with deeply held Christian values which motivate and inspire us to provide a rich and diverse education. **"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." John 10:10.**

**Love: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7** It is integral in all our decision-making. This equips our children for all aspects in life, as they grow and reach their full potential.

**Trust: Isaiah 26:4** It encourages the whole school to work together for the mutual benefit of all, promoting an excellent working relationship

**Peace: Thessalonians 5:13** It helps us to respect each other, recognising all opinions to provide a safe and inclusive learning environment that encourages discussion of all ideas, so promoting a deeper understanding of each other and the wider world.

**Friendship: Luke 6:31** We constantly strive to build and foster the positive relationships so providing a safe and caring environment in which to learn.

**Creativity: Romans 12:6** Each one of us has a unique talent, we all have inherent creativity, and we actively encourage this in all aspects of school life.

### **Introduction**

Petersfield School is committed to supporting young carers to access education. This policy aims to ensure young carers at Petersfield Primary School are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled.

### **Definition**

Young carers are children and young people under the age of 18 who provide care, assistance or support to another family member who is disabled, physically or mentally ill, or has a substance misuse problem. They carry out, often on a regular basis, significant or substantial caring tasks, taking on a level or responsibility that is inappropriate to their age or development.

### **What support might a young carer provide?**

In general, support given by young carers can be divided into physical and practical support, and emotional support.

- Physical and practical support could range from 'preparing a meal for siblings' to 'helping dad get out of bed and get dressed in the morning.'
- Emotional support could range from 'keeping my brother company and talking things through with him to make sure he is feeling ok' to 'preventing further suicide attempts from mum.'

### **Different types of support a young carer may provide:**

It is important to note this is not an exhaustive list and this will be different for every young carer.

#### *Practical support*

- Cooking and making family meals
- Helping with food shopping

- Laundry
- Cleaning and housework
- Helping to look after a sibling
- Attending appointments
- Helping with financial issues and managing money

#### *Physical support*

- Helping carry and lift heavy things
- Helping with mobility and moving around
- Managing and administering medication
- Supporting with getting washed and dressed

#### *Emotional support*

- Talking things through
- Listening
- Reassuring the person cared for and reassuring siblings
- Keeping family members safe
- Helping cared for person to feel calm
- Keeping the cared for person company and making sure they are ok

### **Possible Effect on Education**

Petersfield School acknowledges that there are young carers among its pupils. Petersfield School recognises that having caring responsibilities can impact on a young person's life in different ways and recognises that there can be positive aspects of caring, including learning new skills, developing independence, having specialist knowledge and feeling proud of being a young carer. Petersfield School also recognises that being a young carer may hold many different challenges and 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, due to 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

In some circumstances, it may also be difficult to engage with the young person's parents. This could be due to a number of reasons, including but not limited to, fears about their 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**

Petersfield School acknowledges that young carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education. Through this policy, we want to communicate that young carers' education is important.

A Young Carers Champion is appointed and they will be the main contact for the young carers in the school. The Young Carers Champion will meet with the young carers on a regular basis and will liaise with the teacher responsible for vulnerable groups. The Young Carers Champion will liaise with relevant colleagues and agencies with the consent of the young carer and parents. This includes Centre 33.

Petersfield School will:

- Provide young carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private, and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers.
- 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.
- Acknowledge and celebrate the positive aspects of caring, whilst recognising the challenges young carers may face.
- Ensure young carers can access all available support services in school.
- Follow safeguarding 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 fuller 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.
- In addition, Petersfield School 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 (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 Carers Champion leaves post a new lead will be appointed.