



GEORGE MITCHELL ALL-THROUGH SCHOOL YOUNG CARERS POLICY

At George Mitchell All-Through School we believe that all children and young people have the right to an education, regardless of what is happening at home. When a young person looks after someone in their family who has a serious illness, disability or substance misuse problem, he or she may need a little extra support to help him or her get the most out of school. Our Young Carers Policy says how we will help any student who helps to look after someone at home.

Warning signs

Young carers are not easy to spot and many actively try to conceal their caring role from teachers, pastoral staff and peers for fear of bullying or outside interference in their families. All of the warning signs below could be indicators of another problem. However, staff noticing these signs should consider asking the student if they are helping to look after someone at home.

- Regular or increased lateness or absence.
- Concentration problems, anxiety, tiredness.
- Under-achievement, maybe a sudden unexplained drop in attainment.
- Few or no peer friendships; conversely the student may get on well with adults and present as very mature for their age.
- Victim of bullying, sometimes explicitly linked to a family member's disability, health or substance misuse problem.
- Behavioural problems, sometimes the result of anger or frustration expressed inappropriately.
- Unable to attend extra-curricular activities.
- Difficulties in engaging parents/carers; non-attendance at ARDs (Academic Review Days*).

Our school:

- Has a member of staff with special responsibility for young carers and lets all new students know who they are and what they can do to help.
- Can put young carers in touch with the local Young Carers Service. We can also put families in touch with other support services.
- Is accessible to parents/carers who have mobility and communication difficulties and involves them in ARDs*.
- Respects your right to privacy and will only share information about you and your family (after first informing you of this) with people who need to know to help you.
- Will consider alternatives if a young carer is unable to attend out of school activities eg detention, sports coaching, concerts, due to their caring role
- Allows young carers to telephone home during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Can give parents/carers advice about how to get their children into school where transport is a problem.

