THAMESMEAD SCHOOL

Young Carer Policy

Person responsible	**Mr P Watson**
Governors Committee	**Personal Development Behaviour and Welfare**
Review Period	**Annually**
Date of review	**Spring term 2025**
Date of next review	**Spring term 2026**

Thamesmead School is committed to supporting young carers in accessing education. This policy aims to ensure that the needs of young carers at Thamesmead are identified and that appropriate support is provided to enable them to fully access the education to which they are entitled.

1. Definition

A young carer is a child or young person under 18 years old who provides care and support to someone. This care may be for a family member living at home or for someone who lives elsewhere. Most young carers care for a parent, but they may also be responsible for a sibling, grandparent, other relatives, or even a family friend.

In some cases, a young carer may care for more than one person.
The person(s) they look after may have one or more of the following conditions:

- Physical disability (including sensory disability)
- Learning disability
- Mental health problems
- Chronic illness
- Substance misuse problems

Young carers take on additional responsibilities beyond those expected for their age and development. They may provide the main care or share responsibilities with other family members.

Caring tasks young carers may undertake include:

- **Nursing care:** Administering medication, injections, changing dressings, assisting with mobility, etc.
- **Personal intimate care:** Washing, dressing, feeding, and helping with toileting needs.
- **Emotional care:** Providing support by being attentive and responsive to the person's emotional state. This includes offering a listening ear, comfort, reassurance, and encouragement, such as supporting a parent through depression or difficult times.
- **Domestic care:** Managing a substantial amount of housework, cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry, etc.
- **Financial care:** Running the household, paying bills, collecting benefits, etc.
- **Childcare:** Taking responsibility for younger siblings alongside other caring duties.

At Thamesmead School, we believe every child and young person has the right to an education, regardless of what is happening at home.

When a young person cares for someone with a serious illness, disability, or substance misuse problem, they may require extra support to help them succeed in school. Our Young Carers Policy outlines how we will support any pupil who cares for someone at home.

We aim to identify young carers as early as possible, so we can understand the challenges they face and provide appropriate support throughout their time at Thamesmead.

Our School:

- Has a member of staff with special responsibility for young carers within the school and makes themselves known to the students, offering additional support.
- Surrey young carers awareness training is offered to all staff at Thamesmead to participate in.
- Can put young carers in touch with the local Young Carers Service and their families in touch with other support services.

- Runs sessions on young carers in Tutor time for each year group to help all pupils understand the issues and role of being a young carer.
- Allow young carers to telephone home from the student office during break or lunchtime should they have concerns about their family members.
- Maintains a Teams channel for young carers to share and distribute information directly to them.
- Complies with the Disability Discrimination Act by offering disabled parents support to get their children into school.
- Will consider alternatives if a young carer is unable to attend out-of-school activities e.g., detention, sports coaching, concerts due to their caring role.
- Respects your right to privacy and will only share information about you and your family with people who need to know to help you.
- Periodically, it provides additional activities and rewards for young carers throughout the academic year.
- Use Pupil Premium where appropriate and ensure the grant criteria are met to assist young carers accessing their education and curriculum-based trips/activities.

2. Teaching and Learning

- Allowing young carers to request support from their Head of Year and Pastoral Manager.
- Give 24hrs notice for after school detentions, as per school policy, to allow young carers to make alternative care plans. Staff may also consider discussing the detention date with the student to find a date/time most suitable within that week.
- Staff may consider a request to apply for an extension to the homework deadline due to their caring role.
- Will consider the young carers status when contacting home.

Mrs L Taliana-Carey is Young Carer Lead at Thamesmead
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Pastoral support can be offered to all our young carers from their year group Head of Year and Pastoral Managers. In addition to this support can also be obtained from Mrs Taliana-Carey as Young Carer Lead. Thamesmead can support with information on and referrals to Surrey action for young carers.