Young Carers Policy

November 2026

Version 1.0

Date of approval by head teacher: 09.11.26

Date of ratification by governors:

Next review date: November 2028

Introduction

At Sonning Common Primary School, we believe every child should feel safe, happy and ready to learn. We recognise that some children help care for a family member due to illness, disability, mental health needs, additional needs or substance misuse. We are committed to identifying and supporting Young Carers so that they feel understood, valued and able to achieve their full potential.

1 Legal Context

This policy has regard to:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Young Carers (Needs Assessments) Regulations 2015
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

1.1 **Definition of a Young Carer**: A Young Carer is a child under 18 who helps care for / worries about a family member or friend who has an illness, disability, mental health difficulty, additional need or substance misuse issue.

1.2 Young Carers are recognised by the DfE and the school as children who are vulnerable. This is because the level of care-giving and responsibility to the person in need of care is often inappropriate for that child's age and stage of development, and risks jeopardising their emotional or physical wellbeing, educational achievement and outcomes. A Young Carer may undertake some or all of the following:

- *Practical tasks*
- *Physical care*
- *Personal and intimate care*
- *Emotional support*
- *Household management*
- *Looking after multiple individuals as a result of the primary dependant's condition, e.g. a child taking care of their parent as well as their siblings due to their parent's impairment in doing so*
- *Interpretation*
- *Administering medication*

2 Our Aims

2.1 We aim to

- *Identify Young Carers early.*
- *Ensure no child is disadvantaged because of caring responsibilities.*
- *Promote wellbeing, attendance and achievement.*

- *Work in partnership with families.*
- *Provide access to support and external services.*
- *Young Carers will be given opportunities to share their views and contribute to decisions about the support they receive.*

2.2 This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- *Attendance and Absence Policy*
- *Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy*
- *Behaviour Policy*

3 Identifying Young Carers

3.1 All staff have a role in recognising and supporting Young Carers. Awareness will be promoted through safeguarding updates and staff training.

3.2 All members of staff should be aware of the potential indicators that a child may have caring responsibilities and know how to refer concerns to the Young Carers Lead.

3.3 Staff remain alert to signs such as tiredness, anxiety, attendance concerns, worries about home, homework difficulties and caring responsibilities. Children and families are given opportunities to share information sensitively.

4 Young Carers Lead

4.1 The name Young Carers Lead is Mrs Annie Gammell, Attendance and Family Support Officer. The Young Carers Lead acts as a trusted point of contact, advocate and coordinator of support.

4.2 **Confidentiality:** Information about a Young Carer and their family will be treated with respect and shared on a strict "need-to-know" basis to get them the right help.

5 Support for Young Carers

5.1 Our support for young carers may include check-ins, pastoral support, flexibility around homework, attendance support, signposting and access to a trusted adult.

5.2 **Pastoral and Emotional Wellbeing Support**: Young Carers may experience worry, stress or isolation. The school provides opportunities to talk and receive support in a safe environment.

5.3 **Flexibility and Understanding**: The school will consider individual circumstances where caring responsibilities contribute to lateness, tiredness, homework difficulties or attendance challenges.

5.4 **Attendance and Achievement**: The school will work proactively to reduce barriers to attendance, engagement and achievement.

5.5 **Celebrating and Valuing Young Carers**: We recognise the resilience, empathy and responsibility shown by many Young Carers and are committed to ensuring they enjoy the same opportunities as their peers.

5.6 **Partnership with Families**: The school works sensitively with families to understand needs and identify appropriate support.

5.7 **Referrals and Signposting**: Families may be signposted to Action for Carers Oxfordshire Young Carers Service, Early Help, health services and community support such as BFree Charity.

5.8 **Multi-Agency Working**: Where needed, the school works with health professionals, Early Help, CAMHS, SEND services and other relevant agencies.

6 Safeguarding

6.1 Where caring responsibilities become inappropriate or place a child at risk, our safeguarding procedures will be followed.

7 Monitoring and review

7.1 The school will maintain a confidential register of identified Young Carers. Individual support arrangements for identified Young Carers will be reviewed at least annually, or sooner where circumstances change

8 Dissemination

8.1 The Policy is available on the school website and a paper copy can be obtained from the main school admin office on request.

9 Reviewing the policy

9.1 This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the Head teacher and monitored by the governors to ensure that the Policy is relevant and up to date.

10 Appendix A: Young Carers Parent Referral Form

Child's name: _____

Class: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Parent/Carer Name: _____

Parent / Carer Contact Number: _____

Parent / Carer Email Address: _____

Please tick the relevant boxes:

Who does your child help or worry about?	☐ Parent/Carer ☐ Sibling ☐ Grandparent ☐ Other, please state who: _____
The person they help has:	☐ Physical illness/disability ☐ Mental health difficulty ☐ Additional needs ☐ Other, please state what:_____
What are the child's caring responsibilities:	☐ Looking after siblings ☐ Household tasks ☐ Emotional support ☐ Other, please state what:_____
Any other information we need to know?	
Has your child consented to this information being shared with the school?	□ Yes □ No
Would you like the school to contact you about this? Preferred method of contact:	☐ Yes ☐ No □ Telephone □ Email □ Meeting in school
Are you interested in accessing Young Carer support services?	☐ Yes ☐ No

Parent/Carer Signature: _____ Date: _____