

Dear Parents and Carers,

Supporting Young Carers at Highwoods Community Primary School

At Highwoods Community Primary School, we know that some children and young people take on caring responsibilities at home. These pupils are often doing something truly remarkable providing practical or emotional support to someone they love. While caring can bring a strong sense of pride and compassion, we also understand that it can sometimes feel challenging, tiring, or overwhelming, especially alongside school life. We want to reassure you that you are not alone. By understanding a child's caring role, we are better able to offer gentle, appropriate support and create positive opportunities in school that recognise and celebrate the important role they play within their family.

What do we mean by a "Young Carer"?

A young carer is a child or young person under the age of 18 who helps to look after someone in their family because of illness, disability, substantial special needs, mental health needs, other additional needs, a significant bereavement, substance misuse, or age-related difficulties. This could be a younger family member or an older family member. This care is unpaid and may involve responsibilities that would usually be carried out by an adult.

A young carer might help by:

- Offering emotional support or keeping a family member company
- Helping someone to get dressed, move safely, or manage personal care
- Preparing meals or helping with household tasks such as washing, cleaning, or ironing
- Supporting brothers or sisters, for example with routines, meals, or getting ready for school
- Helping to manage appointments, medication, shopping, or family finances
- Speaking, translating, or interpreting for someone who finds communication difficult

Many children do not realise that they are young carers — they may simply feel they are "helping out at home", 'looking after others' or 'being a good brother or sister', National research suggests there are around 800,000 young carers in the UK, though many remain unidentified.

"Learning for Life"

How we can help at school

We know that young carers may sometimes need a little extra understanding or flexibility to thrive in school. At Highwoods Community Primary School, we are committed to ensuring that young carers feel:

- Valued and recognised for the support they give
- Safe, listened to, and emotionally supported
- Able to enjoy school, take part in activities, and make good progress
- Increased opportunities for support in school-Young carers club (YCC) 'hot chocolate and chat' mornings and enrichment events such as bowling, baking and sporting activities.

If we are aware of a child's caring role, we can work with families to put supportive measures and positive experiences in place. This might include emotional check ins, flexibility around routines, access to enrichment opportunities, or signposting to specialist services. We are forming a young carers club called the YCC with exciting meetings and opportunities.

Support beyond school

Local Young Carer Services can offer a wide range of support, including:

- Confidential one-to-one support with a dedicated worker
- Advice, guidance, and help accessing other services
- Confidence-building activities and wellbeing support
- Training opportunities and access to counselling where appropriate
- Fun and social activities, giving young carers time to relax, make friends, and enjoy being a child

Please see the next page for the reply letter

Kindest regards,

Miss Jaques

Deputy Headteacher and Young Carers Champion

"Learning for Life"

Highwoods Community Primary School

Response letter-parent please fill this in and return to the school office in paper form or as an email.

Highwoods Square, Highwoods, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 9SN
www.highwoodsprimary.com

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	Tick as appropriate
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Please add any additional notes/reasons below:

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