

# YOUNG CARERS

A young carer is someone under 18 who helps look after a family member or friend who is ill, disabled, has a mental health condition, or struggles with alcohol or drug use. Young carers might help with everyday tasks - like cooking, cleaning, shopping, or looking after brothers and sisters. They may also give emotional support, remind someone to take medication, or help them move around. Being a young carer can be rewarding, but it can also be challenging. If you think you might be a young carer, support is available, and you don't have to manage everything alone.

Below are signs, questions, and indicators to help staff recognise pupils who may have caring responsibilities at home. A pupil showing one indicator does not confirm a caring role, but patterns may warrant a gentle conversation or referral to the DSL / Young Carers Lead.

## ATTENDANCE, PUNCTUALITY AND TIREDNESS

Does the pupil...

Struggle with punctuality or often arrive late?

Have patterns of irregular attendance?

Show signs of fatigue or exhaustion during the day?

Frequently fall asleep in class or appear overly tired?

Miss school due to needing to stay home for a parent or sibling?

## ACADEMIC INDICATORS

Does the pupil...

Find it difficult to complete homework or return reading books?

Show fluctuating concentration or unexpected changes in progress?

Struggle to engage in learning due to worry about home?

## PRACTICAL CLUES DURING CONVERSATION

Has the pupil ever mentioned...

Looking after a sibling regularly?

Helping a parent with mobility, medication, personal care, or house tasks?

A parent or family member having a physical illness, disability, mental health issue, or substance dependency?

Being worried about leaving someone at home alone?

## SOCIAL INDICATORS

Does the pupil...

Avoid after-school clubs or social activities?

Seem reluctant to stay for clubs or enrichment activities?

Talk about needing to "get home quickly"?

Struggle to maintain friendships due to limited free time?

## EMOTIONAL OR BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

Does the pupil...

Struggle with punctuality or often arrive late?

Have patterns of irregular attendance?

Show signs of fatigue or exhaustion during the day?

Frequently fall asleep in class or appear overly tired?

Miss school due to needing to stay home for a parent or sibling?

## FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES

Are any of the following known?

A parent or sibling has a diagnosed condition (physical, mental, developmental).

A parent with limited mobility or chronic illness.

A family experiencing significant stress, bereavement, or complexity.

A parent reliant on the child for translation or interpretation.

A family working with Early Help, Social Care, CAMHS, or other agencies.