



February 2025

Dear Parent/Carers

Identifying and Supporting Young Carers at Fakenham Academy

As a school, we are committed to ensuring that all students get the support they need to have a positive school experience, are happy in school and can achieve their full potential.

We know that for some students, factors outside of school can have a big impact on this, particularly if there is someone in their family or a friend who is ill, disabled, or has a mental health problem or an addiction. We think in every class there could be as many as 3 pupils who are helping to support someone because of one of these factors – we call these students **Young Carers**.

Students can be young carers for lots of different reasons:

- They might be providing physical support to a parent with a physical illness such as fibromyalgia or ME, by doing things such as cooking, fetching things, helping with things like laundry or doing the shopping.
- They might be helping a parent with a disability who needs help with more personal tasks such as getting dressed, bathing or changing dressings.
- Or it could be more emotional support – like being there if their autistic sibling is upset, taking responsibility for young siblings whilst parents attend health appointments, or checking that a parent with depression/anxiety is okay.

Some young carers might be doing lots of caring, others just a small amount but are still impacted by the situation at home. For example, they may be worrying about the person with the health condition, or needing to do more things for themselves compared to other students. Sometimes it is the case that these students do not realise they are Young Carers and see this as 'normal'.

There is lots of support available for young carers and their families should they ever need it – both inside and outside of school. We are focusing efforts on identifying Young Carers more rigorously in school and making sure that they have specific interventions to support their needs further. Interventions such as late gate exemption, EP Youth counselling and identification for staff to consider during lessons, have been used effectively to support certain individuals (where appropriate).

If you think that any of the above applies to your child, and that they might possibly be a young carer then please contact either Miss Heeley or Mrs Holland at your earliest convenience. You will find our contact details at the end of this letter.

Even if you feel your child or family are doing really well and don't need any support, we find that it's better for us to be aware and have them on our radar as potential young carers, in case the situation suddenly changes, and they (or you) do need support. It just means that you and your child don't have to start from scratch with letting us know what is going on if things have become difficult.

Yours sincerely

M Heeley

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