St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School

Learning and growing together in God's love

Headteacher: Mrs Felicity Hope

Dear Parent/Guardian

Identifying and supporting young carers at St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary 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. Often there may be a sibling in the family who has high needs and they have to support them in ways that are more demanding that if their sibling was neurotypical. 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, such as cooking, fetching things or 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 ok.

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 by worrying about the person with the health condition, or neurodiversity, or needing to do more things for themselves compared to other students.

There **is lots of support available** for young carers and their families should they ever need it – both inside and outside of school. **Big Norfolk Holiday Fun offer free holiday club places to young carers**. First and foremost you could meet with Mrs Claire Furness the Senior Assistant Headteacher (deputy@st-francisofassisi.norfolk.sch.uk) or Mrs Rowena Cove our Parent Support Worker for the Benjamin Foundation rowena.cove@benjaminfoundation.co.uk. Also part of the young carer support is Miss Melody Hudson, our Personal Development Lead and Mrs Sadie Gunawardena our Young Carer Lead Teaching Assistant. In addition, Carer's Trust, The Caring Together Charity and Boom! Young Carers which is a free support program run by The Benjamin Foundation in Norfolk, UK, for children and young people up to age 18 who have regular caring responsibilities for a family member or friend.

If you think that any of the above applies to your child, and that they might possibly be a young carer

Jessopp Rd, Norwich NR2 3QB
Tel: 01603 441484
Email: deputy@st-francisofassisi.norfolk.sch.uk
Website: www.stfrancisofassisi.co.uk

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. Mrs Furness will meet with Young Carers once a half term in a lunch time meeting to hear their voice and to action any support they share.

Once or twice a year a trip is organised following their voice – for example, in July the Young Carers caught the bus outside school to the train station. From there, they travelled by train to Lowestoft and spent a day at the beach where they ate ice-creams, swam, played and picnicked.

Yours sincerely



Claire Furness
Senior Assistant Headteacher
Young Carers' Champion

St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School

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REPLY SLIP

Pupil's name:

Class:

Does the pupil have parents or other family members who are ill, disabled, or have a mental health problem or an addiction? **Yes** **No**

If you wish, you can give further details here: (not required)

Would you like more information about the types of support the school provides to young carers?

Yes **No**

Please provide a name and telephone number or email address so that we can contact you.

Name:

Telephone/email address:

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