

## Young Carers School Policy

**Our school supports the inclusivity of young carers and their needs, through the implementation of this policy supported by Carers WA.**

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## Policy

Our school believes that all young people have a right to access education. A young carer may provide unpaid support to someone in their family who has a chronic illness, disability mental health, substance misuse problem or is frail aged. Young Carers may need extra support to assist them to achieve their educational outcomes and manage their own health and wellbeing. Our Young Carers Policy aims to support students who help to care for someone at home.

## Legislation

The following highlights the rights of the carer which is outlined in WA state legislation under the Carers Recognition Act 2004. The school policy and best practice recommendations in this document have been shaped by our states legislation which states;

1. Carers must be treated with respect and dignity.
2. The role of carers must be recognised by including carers in the assessment, planning, delivery and review of services that impact on them and the role of carers.
3. The views and needs of carers must be taken into account along with the views, needs and best interests of people receiving care when decisions are made that impact on carers and the role of carers.
4. Complaints made by carers in relation to services that impact on them and the role of carers must be given due attention and consideration.

**For a more in depth understanding of state and federal laws, they can be accessed here;**

A copy of the “Carers Recognition Act 2004” is available at [www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/wa/consol\\_act/cra2004197/](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/wa/consol_act/cra2004197/)

A copy of the “Carer Recognition Act 2010” is available from [www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2010A00123](http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2010A00123)

### Recommendations for school action plan

The following checklist demonstrates inclusive practices to support young carers. Based on your school's needs and capacity you may wish to embed some or all of the recommendations.

| Recommendations  | ✓ |
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| <p>An integrated whole school commitment to the needs of young carers. Incorporating young carer issues and needs in education sessions on disabilities, mental and physical health and substance use, as outlined in Department of Education curriculum.</p>  |   |
| <p>Implement a question in the student enrolment process that would identify a young carer.</p> <p>Our school would like to support students and their education where possible, does the pupil have parents or other close family members who have disabilities, illnesses, drug and/or alcohol dependence or other long term physical or mental health problems? Y / N</p> |   |
| <p>Implement a Young Carers Education Plan to address additional needs and attendance which enables flexibility with homework, assignments and curriculum selection. These plans are to be reviewed when required or at the beginning of each semester/term. In some cases, priority subjects may be identified if the young carer needs to be away from school.</p>         |   |
| <p>Ensure that parents who are unwell, have a disability or have a family member with special needs, feel part of the school and are included in special events. Where appropriate arrange home visits or phone to communicate with parents where disability or illness makes it difficult for them to attend open nights or school interviews.</p>                          |   |
| <p>The school has a Young Carer Representative from student services, to engage with young carers, teachers and their families, implementing education plans and referring to local support agencies and professionals as appropriate.</p>   |   |

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| Professional development for all staff to best equip them to know how to identify a young carer and how to refer the student to the Young Carer Representative or to Carers WA.  |  |
| Promote awareness, acceptance and respect for caring roles. Carers WA can provide information workshops to parents, teachers and students.   |  |
| Provide resources and information regarding organisations that support health issues and local community services for young carers on a dedicated communication board within the school (e.g. Student Services).   |  |
| Ensure information that supports caring responsibilities is shared with appropriate teaching staff, especially when students transition from one year level to the next. Confidentiality for young carers in classrooms should always be respected.  |  |
| Facility for young carers to contact home if necessary.  |  |
| Ensure the school keeps up to date with the latest legislation and guidance affecting young carers and their families, including national and local developments.  |  |
| Implementing a Carers WA link on the school website.   |  |
| The school actively seeks feedback and ideas from young carers and their families in order to shape and improve the wellbeing for young carers.  |  |
| The school encourages and facilitates a Young Carers Peer Support Group where applicable. The aim of a peer support group is to provide an open space for young carers to discuss young carer topics and to build relationships with peers who are in similar situations. Carers WA have developed Young Carers Peer Support Toolkit and can facilitate commencement of a group. |  |

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| Include positive articles in the school newsletter/web pages to raise awareness of young carers.                |  |
| During parent/carer curriculum information evenings, and where appropriate include information on young carers. |  |