Dussindale Primary School
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Website: dussindaleprimary.co.uk
Executive Headteacher: Mrs Louise Norgate
Deputy Headteacher: Mrs Carolyn Bradley

16th January 2025

Dear Parents/Carers

Identifying and supporting Young Carers at Dussindale 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. We think in every class there could be as many as two 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 putting shoes on 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 a sibling with Special Educational Needs is upset or has repeatedly displayed challenging behaviour. They could be 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 impacted by the situation at home for example by worrying about the person with the health condition, or needing to do more things for themselves compared to other students. This can be on a short term or long term basis.

There is lots of support available for Young Carers and their families should they ever need it both inside and outside of school:

- We have a pastoral care team and Young Carer leads in school that can offer time to talk with students who are Young Carers
- Staff have received specific training on how to support students who are Young Carers
- We offer drop in sessions at lunchtimes for Young Carers so they can meet with other students who are also Young Carers
- Staff can support Young Carers with home learning during school hours

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- We can support families with referrals to Young Carers Matter (an organisation that supports families where a young person cares for an adult or sibling with mental or physical needs)

If you think that any of the above applies to your child, and that they might possibly be a Young Carer and you would like school to be aware of this please contact myself by email cbradley@dps-edu.org.uk, or by leaving a message on Class Dojo or by telephoning the school office.

Even if you feel that 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 by letting us know what is going on if things have become difficult.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Bradley and Miss Goodall
Young Carers' School Operational Leads