

# LEWISHAM SCHOOLS YOUNG CARERS CHARTER INVITATION

## WHAT WILL MAKE YOU SIGN UP TO THIS CHARTER?

Carers Lewisham in partnership with Lewisham Council would like you and every school in Lewisham to sign up to the Lewisham Schools Young Carers Charter, the aim of which is to ensure that all Young Carers are supported. School is so important to children and young people and for them to know they are supported can change their lives.

Attached is The Young Carers School Charter Agreement which gives information on the issues faced by Young Carers and the purpose of the Charter. Your school will be issued with a Certificate, see below, for you to display. **Please read the attached before you sign the Agreement, thank you.**

Name of School agrees that all their Young Carers will be:

Seen and Heard  
Recognised  
Respected  
Valued  
Supported

Name of School will annually participate in National Carers Week

Signed by Head Teacher    Frankie Sulke    Carers Lewisham

The terms and conditions of this Charter were agreed with Young Carers  
Lewisham and Lewisham Directorate for Children & Young People

To sign up for The Charter please sign the agreement and return to:-

Marilyn Hodsdon  
Senior Young Carers School Officer  
Carers Lewisham  
Waldram Place  
London  
SE23 2LB

020 8699 8686

[marilyn@carerslewisham.org.uk](mailto:marilyn@carerslewisham.org.uk)

This Charter is a SCIE (Social Care Institute for Excellence) example of Good Practice in the Think Family Agenda

# LEWISHAM SCHOOLS YOUNG CARERS CHARTER AGREEMENT

Carers Lewisham has worked with Young Carers for over 21 years and through our work know that when they are supported in school they have a greater chance to reach their full potential. Below are some of the reasons they have difficulty in their school lives.

## They feel Invisible

Many Young Carers feel they are invisible as they are often not considered by professionals working with their cared for. It could be a coping mechanism (it's better not you be seen); it could be that they are seen as different, either too old or too childish for their years and so unable to fit in with their peers and therefore ignored. Young Carers can then withdraw into themselves and with the lack of friends their own age feel pushed into relationships with older people, relatives, neighbours, teachers etc., which in turn will further ostracize them from their peers.

## They feel they are not Recognised

Many Young Carers have an enormous responsibility to deal with, especially if they are not receiving services. This can often involve inappropriate care. This can affect how they look after themselves, if they arrive in school late or not in uniform they can be treated harshly with no understanding or recognition of the incredible job they are doing for others, often putting them before themselves.

## They feel they are not Respected

Many Young Carers do not feel respected because they have to go from being relied on at home, providing support to the cared for, often carrying out tasks that are usually done by an adult and then when they go to school are expected to be behave like a child.

## They feel they are not Valued

Many Young Carers feel they are not valued because they are stigmatised by the condition of the person they care for and are not seen as equal to their peers. And as above, the help and support they give is often not recognised by professionals supporting their cared for.

## They feel they are not Supported

Many Young Carers feel they are not supported in school because they have no one they can go to especially when life gets too hard for them. Which can be because of a lack of awareness or an understanding of their cared for's condition and/or a lack of awareness of the responsibility they have to deal with every day from the school staff and their peers.

The Charter's conditions:-

1. A designated senior member of staff is appointed to support and oversee all aspects of Young Carers.
2. The senior staff member and staff working with Young Carers to have Awareness Sessions with Carers Lewisham.
3. Young Carers are offered one to one sessions (especially in times of crisis)
4. There is a Young Carers Group or drop in at least once per half term, preferably weekly.
5. There is a separate register of Young Carers so patterns of behaviour can be monitored, days off, lateness etc.
6. You participate in National Carers Week (2<sup>nd</sup> week of June) so it becomes part of the school calendar. (support to be Carers Lewisham)

*By agreeing to the above your school shows not only the Young Carers but the whole school community that Young Carers are **Seen and Heard, Recognised, Respected, Valued and Supported***

NAME OF SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_

HEAD TEACHER: \_\_\_\_\_

LEAD STAFF MEMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT DETAILS: \_\_\_\_\_

Now you have signed we are here to support you. The team of Young Carers Officers will be here to advise and the Schools Officers can make regular visits to your named member of staff as needed. We will send materials to you annually (May/June) for you to participate in National Carers Week.

For further information see:- The National Carers Strategy 2008 – Carers at the heart of 21<sup>st</sup> Century families and communities