



Young Carers Guidance

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Introduction

We are aware that pupils in our school may well have caring roles at home. We believe that all children and young people should have equal access to education, regardless of what is happening at home and that no child should have to take on inappropriate or excessive caring responsibilities. When a young person does look after someone in their family who has a serious illness, disability or substance misuse problem, they may need a little extra support to help them get the most out of school.

We aim to understand the issues faced by young carers and this guidance document suggests how we can support any pupil who helps to look after someone at home. A caring role can impact heavily upon a young person, creating barriers to learning both in school and at home. One of those barriers can be bullying associated with stigma around family situations. It is important therefore, that we acknowledge that Young Carers may be more vulnerable than some other children to bullying. We aim to support young carers through a whole-school approach and through working with other agencies and professionals, with the understanding that support for the whole family is in the best interests of the young carer.

This policy has been written in consultation with various sources such as; [Children's Society](#), [CarersUK](#), and the [Department for Education Survey Report](#). Further useful links are listed towards the end of this document.

Aims

To ensure a full and comprehensive support package is in place for our Young Carers, we aim to ensure we address each of the following standards to the very highest level:

UNDERSTAND: We will ensure we have assigned trained staff members with responsibility for understanding and addressing young carers' needs.

INFORM: We will ensure that all pupils are knowledgeable about disability, illness and what young carers are.

IDENTIFY: We will ensure we work to identify all young carers within our school.

LISTEN: We will listen to our young carers, giving them time and space to talk if they need to.

SUPPORT: We will support our young carers in school including signposting them to other resources and services outside the school.

Definition & Tasks

Young Carers are children and young people under the age of 18 who provide regular and ongoing care to a family member who is physically or mentally ill, disabled, or misuses substances. A young carer may have to take on a wide variety of tasks at home which may include all or some of the following:

- Practical tasks: e.g. cooking, cleaning, laundry, shopping, collecting medications.
- Physical Care: e.g. lifting, some physiotherapy, helping up and down stairs.
- Personal intimate care: e.g. dressing, washing, feeding, toilet needs.
- Emotional Support: being present, monitoring emotional state of the person cared for, listening, being a 'shoulder to cry on'.
- Household Management: e.g. paying bills, collecting benefits, managing money.
- Looking after others: e.g. helping with siblings, younger children.
- Nursing Care: e.g. insulin needles, sorting tablets, changing dressings.

Possible Effect on Education

We acknowledge that there are Young Carers among our pupil cohort, and that being a Young Carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education. Because of their responsibilities at home, a Young Carer might experience:

- Being late or absent due to responsibilities at home
- Concentration problems, anxiety or worry in school
- Emotional distress
- Tiredness in school
- Lack of time for homework
- Poor attainment
- Physical problems such as back pain from lifting
- False signs of maturity, because of assuming adult roles
- Behavioural problems (taking out their anger or frustration)
- Lack of time for extra-curricular activities
- Isolation, embarrassed to take friends home

- Limited social skills
- Bullying
- Feeling that no one understands and that no support is available
- Low self esteem

It also might be difficult to engage their parents (due to fears about a child being taken into care, fears about their condition being misunderstood or their parenting skills being called into question). They may be unable to attend parents' evenings.

Identifying a Young Carer

When a young carer enrolls at our school, it is hoped that the information passed on to us by a family, external agencies and/or other educational placement, allows us to identify needs quickly so that we can support the pupil as best we can. However, it can unfortunately be much more difficult to identify a pupil whose home circumstances change over time, which can lead them to become a carer for someone at home. A Young carer may be 'hidden' due to a number of issues such as:

- Their parent's condition is not obvious, so people don't think that they need any help.
- They do not realise that they are a carer or that their life is different to their peers.
- They don't want to be any different from their peers.
- They believe that the school will show no interest in their family circumstances.
- They want to keep their identity at school separate from their caring role.
- It's not the sort of thing they feel can be discussed with friends.
- There has been no opportunity to share their story.
- They are worried about bullying.
- They worry that the family will be split up and taken into care.
- They want to keep it a secret and/or are embarrassed.
- They see no reason or positive actions occurring as a result of telling their story.

Therefore, the usual high standard of vigilance of all staff for any symptom of a possible safeguarding need is very important, including those listed above under the heading 'Possible Effect on Education'. When staff are concerned that a pupil may be caring for others without the knowledge of the school, they should report this to the relevant staff (e.g. DSL) within the school who will investigate and contact appropriate adults. This will and may include the family in question, social services and any other external agency needed to ensure the family and young person has the appropriate support.

Support Offered

Once a young carer has been identified, an appropriate support plan needs to be put in place. It is important to note that many young carers will feel sensitive about others knowing and therefore, a certain level of confidentiality is needed.

The principles and actions towards producing and implementing a support plan are the same as regards any used to support a particular pupil in school. Annex A outlines a sample document that can be used to document information on a Young carer during a meeting with them and from other sources. Annex B contains a checklist of actions school can consider implementing as part of any support plan and/or action generally across the school.

A meeting with the pupil is needed and relevant adult, which may be a colleague from social services, if the parent/carer is unable to attend. It may be relevant with a colleague to attend the home of the pupil.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe in line with the Equality Act 2010. It does not have an adverse effect on race, gender or disability equality.

Useful links: [Young Carers Annual Survey](#)

[Young Carers in School](#)

[NHS Help for Young Carers](#)

[Action for Children](#)

[Carers Trust](#)

[The Children's Society](#)

[Barnardo's](#)

[Carers UK](#)

Annex A: Meeting/Information document for a Young Carer

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| Name of Pupil: | | Year Group: | |
| Date of Meeting: | | Those present: | |
| Current Attendance: | | Approximate current attainment level: | Above / On / Below |
| Details of caring needs at home, i.e. disability, illness, and/or substance misuse: | | | |
| External Agency details (if relevant): | | | |
| Pupil's identified positives: | | | |
| Pupil's identified concerns/worries: | | | |
| Actions by pupil: | | | |
| Support details: | | | |
| Date of next review: | | | |

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| For office use only: |
| Next steps for lead staff: |
| Implications for further staff training: |
| Implications for education to be included in whole school curriculum: |
| Notes: |

Annex B: Checklist of actions that can be used in order to support a Young Carer in our school.

| Suggested Actions: | |
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| Have mechanisms contained in enrolment process which can identify Young Carers. | |
| Ensure Young Carers know who they can see if they need support or need to speak privately. | |
| Arrange periodic meetings to discuss any possible issues. | |
| Ensure staff are aware not to discuss the situation of a Young Carer in front of other pupils. | |
| Allow access to a telephone during breaks and lunchtime for a Young Carer to telephone home if need arises. | |
| Agree that any approved absence for a Young Carer will be time limited. | |
| Make arrangements for schoolwork to be sent home (when there is a genuine crisis) | |
| Arrange communication method and frequency with home including possible alternative communication options for parents who are sensory impaired or housebound. | |
| Offer advice to parents if there are difficulties in transporting a Young Carer to school. | |
| Liaise with subject teachers to make reasonable adjustments at times of need around deadlines for work. (Involve the Young Carer in this discussion.) | |
| Encourage attendance to homework clubs, where times and arrangements suit. | |
| Provide Extra-curricular activities to engage with other Young Carers. | |
| Signpost support agencies to Young Carer including possibly those who come into school, e.g. school nurse. | |
| Raise the profile of young carers through assemblies, staff CPD. | |
| Enrol the school into a Young Carers programme, e.g. Carers Trust Programme | |
| Develop a support group within the school with other Young Carers. | |

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| Use Pupil Premium money to assist the Young Carer. | |
| Amend other policies to include Young Carers and their families. | |
| Ensure clear lines of communication with external services including local young carers service. | |
| Seek feedback and ideas from Young Carers and their families. | |
| Use lunchtime sanctions instead of after school in some circumstances. | |
| Other actions which can be added by individual Academies: | |
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**Be
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**Be best
in class**

**Be
accountable**