



Young Carers Policy

Context

We recognise that helping around the house is a normal part of growing up for many children, however we are aware that young carers regularly carry out caring tasks and assume a level of responsibility, which is often inappropriate to their age. The definition of a young carer is as defined in section 96 of the Children and Families Act 2014; "...a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person (of any age, except where that care is provided for payment, pursuant to a contract or as voluntary work). This relates to care for any family member who is physically or mentally ill, disabled or misuses substances.

From April 2015 the Care Act and Children and Families Act will re-define the way the local Authority (and school) works to support young carers and their families. From April 2015 all young carers will be entitled to an assessment of their needs from the local authority and a transition assessment as they approach adulthood. This new provision works alongside measures in the Care Act 2014 for assessing adults to enable a "whole family approach" to providing assessment and support.

To meet eligibility for a service in Leicestershire from the Local Authority, children and young people must:

- be undertaking **age inappropriate care** (in terms of what they do or the degree to which they do it)
- be **negatively impacted** as a result of their care role, ie Physical/Mental Health, Education, Emotional and Behavioural Development, Identity Family and Social/Peer relationships

Background:

Young carers are a vulnerable and disadvantaged group, who often experience difficulties in their education. They can struggle to attend school and struggle to make good progress in school. They can experience bullying because of their caring role, may struggle building relationships and they may have few friendships. They may experience punctuality issues, concentration problems, emotional outbursts, tiredness, behavioural problems, anxiety, stress, problems with health & wellbeing, isolation and low self-esteem. Their caring role can impact upon their emotional or physical wellbeing or their prospects in education and life. Identifying and supporting young carers is an effective way of improving the attainment and attendance of this pupil group; who are specifically mentioned in Ofsted's evaluation inspection schedule. We believe that by supporting young carers and their families, we can strengthen families and support parenting.

A young carer may do some or all of the following:

- Practical tasks; such as preparing meals and drinks.
- Physical care; such as lifting, helping a parent on stairs or with physiotherapy.
- Personal care; such as washing, dressing, administering medication, changing dressings, and/or helping with toileting needs.

- Domestic tasks; such as cleaning, managing the family budget, paying bills, collecting benefits and prescriptions.
- Looking after or “parenting” younger siblings.
- Emotional support; such as staying at home to keep someone the person they care for company.
- Interpreting, due to a hearing or speech impairment or because English is not the family’s first language.

Statement:

At Waltham-on-the-Wolds CE Primary School we are aware that pupils in our school may have caring roles at home. We believe that children and young people should have equal access to education, regardless of what is happening at home. We recognise that a young carer 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. We aim to support young carers through a whole school approach and by working with other agencies and professionals, with the understanding that support for the whole family is in the best interests of the young carer. We will continue to keep up to date with both local and national developments, legislation and guidance affecting young carers and their families.

We recognise that identifying young carers is difficult, as children themselves might not recognise themselves as carers and parents may find it too sensitive to declare. Staff at Waltham-on-the-Wolds School will endeavour to be alert to the needs of all children through our Christian approach to Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education and general care and welfare of children.

What we will do as a school:

1. We will have a named senior staff member with lead responsibility for young carers and we recognise this role (Young Carers Champion) within continuing professional development. The Young Carers Champion will be the main point of contact for all issues pertaining to young carers and will support colleagues to understand the challenges that young carers may face. They will ensure that young carers have access to staff that they can talk to, who they feel, understands their circumstances and will **not** discuss their situation in front of their peers. They will be committed to raising awareness of young carers, ensuring that the whole school is committed to meet their needs. At our school this will be the Head teacher.
2. We will endeavour to identify young carers and to ensure that they have the same access to a full education and career opportunities as their peers. We will make a bespoke offer of support, which may include:
 - A referral to First Response if we are concerned that the young carer may be a victim of neglect, abuse, cruelty or at risk of immediate or significant harm or to request an assessment.
 - A referral to the Local Authority’s commissioned support service to request that a detailed assessment is undertaken (presently Barnardo’s) to ascertain appropriate support
 - A referral to Young Carers ID card scheme
 - Signposting and/or referral to relevant agencies (for example the website <https://babble.carers.org/>)
 - Information and advice (for instance, an adult may be able to get help at home from Adults & Communities by telephoning 0116 305 0004)

3. We have in place a policy to encourage practice that identifies and supports young carers such as adapting school arrangements if needed, provision for private discussions and access to local young carers' support. We will monitor and evaluate data on the young carers that we have identified, to examine the progress that they have made and to review and amend the offer of support as appropriate. We will maintain records of Young Carers we have identified and the support we have offered them and may share this data with the Local Authority.
4. Where we suspect that a child may be a young carer, we will closely monitor them and keep records following the safeguarding procedures, including seeking the advice of outside agencies such as First Response or the school nurse team.
5. We promote open communication with families that supports parenting capacity and encourages the sharing of information. We will endeavour to engage the parents of young carers. It is known that they may be difficult to engage and that this may be for a variety of reasons (fear of statutory agency involvement, fears that their parenting may be called into question, fears of losing control of a situation).
6. We ensure school policies such as those for admission, attendance, bullying, behaviour and keeping safe, for example, afford recognition to young carers. We will communicate messages relating to young carers, effectively, for both staff and pupils. We will ensure our staff are trained to recognise the warning signs of a young carer and to inform the Young Carers Champion if they see them.
7. We incorporate into individual pupil plans recognition and support for the positive aspects of the young carer's role, as well as providing the personalised support necessary to enable young carers to attend and enjoy school.
8. We will consider scope for school staff to adopt lead professional roles within locally agreed assessment arrangements or Early help assessments.
9. We will consider the role of school nurses in supporting improved health outcomes and reduce inequalities of family/child experience.
10. Successful local partnerships depend on the building of constructive relationships and a shared vision. We will use the opportunities for working together to identify key priorities for commissioning and the best use of available resources designed to secure the outcomes for Young Carers that have been identified.
11. We will use feedback from young carers and their families to inform our policies and practice.
12. We will encourage effective use of the curriculum, such as PHSCE to explore the roles and responsibilities of young carers. We will use PSHCE lessons as a vehicle to promote positive images of disability and mental ill health, challenging stereotypes and discrimination. We recognise that there are children and young people who are affected by family disability, health problems or substance misuse, who do not become young carers and so we are wary of making assumptions about people and labelling children, young people and their parents. We will promote discussion regarding caring and issues surrounding illness and disability, to promote a fuller understanding, acceptance and respect.
13. We will treat young carers in a sensitive and child-centred way, upholding confidentiality, whilst considering a whole family approach. We will follow child protection & safeguarding procedures, regarding any young carer that is at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate

caring responsibilities or an inappropriate level of care giving.

We recognise every young carer's situation is different and flexibility is required when responding to their needs. We can also consider: access to a telephone during breaks and lunchtime, negotiable homework deadlines, access to homework clubs, access for parents with mobility issues and alternative communication options for parents with sensory impairment or are housebound.

Appendix A: Sample Young Carers Plan

Name		Year Group	
Date of plan		Date of review	
Support offered			
Outcomes			
Signed (by the Young Carers Champion)		Signed (by the Class Teacher)	