



Young Carers Policy

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Introduction

At Longfield Academy we have a commitment to ensuring that all children feel good about themselves, achieve highly in their work, build friendly and lasting relationships and take responsibility for their attitudes towards work and behaviour.

By working in close partnership with parents / carers we will nurture the developments of trust, respect, confidence, independence, self-esteem and the aspiration to learn.

This statement sets out our aspirations for all of our pupils. Some children, however, will need extra support in achieving their potential and we believe that young carers are part of this group. We will do our utmost to ensure they are supported within school to help them be safe, feel happy and achieve their potential.

What is a Young Carer?

A Young Carer is someone between the ages of 5-18 years who is affected by care responsibilities for a family member within the home who has:

- A drug or alcohol dependency
- A mental health problem
- A serious or long-term illness
- A physical disability
- A learning disability

Definition of Caring

Caring responsibilities are defined not just in terms of practical support, such as carrying out practical tasks but also in terms of emotional support and the emotional impact on young people of care needs within a family.

Aims of the Policy

- To raise awareness among staff about the needs of young carers and to support them in addressing any issues that may arise within the school day
- Provide staff with the information needed to enable them to provide young carers with information and advice on where to seek help
- 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

Legislation

Carers and Disabled Children Combined Policy Guidance Act 2000 and Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004

These acts provide young carers with varying rights to an assessment of their needs, which must take into account their right to an education.

Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995

Highlights that an assessment of a young carer's needs must take into account the right to education.

Children Act 1989

If a child does not have the opportunity or is unable to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development, then they are regarded as being in need. This in turn means they are eligible for a range of support services.

The *Framework for Assessment of Children in Need and their Families*, which gives guidance on S.17 of the Act, includes a section on young carers stating that effective support will require "good quality joint work between adult and children's social services as well as co-operation from schools and health workers. Young carers can receive help from both local and health authorities." See paragraphs 3.61-3.63.

Factors that may suggest a pupil is a Young Carer

Being a young carer can have various implications on their education which may include;

- Late for school on a regular basis and may have a high number of absences
- May often be tired, withdrawn and come across as pre-occupied
- Not able to join in after-school activities or trips
- Could be a victim of bullying
- Not achieving to the best of their ability – homework may not be handed in regularly
- May be anxious or worried over family relatives
- Behaviour may change and young carer may develop emotional problems
- Unable to establish friendships as unable to socialise with school friends outside school
- Display poor health as often young carers carry out tasks for which they are physically ill-equipped which impacts on their physical health. In addition to this, long term caring responsibilities can impact hugely on the mental health of young people
- Lack of parent / carer involvement – parents / carers may be unwilling or unable to attend school events or parent evenings, which makes them feel isolated from the school environment and unaware of experiences or issues their child may be experiencing

These signs and behaviours may indicate other problems but being a young carer should be considered a possibility and discussed with the young person in a private space.

The teacher or support staff may refer the young person to the nominated Young Carers Leads, who are: Mrs E Hickerson and Miss N Harrison

How Longfield Academy will Support Young Carers

The school views young carers as any other pupil but understands that they have the additional burden of caring responsibility. The whole school is committed to meeting the needs of young carers so that they are enabled and encouraged to attend and enjoy school and have equal access to education as their peers.

Longfield Academy will ensure:

- It keeps up to date with national and local developments and with legislation and guidance affecting carers and their families by registering with the Carers Trust
- As part of the admissions process, that young carers are identified where possible at an early stage so that they can be best supported by the school
- A confidential approach, providing a private space to speak to young carers. However, we also recognise that some young carers prefer not to discuss their caring role while others might find it helpful to discuss their own personal situation with a member of staff. Staff will not ask young carers about their home life when other people are listening
- A Young Carers' Lead will be assigned and will have responsibility for young carers and their families. The Young Carers Lead is the nominated link with the DISC Young Carers project. Pupils and families will be made aware of the identity of the Young Carers' Lead
- Training on young carers' issues is embedded in ongoing professional development for all staff
- Information about support and how to access it is made clearly available to both pupils and families
- Young carers and their families receive coordinated support by the school, working in partnership where appropriate with general practitioners, young carers' services, behaviour and education support teams
- Young carers will be referred or signposted to other support agencies and professionals as appropriate, including the local young carers service
- All referrals will be made via the Young Carers' Lead to ensure consistency and to ensure support is in place for the identified pupil/family
- Young carers have access to the school counsellor or Young Carers Lead if required
- Individual plans recognise the child's / young person's specific needs as a young carer
- Identification of those young carers at risk of falling into the Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) category and will take appropriate action to address this
- Data is used and evaluated effectively to identify and monitor progress made by young carers
- Young carers are allowed to use a telephone to call home during breaks and lunchtimes without having to explain why each time, so as to reduce any worry they may have about a family member
- Provision of support to improve attendance and pupil's wellbeing and offer privacy to young carers when investigating lateness or non-attendance at school
- Staff negotiate deadlines for homework and course work in advance and provide extra time to hand work in when the person being looked after is ill
- Young carers are allowed to go to lunch early if they need to get home at lunchtime
- Alternatives are considered if a young carer is unable to attend out of school activities due to their caring role. The school will also consider lunchtime detentions rather than after school ones

- Young Carers know about the lunchtime homework club which they can access
- Other appropriate policies such as a bullying policy, take young carers into account
- Issues surrounding caring are included within the PSHCE curriculum
- Provision of appropriate lessons about disability, mental health or drug/ alcohol issues
- Adherence to the Disability Discrimination Acts (1995, 2005)
- Young Carers becomes an annual assembly theme to all year groups
- Young Carers needs are embedded in the whole school Pastoral systems of RAG, SSCR, Pastoral Bulletin and Vulnerable Pupil Information
- The school is accessible and welcoming to parents / carers with disabilities and / or illness, offering additional support to enable them to attend parents' evenings or other school events. Home visits will be considered where appropriate
- Additional support is available to remove any communication barriers with parents / carers, so that they are able to be fully engaged with the education of their child
- Consider how best to support those parents / carers who find it difficult to escort younger children to school
- Offer support to the young carer and family during the transition from primary to secondary school. This will involve sharing agreed information with their new school lead for young carers and families
- Young Carer school packs are given to all Young Carers that staff become aware of in school
- Feedback and ideas are actively sought from young carers and their families in order to shape and improve provision for young carers

School Admissions

Longfield Academy is aware of paragraph 1.8 of the 'School Admissions Code 2012' which states:

*"Oversubscription criteria **must** be reasonable, clear, objective, procedurally fair, and comply with all relevant legislation, including equalities legislation. Admission authorities **must** ensure that their arrangements will not disadvantage unfairly, either directly or indirectly, a child from a particular social or racial group, or a child with a disability or special educational needs, and that other policies around school uniform or school trips do not discourage parents / carers from applying for a place for their child. Admission arrangements **must** include an effective, clear and fair tie-breaker to decide between two applications that cannot otherwise be separated"*

The Right to Confidentiality

The school acknowledges that pupils and families have the right to privacy and the school will only share information with professionals and agencies on a need to know basis in order to support pupils and families.

Outcomes of the Policy

Governors, teaching and non-teaching staff will be aware that there are young carers within their school and understand how to support them.

Young carers will feel that there is more support for them within school and so will be more likely to communicate with the school about their caring role.

APPENDIX ONE: Further Information

DISC Young Carers Project – 01325 350465

Supporting Young Carers: A Resource for Schools

<http://professionals.carers.org/young-carers/articles/schools-resource-pack,6282,PR.html>

Carers Trust <http://professionals.carers.org/young-carers/>

The Children's Society <http://www.youngcarer.com/>

Think Child, Think Parent. Think Family

<http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/ataglance/ataglance09.asp>

Think Family Toolkit

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/Think-Family.pdf>

Keeping the Family in Mind Resource Pack

http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/policy_research_unit/research_and_publications/keeping-the-family-in-mind-resource-pack-2nd-edition/publication-view.jsp?pid=PUB-1600

Minds, Myths and Me <http://www.copmi.net.au/resources/3306-Minds-Myths-and-Me-UK.html>

Drugs, alcohol and parenting

http://www.exchangesupplies.org/shopdisp_P108.php

Understanding the Impact of Parental Substance Misuse on Children (elearning)

<http://www.scie.org.uk/assets/elearning/parentalsubstancemisuse/website/module2/main.html>

Parental Mental Health and Families (elearning)

<http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/elearning/parentalmentalhealthandfamilies/index.asp>

The Carers' Hub, a developing showcase of successful interventions for carers and young carers <http://www.carershub.org>

The Include Partnership - a range of resources to aid local authorities and services with their development of strategy and service provision for young carers and their families:

<http://www.youngcarer.com//showPage.php?file=200813131330.htm>

Childline – 0800 11 11

KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri 10-4) – 0845 1 205 204

Parentline Plus – 0808 800 2222

Young Carers Website – www.youngcarers.net

Bullying online – www.bullying.co.uk