



Central Academy
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Young Carers Policy

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Introduction

Supporting our students – Guidelines for staff

The document covers -

- Young Carers – A definition
- Impact on homework, social life, sleeping, eating
- Pathway of support
- Useful websites

Young Carers – A definition

Young carers are children and young people under 18 years old who provide regular and ongoing care to a family member who is physically or mentally ill, disabled or misuses substances (ADASS, ADCS and The Children's Society, 2012).

The tasks and level of caring undertaken by young carers can vary according to the nature of the illness or disability, the level and frequency of need for care and the structure of the family as a whole.

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

- Practical tasks – eg cooking, housework, shopping
- Household Management – eg paying bills, managing finances, collecting benefits
- Physical care - eg lifting, helping up the stairs, physiotherapy
- Looking after siblings – eg putting to bed, walking to school, parenting
- Personal care – eg dressing, washing, toileting needs
- Interpretation – eg for hearing/speech impairment or English as an additional language
- Emotional support - eg listening, calming, being present
- Administering medication – eg insulin needles, preparing daily tablets

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 their education as their peers. This commitment is reflected in all relevant school policies.

A school lead has been assigned with responsibility for young carers and their families. Students and families will be made aware of the identity of the school's young carer lead and how to access support from them. This is currently Stephanie Slater, Assistant Principal (Pastoral).

The school has an effective referral system and strong partnership in place with the local young carers service.



Impact of caring responsibilities on young people

- Physical health: often severely affected by caring through the night, repeatedly lifting a heavy adult, poor diet and lack of sleep.
- Emotional wellbeing: stress, tiredness and mental ill health are common for young carers.
- Isolation: feeling different or isolated from their peers, limited opportunities for socialisation, bullying and harassment – more than two out of three young carers are bullied at school
- Unstable environment: traumatic life changes such as bereavement, family break-up, losing income and housing, or seeing the effects of an illness or addiction.

Pathway of support

If staff/parents have any concerns about children who may be showing signs they have caring responsibilities at home, it should be brought to the attention of their Pastoral Head of Year in the first instance so that support can be initiated if not already in place.

During the school enrolment process for new students, the school will:

- Identify parents or family members who have disabilities or other long-term physical or mental health conditions and whether the pupil has caring responsibilities which need supporting.
- Establishes individual plans to recognise the child's/young person's specific needs as a young carer.
- Refer or signpost young carers and their families to other support agencies and professionals as appropriate.

The school actively seeks feedback and ideas from young carers and their families in order to shape and improve provision for young carers.

The school understands the issues faced by young carers, what to look and listen for and how to respond.

The school keeps up to date with national and local developments and with legislation and guidance affecting young carers and their families.

Young carers will know how to access support and information about the support available for young carers and how to access it is clearly available to both students and families.

The school is accessible and welcoming to parents with disabilities and/or illness, offering additional support to enable them to attend parents' evenings or other school events.

Home visits are considered where appropriate.

The school offers additional support to remove any communication barriers with parents, so that parents are able to be fully engaged with the education of their child.

Young carers are respected.

A young carer's privacy is respected and information about them or their caring role is not communicated in front of their peers.

A family's privacy is respected, and the school only shares information with professionals and agencies on a need-to-know basis to support students and their families.

The school views young carers as any other student but understands that they have the additional pressure of caring responsibilities.

Transition support is in place for young carers

- The school offers support to the pupil and their family during the transition process, sharing agreed information with their new school/college/university lead for young carers and their families.
- The school will identify young carers at risk of falling into the NEET category and take appropriate actions to address this.

The school will reduce barriers to education and learning

- The school will offer lunch-time detentions as well as after school ones.
- The school allows young carers to use a telephone to call home during breaks and lunch times to reduce any worry they may have about a family member, when necessary.
- Where appropriate, the school negotiates deadlines, for example, for homework and coursework.
- The school actively seeks feedback and ideas from young carers and their families to shape and improve provision for young carers.
- The school will consider how best to support those parents who find it difficult to escort younger children to school.
- The school uses and evaluates data effectively to identify and monitor the progress made by young carers.
- The school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.



Useful websites for further information

www.carers.org

www.youngminds.org.uk

www.youngcarers.net www.nhs.uk

www.barnardo's.org.uk