



YOUNG CARERS POLICY

Newent Community School and Sixth Form Centre is committed to supporting Young Carers' access to education. This policy aims to ensure, *where possible*, Young Carers at the School are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled.

(See Appendix 1 for details of the school's Young Carers.)

Definition

"Young Carers are children and young persons under 18 who provide, or intend to provide, care, assistance or support to another family member. They carry out, often on a regular basis, significant or substantial caring tasks and assume a level of responsibility, which would usually be associated with an adult. The person receiving care is often a parent but can be a sibling, grandparent or other relative who is disabled, has some chronic illness, mental health problem or other condition connected with a need for care, support or supervision."

"Factors which influence the extent and nature of Young Carers' tasks and responsibilities include the illness/disability, family structure, gender, culture, religion, income and the availability and quality of professional support and services." [Becker, S. (2000) 'Young Carers', in Davies, M. (ed.)]

The person they look after will have one or more of the following:

- Physical disability (including sensory disability)
- Learning disability
- Mental health problem
- Chronic illness
- Substance misuse problem

Caring Tasks

A Young Carer will take on additional responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development. A Young Carer might be providing the main care or share responsibilities with another family member. The caring tasks that a young carer has to deal with can range from:

- **Nursing care** - giving medication, injections, changing dressings and assisting with mobility etc
- **Personal intimate care** - washing, dressing, feeding and helping with toilet requirements
- **Emotional care** - being compliant, monitoring the emotional state of the person cared for, listening, being a shoulder to cry on, supporting a parent through depression and trying to cheer them up
- **Domestic care** - doing a substantial amount of housework, cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry etc
- **Financial care** - running the household, bill paying, benefit collection etc
- **Child care** - taking responsibility for younger siblings in addition to their other caring responsibilities

Possible Effect on Education

Newent Community School and Sixth Form Centre acknowledges that there are likely to be Young Carers among its students, and that being a Young Carer can have an adverse effect on their education.



As a result 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

Identification of Young Carers

The names of the Young Carers we are informed about will be flagged up electronically and confidentially for the attention of subject and support staff, whenever they go on SIMS so that everyone knows who they are. A list of warning signs to recognise Young Carers will be circulated to all staff. Please refer to Appendix 2.

The Vice Principal will be tracking the group through the appropriate year group reporting and target setting structures, to ensure they are achieving their best and attending regularly.

Support Offered

The school acknowledges that Young Carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education. Staff will monitor the progress of known Young Carers and ensure that they have every opportunity to achieve their potential.

It can be difficult to engage the parents of Young Carers (due to fears about the 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.

The designated link for Young Carers is the Vulnerable Student Lead who provides information about Young Carers, and acts as a link between Young Carers, Gloucestershire Young Carers and relevant agencies offering support. All students are made aware of the designated lead.

The Principal, as the Designated Safeguarding Lead, is the Senior Leadership Team link for Young Carers. Information regarding arrangements for Young Carers will be made available on the school website and through the prospectus.

The school will provide Young Carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private, and staff will not discuss a student's situation in front of their peers or expect Young Carers to discuss their family situation unless they feel comfortable to do so. The young person's caring role will be acknowledged and respected.

Newent Community School and Sixth Form Centre will:

- Treat Young Carers in a sensitive and child-centred way, upholding confidentiality;



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- Ensure Young Carers can access all available support services in school;
 - Follow child Protection procedures regarding any Young Carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring

The school will promote discussion and learning in all areas of the curriculum to facilitate fuller understanding, acceptance of and respect for, the issues surrounding illness, disability and caring. There are discrete lessons in the PSHE programme in KS 3 and 4 to raise awareness across the school and there are assemblies delivered in the course of the school year to further promote understanding and support for Young Carers.

Newent Community School and Sixth Form Centre recognises that flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of Young Carers. Available provision includes (but is not limited to):

- Access to a telephone during breaks and lunchtime, to phone home
- Negotiable deadlines for homework/coursework (when needed)
- Access to homework clubs (where these are available)
- Lunchtime detentions rather than after school detentions (where possible)
- Arrangements for schoolwork to be sent home (when there is a genuine crisis)
- Any approved absence for a young carer will be time limited. (DfES 2006)
- Access for parents with impaired mobility
- Alternative communication options for parents who are sensory impaired or housebound
- Advice to parents if there are difficulties in transporting a young carer to school

Provision will be made for work to be sent home if and when there is a situation at home, which requires their absence from school. It may be relevant for students to have a period in the Learning Centre on their return from any forced absences, to ensure they are fit for full time return to lessons.

Further information is available in Appendix 3.

Monitoring and Review

The Senior Leadership Team shall review this protocol from time to time to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice.

If Staff have any questions about this protocol or suggestions for additions that they would like to be considered on review, they may do so by emailing the Principal or Business Manager.

The School will continue to review the effectiveness of this Protocol to ensure it is achieving its stated objectives.

Date of Review

February 2015



APPENDIX 1 YOUNG CARERS

Young carers:

- May want to stay in the background in lessons as they have so much to cope with at home
- Have very little time for homework, and probably no time if there is a crisis at home
- Are often worried, distracted, stressed or angry
- May need to have their mobile phone on so that they can be contacted in an emergency (check with HOH)
- Are unlikely to be able to stay after school
- Are more likely to be bullied
- Feel stressed sometimes- people are relying on them
- May worry during school hours and be unable to concentrate
- Don't want a big deal made of the fact that they are a carer
- May have been working for several hours before getting to school
- Need emotional and practical support at school, and with managing work
- May need to get younger siblings to school, so are often late themselves
- Are sometimes angry about caring, even though it is very important to them and this may make them feel guilty



APPENDIX 2 YOUNG CARERS

Warning signs for all staff at the start of the school year

Definition

“Young Carers are children and young persons under 18 who provide, or intend to provide, care, assistance or support to another family member. They carry out, often on a regular basis, significant or substantial caring tasks and assume a level of responsibility, which would usually be associated with an adult. The person receiving care is often a parent but can be a sibling, grandparent or other relative who is disabled, has some chronic illness, mental health problem or other condition connected with a need for care, support or supervision.”

“Factors which influence the extent and nature of young carers’ tasks and responsibilities include the illness/disability, family structure, gender, culture, religion, income, and the availability and quality of professional support and services.”

Becker, S. (2000) ‘Young Carers’, in Davies, M. (ed.) *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Social Work*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, p. 378.

Warning signs

Young carers are not easy to spot and many actively try to conceal their caring role from teachers, pastoral staff and peers for fear of bullying or outside interference in their families. All of the warning signs below could be indicators of another problem. However, staff noticing these signs should consider asking the pupil if they are helping to look after someone at home.

- Regular or increased lateness or absence
- Concentration problems, anxiety, tiredness (due to caring at home, prior to coming to school or caring until late the night before school)
- Under-achievement and late or incomplete homework: may be a sudden unexplained drop in attainment
- Few or no peer friendships; conversely the pupil may get on well with adults and present as very mature for their age
- Victim of bullying, sometimes explicitly linked to a family member’s disability, health or substance misuse problem
- Behavioural problems, sometimes the result of anger or frustration expressed inappropriately
- Unable to attend extra-curricular activities
- Difficulties in engaging parents; parents not attending parents’ evenings



APPENDIX 3 YOUNG CARERS

Further Information

Contacts: Lyn Szczepura, Gloucestershire Young Carers on 01452 309399

Belinda Heaven, Healthy Schools Partnership on 01452 427318

www.youngcarer.com - A really useful informative and supportive national web site for young carers

These websites support the Right for Children to be Heard

www.young-voice.org.uk - Young Voice is an organisation that is interested in promoting the views of young people. The website has a discussion forum for you to share your views.

www.11million.co.uk - 11 Million website for the Children's Commissioner for England, Professor Sir Albert Aynsley-Green. Allowing you to have a say and join campaigns that affect you.

www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk/ - The UK Youth Parliament (UKYP) enables young people to use their energy and passion to change the world for the better. It provides young people with the opportunity to have a say about a range of issues and get involved in campaigns to make a difference.