



Young Carers

Adopted On:	May 2021
Review Date:	May 2025
Review Frequency:	Every 4 years
Approved By:	Headteacher

Who is a Young Carer?

A young carer is someone under the age of 18 who is caring for a family member, a friend with a disability or a long term illness. The young carer does not have to be living in the same home to be a carer. This includes a young person caring for someone with a mental health illness or depending on drugs or alcohol.

What tasks may they be doing?

- Domestic tasks such as cooking, cleaning, washing or shopping
- Personal care such as helping with mobility, washing, dressing and giving medicine
- Emotional support and supervision such as watching over someone, providing company and a listening ear
- Sibling care: looking after an ill or disabled sibling or a non- disabled sibling where an ill or disabled parent is unable to provide this care
- Communication support: answering the phone or door or interpreting
- Financial management such as budgeting and paying bills
- Self-care, looking after themselves where an ill or disabled parent is unable to provide this care

Difficulties with relationships, roles, routine and income are more likely to occur when a family member has a disability or long term illness. Some carers/young people cope very well in these circumstances but others will experience stress related problems.

At Moss Lane School we believe that all young people have the right to an education and should be treated equally. If a young person looks after someone, we know that they may need additional support to help them get the most out of their education, and we aim to meet their needs with respect.

Young Carers support team:

Operational Lead – Gilly Forbes Wood (HSLW & SENDco)

School Nurse – Sandra Fishlock

Young Carers – 0303 040 1234

Headteacher –Victoria Abbott

Our School

- Is sensitive towards Young Carers' needs, and aims to show discretion. We respect pupils' privacy and will only share information about their circumstances with people who need to know, in order to provide help and to ensure safety. Pupils and parents are consulted before information is shared, in line with our GDPR policy.
- Expects all pupils to arrive at school on time and attend school every day. Office Staff and HSLW monitor attendance. In exceptional circumstances absence may be authorised by the Headteacher should an emergency situation arise. Please always speak to us if this occurs.
- Employs a HSLW who offers support to Young Carers and their families.

- Has links with local services providing support to families with care needs, including local Young Carer services.
- Provides flexibility on home learning, if required. Please speak to us if you require this support.
- Realises Young Carers may feel tired, worried and in some cases isolated from other children who enjoy and experience a variety of social activities.
- Allow reasonable short term absences for young carer during any critical times at home until alternative support is in place, BUT expect pupils to be in on time for registration and lessons
- Being there to listen
- Sign post to other services
- Provide access to a telephone to contact home to alleviate any worries
- Encourage and enable young carer to access school trips and extra curriculum activities
- Assist parents with any disability and/or health problems in attending school meetings and communicating in other ways according to their needs
- Include topics on disabilities, ill health and caring within PHSEC through assemblies and talks.
- Provides individual listening support for young carers e.g. HSLW, Senco and ELSA all known to the Young Carers, who they know they can approach.
- Provides access to a telephone in the office to enable Young Carer to call home, if required.
- Provides assistance for disabled parents in getting their children to school in exceptional circumstances.
- Assists parents with disabilities and health problems in accessing parent's evenings, school events etc in a way that meets their needs.
- Uses the Pupil Premium to assist eligible young carers in their education, including accessing curriculum-based trips enabling them to have equal access to education and enrichment experiences.
- Ensures Young Carer's attainment and progress is monitored through Pupil Progress meetings and appropriate interventions implemented.
- Consider alternatives if pupils are unable to attend after- school activities (e.g. clubs) due to their caring role. Please speak to us if this is an issue.

The impact on a Young Carer's education is?

Attendance

Many young carers turn up late for school or miss whole days. Some miss out on school trips and clubs. There may be transport issues.

Behaviour

Some young carers have problems interacting with school staff and their fellow students. How a young carer deals with stress varies widely. Some may be withdrawn, some maybe disruptive. This can be a sign of struggling between the role of a carer and of a child.

School Work

Problems with concentration due to stress fatigue and worry. Having lack of time for school work and then not achieving as well as they might.

Home school communication

Some people with a disability and health problems will have difficulty coming into school, attending parent evenings and reviews. Some will have difficulty reading and accessing letters and information.

For young carers, school can either be a sanctuary or a source of misery. For some, school is a means of escape from home life, where they can enjoy learning, see friends and be "normal". For others, school is a place where they feel isolated and unsupported and sometimes even punished for having a caring role. The awareness, understanding and response of teachers are key elements in determining how school is experienced by its pupils.

How to identify and support young carers

Schools have a key role. They are well placed to identify young carers at an early age. Any teacher who has regular contact with a child should take a keen interest in their welfare. To be able to be equipped to identify young carers, staff need to be well-versed in this subject. This is a moral and a statutory requirement. In 2008 the Government made recommendations that all schools can support young carers by contacting appropriate community care or adult services to provide more support to the cared for person. The school can also help by providing flexible and sensitive support to the young carer when the caring role is particularly stressful and making it hard for them to complete work on time. In a genuine crisis schools can approve absence for a child to care for a relative until other arrangements can be made. A time limit should be set and work should be set to complete while absent. If it is a terminal illness coming to the end, it may be appropriate for the pupil to take time off school. The school should consider dedicating a member of staff to have the responsibility for young carers communicated through newsletters, parent mail and school applications.

Tips for school staff

The provision of core support to parents from Adult Social Care Services, the children with Disabilities Teams and the Mental Health Services is the most effective way to alleviate the caring role held by the children in the family. These teams have "Carers' Champions" that can liaise with the school staff and families. The additional involvement of Children's Services is required in cases of suspected neglect or abuse. Making a referral to the local young carers service should also be considered, for supplementary support such as social activities with their peers. Carers that undertake regular and substantial care are entitled to an assessment from the core services to provide support for their needs. Carers under 16 can receive a Carer's Assessment from Social Care teams, AP2's. AP2's will come into schools. The support that follows on from Carer's Assessments can include Carers Direct Payments that can be used for leisure

activities that provide a break from caring, as well as other uses. (However, any replacement care worker costs or respite care must be covered by the cared-for persons budget). Pupil Premium funding can be used to assist with the cost of activities for the young carer.

Information Sharing

The sharing of information on individual young carers is essential to provide the required support. Sometimes information can be kept "hidden" within a file or within a team of pastoral workers and not shared with classroom teachers and assistants – even when consent has been granted by the pupil and parent. This may be intended to preserve privacy, but confidentiality which is too strict limits awareness and can prevent the right kind of support being provided by the right person at the right time.

When consent for information recording and sharing is given by the family (or a pupil that has the competency to provide consent), a confidentiality agreement normally allows the sharing of data within the school. Such consent should be re-confirmed when sharing with third-parties outside of the school (unless child protection measures are required).

Information sharing across the school is on a need-to-know approach. Only minimal details may be required. If the caring role is impacting on the child's attendance, concentration or friendships then the sharing of some information is necessary.

Be mindful that family situations involving health problems (particularly mental health illness) can fluctuate. There are often unpredictable changes for young carers at home, and so additional support within school needs to be flexible and reviewed regularly.

Refer to Moss Lane's own data protection policy and procedures. Guidance for schools on information sharing in schools is available from:

Bereaved Young Carers

In losing a parent or sibling, a young carer will experience grief, just as any child would, but in addition, they may have anxieties that they failed in their role as carer or feel a sense of loss of the responsibility itself.

When someone dies people react with varied and changeable feelings, including numbness, guilt, anger, sadness, fear and relief. They may experience physical symptoms, including fatigue, nausea and lack of concentration. With the death of a parent, the family may be dealing with financial difficulties and all the changes that may entail as well as the inherent emotional challenges.

School can be a valuable part of the pupil's life during the period following the bereavement because of the consistent structure it offers. After consultation with the family, all staff should be made aware of the death and given any other significant information, to enable both support and normal routine for the pupil upon their return. Informing classmates of the situation will help with this. For

younger children informing their parents may help them deal with any anxieties that may arise. A flexible approach to the child's return to schools and to any home work may help ease transition back into the class.

The child should be sign posted to the dedicated member so the child has someone to talk to who will listen. If needed, the child can be sign post to a relevant service for outside support. Please be aware that bereaved people do best when with familiar friends, people and environment. An outside agency is not always necessary.

Useful Link

Please click on the following link to find out more information on Surrey Young Carers and access their latest newsletter.

<https://www.actionforcarers.org.uk/who-we-help/young-carers-under-18/>

Appendix 1

Signs to assist identification

Working through the questions below will help you to draw up a list of pupils who are providing care, or are affected by a relative's condition. None of the answers are indicative of caring roles in and of themselves, but like jigsaw pieces, if put together they create a picture that will indicate challenging home circumstances, likely involving illness and disability.

It is worthwhile to consult with colleagues – teaching and support staff, reception staff, pastoral staff, the Safeguarding Officer and the School Nurse during this process. Please follow your school's data protection and confidentiality policies when recording and sharing information.

Are any of your pupils:

- Regularly arriving late for school?
- Regularly missing days of school, marked as authorised or unauthorised absence?
Some young carers miss school to stay close to the cared-for person
- Appearing physically neglected – missing breakfast, lacking clean uniform, etc?
- Appearing to be regularly tired?
- Regularly complaining of aches and pains?
- Regularly appearing withdrawn or anxious?
- Regularly challenging adult authority?
Some young carers struggle with switching between being the adult at home and the child at school
- Appearing isolated from their peers?
- Having regular problems in concentrating upon their work?
- Regularly failing to complete homework on time?
- Listed as Child in Need, subject to a Child Protection plan, or Looked After Children where parental ill health or substance dependency issues are involved?
- Registered with disabilities or ongoing health problems, including mental illness? (Refer to your SEN Disability Register and School Census data).
Do they have any siblings at your school (or arriving soon), who might be looking after them?

Are any of your parents:

- Regularly not responding to school correspondence?
This may be because of a communication problem
- Regularly not attending parent's evening?

This may be because of an inability to attend

- On low incomes, and unable to afford school related expenses? (Refer to your Free School Meals Register) *This may be because of disability or illness related unemployment*

Appendix 2

Template assembly feedback / questionnaire

Young Carers

Do you provide help for someone who is disabled, ill, frail, experiencing mental illness or drug or alcohol problems?

This might be:

- Helping with housework and cooking
- Helping with washing and dressing
- Keeping an eye on them
- Cheering them up

You might be helping in other ways. You might simply be worried about the situation.

We know that if you are caring for someone in your family, that school can sometimes be tough.

We would like to know about all of our pupils who are looking after someone, so that we can provide help at school when it is needed. Please help us to help you by answering these questions, and I will arrange to meet with you soon for a quick chat. Any information you give us will be treated with sensitivity, and will not be shared without your knowledge.

Name:

From:

Even if you don't need help right now, it is very helpful for us to know if you are a young carer, so do please give me your name and form. To remind you, all information will be handled sensitively.

Once completed, please put this sheet in the post box by my office.

Thank you.

(Name of school's young carer contact)

Appendix 3 - Template pupil support plan

Name:

Young Carers contact in school:

Year Group	Caring circumstances	Needs	Support Strategies	Other agencies involved
Year 2 From Moss Lane School	Tommy cares for his mother, who has mobility problems and depression	<p><u>Info from nursery/infant School:</u></p> <p>Tommy has few friends. Needs social opportunities.</p> <p>Difficulties concentrating at school due to worrying about mother. Needs listening support and the ability to call home.</p> <p>Longer journey into new school; travelling by bus. Needs bus pass.</p> <p>Needs extra support in organising homework.</p>	<p>Head of Year, Form Tutor and Subject Tutors to be given relevant details of circumstances and support plan. Tommy given young carer card.</p> <p>Flexibility on homework deadlines required.</p> <p>Place at homework club.</p> <p>Identify interests, encourage joining school club. Invite to young carer club.</p> <p>Provide family with info on School Counsellor.</p> <p>Introduce Tommy to office staff and location of phone, so that he can call home.</p>	<p>Adult Services; Children's Services</p> <p>Local Young Carers Project</p>

Completed by:

Date:

Review due:

Appendix 4

Template monitoring sheet and inclusion register fields

Name	Year	Details	Forms of current support	Attendance % before support plan	Attendance % during support period		Attainment
Tommy Smith	2	Cares for mother with physical disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young Carer Card Flexible deadlines Homework club Attends support group 	85%	Date	90%	Potential to achieve 9 GCSE grades A-C
					Date		
					Date		

Appendix 5

Letter to accompany Young Carer Policy

Dear Parent,

At Moss Lane School we are developing our support for young carers. Young carers are young people who have caring roles for family members or friends with physical or mental health problems or disabilities, or drug or alcohol problems.

My name is Gilly Forbes Wood and I am the main contact person for young carers in the school. I liaise with pupils, families and staff in order to ensure that pupils who are carers are able to achieve and to enjoy their education. I enclose a copy of the school's Young Carer Policy for your reference, so that you are aware of the forms of support that the school can provide. The school is in contact with Surrey Young Carers, a charity to whom the school can refer for further assistance.

If your family is affected by any of the issues mentioned above, and you and your son/daughter would like support, please indicate this on the reply slip below, or contact me at the school so that we can arrange to talk. If no help is required just at this time, the school would still appreciate your sharing of any circumstances that may have an impact upon your child's education as they progress through the school. This will allow us to be aware and offer support as required. Anything you do tell us will be treated sensitively and will not be shared without your knowledge.

Yours faithfully,

Gilly Forbes Wood
Home School Link Worker

Name: _____

Child's name: _____

My son / daughter is a carer.

Brief details:

I would like to arrange for support in-school. Please contact me to discuss this.
YES / NO

Best form of
contact: _____

Please return slip to: (Name of young carer contact, school address)
Or contact on (phone number / email address)

Appendix 6

Template article for school newsletter or Parent Mail

At Moss Lane School we are developing our support for young carers. Young carers are young people who have caring roles for family members or friends with physical or mental health problems or disabilities, or drug or alcohol problems.

My name is Gilly Forbes Wood, Home School Link Worker and I am the contact person for young carers in the school. I liaise with pupils, families and staff in order to ensure that pupils who are carers are able to achieve and to enjoy their education. A copy of the school's Young Carer Policy for your reference, is available on request so that you are aware of the forms of support that the school can provide. The school is in contact with Surrey Young Carers, a charity to whom the school can refer for further assistance.

If your family is affected by any of the issues mentioned above, and you and your son/daughter would like support, please contact me at the school on 01483 417 214 or hslw@moss-lane.surrey.sch.uk so that we can arrange to talk. If no help is required just at this time, the school would still appreciate your sharing of any circumstances that may have an impact upon your child's education as they progress through the school. This will allow us to be aware and offer support as required. Anything you do tell us will be treated sensitively and will not be shared without your knowledge.

With thanks and best wishes,
Gilly Forbes Wood

Home School Link Worker