

Young Carers

SCOPE:	Academy Policy
AUTHOR/ORIGINATOR:	Principal
NAME OF RESPONSIBLE DIRECTOR/PRINCIPAL:	Academy Principal & Sector Director
APPROVING COMMITTEE:	Sector Director
STATUTORY BASIS:	Non Statutory
REQUIREMENT TO PUBLISH ON WEBSITE:	Yes
DATE RATIFIED:	14 th December 2023
DATE DISTRIBUTED TO STAFF:	14 th December 2023

Outstanding Achievement for All

Principles of the Young Carers Policy

Ambitions Academies Trust values the abilities and achievements of all students and is committed to providing for each student the best possible environment for learning. We believe that all pupils should be equally valued and strive to eliminate prejudice and discrimination. We aim to create an environment whereby all students will flourish and feel safe. We are committed to inclusion and equal opportunities and actively seek to remove barriers to learning and participation that can otherwise hinder or exclude students.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation and guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2011
- Equality Act 2010
- Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004
- Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000
- Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Care Act 2014
- The Young Carers (Needs Assessments) Regulations 2015
- DfE (2010) 'Improving support for young carers – family focused approaches'
- DfE (2016) 'The lives of young carers in England'

Our young carers policy also takes account of findings and recommendations given by Barnardo's Still Hidden, Still Ignored; Who Cares for Young Carers? report published in 2017, which emphasises the role and accountability of school staff and procedures regarding provision for, and progress of, young carers. This guidance suggests that schools have a key part to play in the provision of holistic and effective support to young carers, and our Academy Advisory Committee will ensure that we fulfil this responsibility.

Definition of a Young Carer

- 1) A young carer is a child or young person who is helping to look after someone at home. Most are caring for a parent, commonly in a single parent family, but some may be taking responsibility for a sibling, grandparent or other relative. In some instances, a young carer may care for more than one family member.
- 2) The person they look after will be living with one or more of the following:
 - a) physical disability (including sensory disability)
 - b) learning disability
 - c) mental health condition
 - d) chronic illness
 - e) substance use disorder

Caring Tasks

- 3) A young carer will take on additional responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development. A young carer may act as sole or main carer or may share responsibilities with another family member. Caring tasks may include:
 - nursing care e.g. administering medication, injections, changing dressings, assisting with mobility etc.
 - personal intimate care e.g. washing, dressing, feeding, helping with toilet requirements etc.
 - emotional care e.g. being compliant, monitoring the emotional state of the person cared for, listening, being a shoulder to cry on, supporting a parent through depression, trying to cheer them up etc.
 - domestic care e.g. doing a substantial amount of housework, cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry etc.
 - financial care e.g. running the household, paying bills, collecting benefits etc.
 - childcare e.g. taking responsibility for younger siblings.

Aims of Young Carer Provision at Ambitions Academies Trust

- To improve the progress and raise the standard of achievement for young carers.
- To address any underlying inequalities between young carers and other students.
- To raise awareness of young carers among staff and to ensure the identification of all young carers as early as possible on entry to the school.
- To ensure that young carers feel as included and supported within their school community as possible.
- To foster respect and understanding towards young carers among all students.
- To ensure that young carers are involved in discussions and decisions affecting young carer provision.
- To ensure that young carers have access to appropriate careers guidance and opportunities.
- To meet the needs of young carers in a graduated and timely manner, working with other agencies as appropriate.
- To keep up to date with advice, publications, and research regarding provision for young carers and review practice and procedures in place at Ambitions Academies Trust.

We recognise that many students will have caring responsibilities at some point during their time at the school, and that these responsibilities can impact a student's performance in any area of the curriculum; a whole school commitment is therefore necessary.

Ambitions Academies Trust acknowledges that high standards and expectations are crucial to enhance personal and academic progress for all students, including those with caring responsibilities. Therefore, additional provision for young carers is balanced with appropriate challenge to reach longer term outcomes and opposes a sympathetic acceptance of low achievement. As a school, we aim to demonstrate that all students are capable of excellence in relation to individual circumstances. The importance of enhancing positive self-esteem is also recognised, which allows opportunities for increased engagement, social development, and achievement.

Equality and Discrimination

Ambitions Academies Trust aims to make reasonable steps to ensure that young carers are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to other students, and to ensure equal educational and social opportunity for all.

We strive to maintain a climate of tolerance, understanding, respect and trust that allows all students and staff irrespective of background or personal circumstances to feel safe and be safe from any form of discrimination or emotional harm. This young carer policy is supported by other Ambitions Academies Trust including our Equal Opportunities policy which can be viewed separately on the school website.

Identification of Young Carers

- All staff are aware of possible signs that might indicate that a child may be a young carer (see Appendix) and will share concerns about a child who may be considered as an unidentified young carer to the member of staff with responsibility for young carers.
- We will ensure admission forms allow opportunities for identification as a young carer. We will ask parents to declare whether their child is a young carer, and whether their child is registered as a young carer.
- We will request a Young Carers support and assessment from BCP Children's Services First Response Hub on 01202 123334 or childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk when any child has been identified as a possible young carer by a member of school staff.
- We will make resources accessible to all staff that aid the identification and support of young carers.
- All staff will receive CPD (Continuing Professional Development) which includes identification of young carers.

Strategies to Support Young Carers

- All our staff will receive annual CPD training from MYTIME or YC Champion.
- We will create a young carer forum to give young carers a voice.
- We will give our young carers the opportunity for one-to-one staff time.
- We will appoint a member of the Academy Advisory Committee who will be responsible for ensuring that provision of a high standard is offered to young carers.
- We will appoint a member of staff to lead on young carer provision who will be responsible for maintaining a young carer support group and corresponding with external agencies such as local councils to stay up to date on a young carer's circumstances and needs.
- We will monitor the progress of young carers and respond accordingly with appropriate intervention where necessary.
- We will monitor the attendance of young carers and respond accordingly with appropriate intervention where necessary.
- We will provide a quiet space where homework can be completed at school if the atmosphere at home is not conducive to study.
- We will work with MYTIME Young Carers to offer extra-curricular opportunities for relaxation, leisure, and social connection for young carers.
- We will work with MYTIME Young Carers to build the career aspirations of young carers.
- We will correspond with MYTIME Young Carers to provide access to counselling for young carers if needed.
- We will participate in activities that raise awareness of young carers including assemblies.
- We will promote a full understanding, acceptance of, and respect for, issues such as caring, disability and impairment by embedding the challenges faced by young carers into the Personal Social Health Economic education lessons curriculum.
- We will actively encourage young carers to be part of the school's language and recognised by parents, students, and the wider community via our school newsletters, displays and social media.
- We will maintain and regularly review our young carer's policy.

Data Protection

Any information gained will be held securely and made available in the first instance to the designated member of school staff with responsibilities for young carers. While we will respect the right to privacy, we would wish to establish if the family is in contact with a support service that could help reduce their reliance on the child or young person. We will only share information about young carers and their families with people who need to know in order to be able to help. Before sharing information with anyone else, we will seek consent from a parent.

Appendix

Identifying a Young Carer

The following maybe indicators of a range of problems, some not associated with a child having a caring role at home. However, in dealing with any child exhibiting any of the following signs, staff should consider asking the child if they are helping to look after someone at home.

Signs that might indicate that a child has unrecognised responsibilities are:

- Regular lateness or unauthorised absence.
- Tiredness in school.
- Erratic response to homework tasks
- Lack of concentration, anxiety or worry.
- Under-achievement.
- Anger or frustration.
- Presents as very mature for their age, has good relationships with adults, but few or no peer friendships.
- Difficulty in developing friendships out of school.
- Victim of bullying, perhaps linked to a family member's disability or state of health.
- Lack of interest in extra-curricular activities, especially after school.
- Parental non-attendance at parent's meetings.

Policy Prepared: Dec 2023

Ratified by: Sector Director

Policy to be Reviewed: Dec 2024