



Document Version	1.0
Date of Last Review	July 2025
Next Review Date	July 2026
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Introduction

Relational practice is central to the work of all staff at Knutsford Academy focussing on creating a safe and caring environment for all students. This caring environment will support all students to achieve their academic potential. Staff will though have an additional focus on students who have a caring roll in their own family. The school is aware that these students may need additional help, support and care to ensure that they are able to make the most of the opportunities available at The Academy.

Definition

A young carer is a child or young person, under the age of 18, living with or carrying out a significant physical or emotional caring role and assuming a level of responsibility for another person, which would normally be taken by an adult. They can be caring for any of the following:

- Grandparent, parent or sibling suffering from a mental illness
- Grandparent, parent or sibling suffering from a physical disability
- Grandparent, parent or sibling with substance misuse problems
- Grandparent, parent or sibling with learning disabilities
- Grandparent, parent or sibling with a terminal illness

Young carers are recognised by the DfE as children who are vulnerable. This is because the level of care-giving and responsibility to the person in need of care is often inappropriate for that child's age and stage of development, and risks jeopardising their emotional or physical wellbeing, educational achievement and outcomes.

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. At Knutsford Academy we acknowledge that there are young carers amongst our students, and that being a young carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education.

Roles of a young carer may include:

- Practical tasks – cooking, housework and shopping.
- Physical care – lifting or helping someone use the stairs.
- Personal care – dressing, washing, helping with toileting needs.
- Emotional support – listening, calming, being present.
- Managing the family budget, collecting benefits and prescriptions.
- Medication management.
- Looking after younger siblings.
- Helping someone communicate.

Knutsford Academy will strive to best support the needs of these students.

Educational Impact

Being a young carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education. Because 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
- Isolation and embarrassment to take friends home
- Emotional distress, tiredness in school and limited social skills
- Lack of time for homework
- Poor attainment Bullying and low self esteem
- Physical problems e.g. back pain from lifting
- False signs of maturity because of assuming adult roles
- Feeling that no one understands, and no support is available
- Behavioural problems
- Lack of time for extracurricular activities
- Lack of voice

Support for Young Carers at Knutsford Academy

Identification

At Knutsford Academy we take proactive steps to ensure that we identify students how are acting as a young carer as early as possible. Identification will take place at three levels :

- **At point of transition.** Staff from the Academy visit all the primary feeder schools to ensure that we get a full range of information regarding students. Identifying students who are acting as young carers will be vital during these meeting.
- **At point of in year admission.** For any student joining the school in year young carers will be part of the process ensuring that the school has a clear understanding of any underlying challenges.
- **During the academic year.** At key points during the academic year the safeguarding team will share the Vulnerable Student Tracker so that staff can update any student whose circumstances have changed.

Information regarding those students identified as young carers will be shared with all staff through Arbor.

Young Carers Clubs

The Academy will run Young Carers Clubs as a weekly lunchtime activity on both sites. This club will be offered to and open to all young carers.

External Support

The Academy will work with local agencies to best support young carers and to best provide opportunities to support students. The key agencies that the school will work with are :

- Cheshire East Carers Hub ([Cheshire East Carers Hub \(All Age Carers Hub\) | CheshireEast MarketPlace](#))
- Cheshire Young Carers ([Cheshire Young Carers | Chester | Supporting children who care for others](#))

Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing the Policy

This policy will be reviewed every year or more frequently if there are changes to national or regional policy.

Links with other Policies

This policy should not be viewed in isolation and should only be viewed alongside the following policies :

- Attendance Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Mental Health Policy