

Our Lady Queen of Peace

Catholic High School



Young Carers Policy

Date of Policy	Sept 2024
Date of Review	Sept 2025

Whole School Young Carers Policy

Context and Rationale

Our Mission Statement

In Christ We Grow

'As a learning community we live out our Mission Statement striving for excellence through caring, sharing and achieving'.

School Context

Our Lady Queen of Peace is a mixed secondary school with a wide demographic, including all socio-economic profiles. However, the school does have a larger proportion of students in the lowest socio-economic profile. This provides a wide range of issues associated with poverty and poor living conditions. As a satellite town of the city of Liverpool, Skelmersdale is exposed to 'County Lines' drug activity and associated gangs and violence. This has had some impact on the school and community, with an increasing number of incidents of anti-social behaviour, gang related violence and drug taking. Post Covid, there has been an increase in students needing support with issues relating to their mental health and well-being and families experiencing domestic violence. Common safeguarding concerns raised in school have related to low mood and depression, stress and anxiety and self-harm.

The school works alongside the police and participates in Operation Encompass. It also works with the Children, Family and Wellbeing Service and makes referrals to Early Help.

At Our Lady Queen of Peace we take our statutory duty to protect and promote the welfare of all students very seriously, and aim to provide a community for students, which keeps them safe, supports their creativity and enables them to meet their full potential.

The school is committed to supporting young carers' access to a full education. All staff members will implement this policy in order to ensure young carers at our school are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled.

1.Aims

1.1 The aim of this policy is to raise awareness among school staff about the needs of young carers and to support them in establishing a whole-school approach to address the issues that may arise within a school setting, in line with the school's statutory duty of care to young carers who are students at the school.

1.2 Our Lady Queen of Peace is committed to enabling young carers to access education and support.

1.3 This policy aims to ensure young carers at this school are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education and other services to which they are entitled.

1.4 Research indicates that 10% of pupils in the UK are young carers, whether they are aware of this or not. This means that in the average classroom in a school, three pupils will be young carers. Of these, 7% are providing high amounts of care and 3% very high amounts. 11% of these pupils provide between 20-49 hours of care per week. All Saints is committed to doing all that it reasonably can to:

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- identify young carers
- support young carers to access education, including enrichment activities
- minimise the disadvantages that young carers face
- have due regard to the impact of young carers' responsibilities when considering the application of sanctions upon them
- work with external agencies to help identify the needs of individuals who have caring responsibilities with the aim of increasing the support available to them and to their families.

2. Definition

2.1 Young carers are children and young people who provide care to another family member. The level of care they provide would usually be undertaken by an adult and as a result of this they take on a level of responsibility that is inappropriate to their age and development. This is likely to have a significant impact on their childhood experiences.

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

- Physical disability
- Sensory disability
- Learning disability
- Mental health problem
- Chronic illness
- Substance misuse problem

2.3 They may also be taking on a caring role if they are:

- growing up with disabled siblings,
- in a family where there has been recent serious or terminal illness diagnosed,
- coping with illness in wider family.

3. Caring Tasks

3.1 A young carer will take on additional responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development.

3.2 A young carer might be providing the main care or share responsibilities with another family member.

3.3 The caring tasks that a young carer has to deal with can range from:

3.4 **Nursing care:** giving medication, injections, changing dressings, assisting with mobility etc.

3.5 Personal **intimate care:** washing, dressing, feeding and helping with toilet requirements.

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- 3.6 **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. In cases where a young carer is supporting an adult with drug/alcohol misuse problem, they will often take a leading role in trying to keep that person safe.
- 3.7 **Domestic care:** doing a substantial amount of housework, cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry etc. Financial care: running the household, bill paying, benefit collection etc.
- 3.8 **Childcare:** taking responsibility for younger siblings in addition to their other caring responsibilities.
- 3.9 **Communication communicating on behalf of the adult or family with & Interpreting:** agencies/services and interpreting for a language or sensory impairment.

4. The designated school leads for Young Carers

4.1 Olivia Jones	Year 9 Pastoral Support Assistant/ KS3 Young Carer and LAC lead
4.2 Karen Batchelor	Year 11 Pastoral Support Assistant/ KS4 Young carer and LAC lead
4.3 Gus Diamond	Assistant Head – Young Carer and LAC SLT link

5. Support Offered

- 5.1 Our Lady Queen of Peace acknowledges that young carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education. Through this policy, the academy is giving the message that young carers' education is important.
- 5.2 The designated professionals for young carers will liaise with relevant colleagues, and other relevant agencies regarding their caring responsibilities, with the consent of the young carer. All pupils will be made aware of the designated professional. If the designated professional is not a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team, then they will be line managed by an individual who is a member of it.
- 5.3 The designated professional will:
- work to identify young carers through activities such as, but not limited to; using transfer information e.g. from primary schools; holding assemblies to raise awareness with pupils and staff; working with the C4L lead to ensure the curriculum in that subject helps to raise awareness; directly working with pupils who may be young carers, including those with unexplained patterns of lateness, absence, work completion or behaviour
 - ensure, in line with the Children's Commissioner's recommendations, that the school's records include young carers' caring responsibilities and that young carers are identified as a vulnerable group
 - provide staff training where appropriate , and on a 'drip-feed' basis, about young carers, and the responsibility upon all staff to ensure that they are fully supported

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- ensure that form tutors, class teachers and other relevant members of staff know the young carers in their forms and classrooms, do all they reasonably can to identify the barriers they face, and any reasonable adjustments that they might require, whether in respect of the application of the behaviour policy, or more broadly
- meet with pastoral and other leaders regularly to discuss young carers' attendance, behaviour, safety, progress and personal development and how any relevant barriers might be removed
- meet with young carers regularly, and as needed, to discuss their provision, including their access to education and enrichment, and ascertain from them how any barriers might be removed
- ensure our young carers have an adult in school that they have chosen as a key worker

5.4 In addition:

- give our young carers access to the adult they have chosen at any point during the school day
- give our young carers time for them to feel valued and appreciated and for them to do something nice and that they enjoy
- be an advocate for young carers, helping to ensure that they do not serve sanctions that would be unreasonable, given an individual's caring responsibilities
- actively promote the participation of young carers in enrichment activities that might promote their personal development
- liaise with the Careers leader to ensure that young carers are helped to access work related learning and information about post-16 and post-18 pathways that are available to them
- work with external agencies to ensure that the needs of individual young carers and their families are known
- Access to a telephone during breaks and lunchtime, to phone home
- Negotiable deadlines for homework/coursework (when needed)
- Access to homework clubs (where available)
- Arrangements for schoolwork to be sent home (where 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

6. Why do we need a school lead for Young Carers

6.1 A young carer is a child or young person who provides care for another family member.

6.2 The level of care they provide would usually be undertaken by an adult and as a result of this they take on a level of responsibility that is inappropriate to their age and development.

6.3 One in 12 young carers is caring for more than 15 hours per week. Around one in 20 misses school because of their caring responsibilities. 5

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- 6.4 Young carers are 1.5 times more likely than their peers to be from black, Asian or minority ethnic communities, and are twice as likely to not speak English as their first language.
- 6.5 Young carers are 1.5 times more likely than their peers to have a special educational need or a disability.
- 6.6 The average annual income for families with a young carer is £5000 less than families who do not have a young carer.
- 6.7 There is no strong evidence that young carers are more likely than their peers to come into contact with support agencies, despite government recognition that this needs to happen.
- 6.8 Young carers have significantly lower educational attainment at GCSE level, the equivalent to nine grades lower overall than their peers e.g. the difference between nine B's and nine C's.
- 6.9 Young carers are more likely than the national average to be not in education, employment or training (NEET) between the ages of 16 and 19.
- 6.10 A lot of Young Carers miss school because of their caring responsibilities. Many will be late to school and unable to complete their homework on time.
- 6.11 When at school young carers may have difficulty concentrating due to anxiety about the person they care for. In addition to academic problems, many young carers have difficulty integrating socially within the school environment, with some being teased or bullied by their peers.
- 6.12 In spite of these problems the majority of young carers will not be identified as such by staff in schools, partly because young carers and their families often remain silent about their caring responsibilities due to fears of the reactions of statutory agencies and peers and the stigma surrounding some health conditions, addictions and disabilities or they are unaware that help may be available.
- 6.13 Principle 4 from the Key Principles of Practice (The Children's Society 2008) recommends that:

"Schools and colleges take responsibility to identify young carers at an early stage and have a named staff member with lead responsibility for young carers to ensure that they have the same access to a full education and career choices as their peers; and to be responsible for promoting and co-ordinating the support they need in school and liaising with other agencies as appropriate."

7. Possible effect on education

- 7.1 At Our Lady Queen of Peace , we acknowledge that there are likely to be young carers among its students, and that being a young carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's access to education and attainment.
- 7.2 Because of their responsibilities at home, a young carer might:

- Have erratic or poor school attendance
- Arrive late at school

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- Decline in academic achievement
- Not complete homework
- Not attend out of school activities or school trips
- Lack motivation
- Have back problems, aches and pains patterns of being generally unwell
- Appear withdrawn, isolated from peers, have difficulties socialising
- Show, anxiety, depression, anger, self-harming behaviour
- Have poor concentration (due to worrying about the person who is cared for)
- Have poor home/ school relationship
- Have parents who do not attend parents evening or lack of overall contact with school
- Have false signs of maturity, assuming an adult role in social situations or have difficulty enjoying childhood activities It also might be difficult to engage their parents (due to fears about child being taken into care, fears about their condition being misunderstood or their parenting skills being called into question).

7.3 School may need to make alternative arrangements for communication about attainment.

7.4 Our Lady Queen of Peace acknowledges that Young Carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education and opportunities offered through the life of a school.

7.5 Through this policy, school is giving the message that Young Carers education and school experience is important.

8. Further Guidance

8.1 Further government guidance is available through the following links:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/498115/DFE-RR499_The_lives_of_young_carers_in_England.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-carers-and-young-adult-carers-providing-care-duringcoronavirus/guidance-for-those-under-25-who-provide-care-for-someone>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/909255/COVID-19_young_carers_sasy_read_guidance.pdf