

Young Carer Policy

2024-2026

Upton Junior School

Policy Date: 1.9.24

Senior Leadership: Nicky Nixon

Governor: SEN Governor

Young Carer Champion: Jayne French

Review Date: 1.9.26



PRINCIPLES OF THE YOUNG CARER POLICY

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

Upton Junior School strive to develop aspirations, resilience and curiosity in all students, including those with caring responsibilities. We believe that all pupils should be equally valued. We aim to create an environment whereby all students will flourish and feel safe and that seeks to remove barriers to learning and participation. The importance of enhancing positive self-esteem is also recognised, which allows opportunities for increased engagement, social development, and achievement.

Therefore, additional provision for young carers is balanced with appropriate challenge to reach longer term outcomes and opposes a sympathetic acceptance of low achievement.

Upton Junior School will engage with MYTIME Young Carers through their Level-Up Programme, which aims to improve the knowledge of staff in supporting and identifying young carers, of students by educating them regarding the role which young carers may carry out outside of the school day and the impacts their role may play on day-to-day life and future choices. Additionally, children will understand the impact their decisions have on a young carer's life.

Our young carers policy takes account of findings and recommendations given by Barnardo's Still Hidden, Still Ignored; Who Cares for Young Carers? report published in 2017, and the Children's Commissioner's Voices of England's Missing Children report, published in 2022, which both emphasise 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 Governing Body will ensure that we fulfil this responsibility.

Upton Junior School acknowledges the need to keep up to date with advice, publications and research regarding provision for young carers via their MYTIME Coordinator and MYTIME newsletter, and therefore this document is subject to review at regular intervals.

This policy has been produced in collaboration with local experts, MYTIME Young Carers.

AIMS OF YOUNG CARER PROVISION

- 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 and make referrals when necessary
- To foster respect and understanding towards young carers among all students
- To support young carers in improving their attendance
- To ensure that young carers feel included and supported within their school community as possible, and that reasonable adjustments made to promote this
- To protect young carers from the impact of their caring role and improve co-ordination with other agencies and support services
- To give young carers a voice in the school community and that they are involved in decisions affecting young carer provision
- To ensure that staff recognise that flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of young carers

Definition of a young carer

Young carers are children under the age of 18 who help to look after someone in their home or another family member. This could be a sibling, parent, both parents or a grandparent who has a disability, illness, mental health condition or who misuses substances.

EQUALITY AND DISCRIMINATION

Upton Junior School 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.

Upton Junior School strives 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 school policies including our equality policy and anti-bullying policy which can be viewed separately on the Upton Junior School website.

Strategies To support young carers

A multitude of strategies can be implemented at various levels within a school to ensure that young carers are identified, supported, and enabled to succeed both academically and socially. This requires a collaborative approach where every adult is held accountable for young carers.

SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

- To create a young carer register accessible to all members of the pastoral team and any other necessary staff
- To monitor the attendance of young carers and respond accordingly with appropriate intervention
- The school will add the pupils to the vulnerable pupils' list
- To ensure that young carers have the opportunity to contribute to the discussion around the schools' provision for young carers
- To maintain and regularly review our young carer's policy

ENGAGEMENT WITH THE LEVEL-UP PROGRAMME

To engage in MYTIME Young Carer's Level-Up Programme, where the school pledges:

- To ensure that all school staff receive training on how to identify and support young carers through CPD
- To appoint a young carer champion, who is held to account by a dedicated member of SLT and an appointed Governor. The young carer champion will be responsible for maintaining a young carer support group and corresponding with external agencies such as Dorset and BCP council to stay up to date on a young carer's circumstances and needs
- To raise awareness of young carers, to develop a culture of respect for young carers among the student community, and to encourage young carers to come forwards
- To host MYTIME young carer assemblies and PSHCE lessons
- To engage with MYTIME Young Carers in providing opportunities for young carers (Zoom Youth Group, making memories days, Christmas, and Easter events)
- To sign up to the Level-Up and MYTIME newsletters
- To create and organise a young carer group and young carer display board visible by students and staff

In school support

- To offer extra-curricular opportunities for relaxation, leisure, and social connection for young carers
- The school will provide young carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private, and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers
- To ensure that young carers have access to pastoral support available across the school where necessary
- The school will create young carer passports which all staff can access
- To be identified on the graduated response
- To make reasonable adjustments to usual School policies and show flexibility on a case-by-case basis regarding issues such as lateness to school, late homework, and poor attendance. These include, but are not limited to:
 - access to a telephone, during breaks and lunchtime, to phone home, with pastoral support or independently
 - negotiable deadlines for homework/coursework (when needed)
 - access to homework clubs during the school day (where these are available)
 - identifying support for young carers and their family to enable them to attend school trips and educational activities
 - To provide flexibility for parents with a physical disability, who are housebound or have a sensory impairment

REFERRAL AND EXTERNAL AGENCIES

- The young carer champion will consult with relevant colleagues, and other relevant agencies, regarding their caring responsibilities, with the consent of the young carer
- The school will 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
- Where appropriate, the school will refer a young carer to the local authority for a referral

GUIDANCE AND FURTHER READING

- Barnardo's Still Hidden, Still Ignored; Who Cares for Young Carers?
[Click here for file](#)
- Children's Commissioner for England, Voices of England's Missing Children
[Click here for file](#)