

West Kidlington Primary and Nursery School

Young Carers Policy



West Kidlington
Primary & Nursery School
Be kind, give your best!

2026/27

Reviewed September 2026

Next review – September 2028

Role	Name	Signature
Headteacher	Simon Isherwood	<i>S.Isherwood</i>
Assistant HT	Jo Simpson	<i>J.Simpson</i>
Mental Health leader	G.Bullen/Simon Isherwood	<i>G.Bullen</i>
Young Carer's School Lead	G.Bullen	<i>G.Bullen</i>
Chair of Governors	Charlotte Christie	<i>C.Christie</i>

Aims

West Kidlington Primary and Nursery School is committed to supporting young carers to access education. This policy aims to ensure young carers at West Kidlington Primary and Nursery School are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled.

Definition

A young carer is a child or young person who is helping to look after someone at home. Most are caring for a parent, 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.

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

- Physical disability (including sensory disability)
- Learning disability
- Mental health problem
- Chronic illness
- Substance misuse problem

Caring Tasks

A young carer will take on additional responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development. They may be providing the main care or share responsibilities with another family member. The caring tasks that a young carer may have to experience can range from:

- Nursing care - giving medication, injections, changing dressings, assisting with mobility etc.
- Personal intimate care - washing, dressing, feeding and helping with toilet requirements.
- 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, adapting their own behaviour to meet the needs of the person they care for.
- Domestic care - doing a substantial amount of housework, cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry etc.
- Financial care - running the household, bill paying, benefit collection etc.
- Child care - taking responsibility for younger siblings in addition to their other caring responsibilities.
- Accessibility care – translating for their families, reading or writing.

Possible effect on education

West Kidlington Primary and Nursery School acknowledges that there are likely to be young carers among its pupils, and that 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,
- Emotional distress,

- Tiredness in school,
- Lack of time for homework,
- Poor attainment,
- Physical problems such as back pain from lifting,
- False signs of maturity, because of assuming adult roles,
- Behavioural problems (taking out their anger or frustration),
- Lack of time for extra-curricular activities,
- Isolation, embarrassed to take friends home,
- Limited social skills,
- Bullying,
- Feeling that no one understands and that no support is available,
- Low self-esteem,

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). They may be unable to attend parents' evenings. As a school, we will make any reasonable adjustments we can to overcome any barriers that may stop the family engaging. These may include home visits, meetings in or out of school time or access to after school club.

Support Offered

West Kidlington Primary and Nursery School acknowledges that young carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education. Through this policy, West Kidlington Primary and Nursery School is giving the message that young carers' education is important.

The designated lead for young carers is Mrs Genevieve Bullen who works alongside Jo Simpson, who is the young carers senior leadership team lead. They will liaise with relevant colleagues, Oxfordshire County Council Young Carers Team – Family Solutions Service and other relevant agencies, on a need to know basis, with the consent of the young carer, their families or designated safeguarding lead. Referrals for further support may also be made to outside agencies, such as Be Free Young Carers, when families have given consent.

Families are able to contact Mrs Bullen directly via email – gbullen@west-kidlington.oxon.sch.uk – or by contacting the school office.

All pupils will be made aware of the Young Carer's School Lead and

- We will provide young carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private, and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers
- We appreciate that young carers will not discuss their family situation unless they feel comfortable. The young person's caring role will be acknowledged and respected.
- We will treat young carers in a sensitive and child-centred way, upholding confidentiality.
- We will ensure young carers can access all available support services in school.
- We will follow child protection procedures regarding any young carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring.

- We 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.

West Kidlington Primary and Nursery School recognises that flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of young carers. Available provision includes (but is not limited to):

- Access to a telephone during breaks and lunchtime, to phone home,
- Negotiable deadlines for homework (when needed),
- Access to homework clubs (where these are available),
- Arrangements for schoolwork to be sent home, with the Principles discretion, if a crisis situation arises. 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.