

AYLSHAM LEARNING FEDERATION

YOUNG CARERS POLICY

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Signed:

Chair

Introduction

Schools within the Aylsham Learning Federation (ALF) are committed to meeting the needs of our Young Carers, so that our young people attend and are successful at school. We believe that all pupils and students have the right to an education regardless of what is happening at home. When a child looks after someone in their family with a history of long-term physical or mental illness, a disability, alcohol, or substance abuse the young person may need some extra support to help them get the most out of school. This Young Carers' policy will set out how we will help any pupil who looks after someone at home.

Definition of a Young Carer

A Young Carer is a pupil/student under 18 years of age who helps to look after a family member who is disabled, physically or mentally ill or has a substance misuse problem. Caring can involve physical or emotional care or taking responsibility for someone's safety or well-being. Young carers might also be defined as a young person whose own care and emotional need is significantly impacted by the needs and care of a member of the immediate family. The level of responsibility assumed by a Young Carer is often inappropriate to their age and at a level beyond simply helping with the jobs at home, which is a normal part of growing up.

Identifying a Young Carer

It can often be difficult to identify young carers unless schools are advised by families, other professionals or the child themselves. Some Young Carers' may also worry about bullying or interference in their family life and may seek to conceal their role from their peers and from teachers.

These barriers can result in many 'hidden young carers' whom school may only be able to identify by noticing some of the warning signs which can indicate a pupil has unrecognised responsibilities such as:

- Regular lateness or unauthorised absence, possibly increasing

- Tiredness at school
- Erratic responses to homework with incomplete, late or non-compliance to set tasks
- Lack of concentration
- Anxiety/worry
- Under-achievement
- Behavioural problems
- Inappropriate responses resulting from anger or frustration
- Few or no peer friendships, but possibly good relationship with adults and presenting as very mature for their age
- Victim of bullying, perhaps linked to a family member's disability or state of health
- Lack of interest in extracurricular activities especially after school
- Apparent parental disinterest due to non-attendance at parent's meetings
- Difficulty with completing homework tasks

The above may be indicators of a range of problems; some not associated with a child having a caring role at home. However, dealing with any child or young person exhibiting any of the above signs, staff should consider asking the child or young persons if they are helping to look after someone at home. Staff should also discuss their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and with colleagues with pastoral responsibilities for the child.

School Support for Identified Young Carers

All schools have named Young Carer Leads, who monitor the support in place for identified young carers. Schools make every effort to understand the particular needs and circumstances of the young carers and their families.

Young Carers Leads

- John of Gaunt Infant & Nursery School * Bure Valley School - Mr Jamie Olney (Head Teacher/DSL) & Mrs Vicky Seal (Pastoral Lead and DSL)
- Aylsham High School – Mrs Jenny Coles (Link room officer)

In our schools:

- Where possible, practical help will be offered to enable the young carer to attend school regularly and to take part in all school activities.
- School seeks to support children who cannot complete homework tasks in the home environment due to their family responsibilities and supports young carers to attend extracurricular school based activities;
- Schools will liaise with support services to ensure that families can be advised where additional help may be found; this includes 'Carers Matter Norfolk' and 'BOOM! Young Carers';
- If a parent is unable to travel to parent's meetings due to family circumstances, school staff will try to make alternative arrangements (e.g. online.) The young carer or parent may request this.
- Schools will take an active role in seeking to identify and provide support to hidden young carers.
- We aim to develop a whole school approach to educating students about young carers this would be by;
 - Having a designated Young Carer's notice board in each setting where information about what it means to be a young carer/support available in school such as groups and meetings can be displayed.

- To educate all students about what a young carer is via school assemblies (either in person or online)

Transition

As a federation we are aware that a good transition between schools is key to enable children to gain the correct support.

As Young Carers Leads we will work together to ensure that between the settings within the federation (John of Gaunt Infant & Nursery School, Bure Valley School and Aylsham High School) and to other educational settings outside of the federation there is handover of information to continue the support for those young carers who have been identified by either school or families.

This will look like;

- At each setting we have developed specific sections on CPOMS (Our electronic safeguarding and wellbeing database) to highlight young carers. These records are then transferred electronically from school to school.
- There are set times in the school year where transition days occur for all Aylsham Learning Federation settings. This includes pupils visiting their new schools. Prior to these days Young Carers Leads will update the new setting's Lead person regarding children who have been identified as young carers - this could be a face to face meeting, telephone call or secure email.
- Each setting can discuss with their Young Carers about who their key contact will be at their next setting and where possible we will arrange introductions.
- Federation settings are working together to create a 'Young Carers Passport' or 'support plan' to assist with transitions across settings also.

Working with Local Authority

Within the Aylsham Learning Federation (ALF) Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and other staff members are involved in processes such as Early Help Assessment Plans (EHAPS), Family Support Processes (FSP), Child in Need proceedings (CIN Section 17) and Child Protection Proceedings (Section 47.) This involves liaising with professionals from the local authority and other agencies such as health and police. As a federation we will strive to advocate for young carers within these meetings and would invite any key workers to them where appropriate.

Training

Schools would either deliver training in person or online.

We have an expectation that all staff keep up to date with Young Carers training annually.

Children Act 2004

Most young carers will meet the definition of 'child in need' under the Children Act 2004 and may be entitled to an assessment from Children's Services. In the event of any young carers being considered to be at risk of significant harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed.

Equality Act 2010

Young carers' have protected characteristics as defined by the Act because they are associated with a family member who has a disability or illness and cannot be discriminated against because of this.

Children and Families Act 2014

The Act has a section on Young Carers' and, in conjunction with the Adult Care Act, seeks to make sure that Young Carers get the support they need. Local authorities are expected to try and identify Young Carers so they can be offered support.

Those who contributed towards developing the policy

Policy Drafted with Input from all Young Carers Leads at all federation settings:

- Jamie Olney
- Vicky Seal
- Jenny Coles