

Alexandra Primary School



Alexandra

Primary School

Aspire, Perform, Succeed

A policy for supporting identified Young Carers at school

Drafted by: J Bird
Date: April 2024
Review: April 2026

Contents

Aims of the Young Carers Policy	2
Background and Context	2
Impact of being a young carer	2
Definition of a Young Carer.....	3
What do young carers do?.....	3
Supporting Young Carers at School	4
Staff responsible for Young Carers.....	4
School Responsibilities	4
Partners, External Support and Networks.....	5
Links to other policies	6
Monitoring and Evaluation	6
Policy Review	6

Aims of the Young Carers Policy

This policy outlines how we will seek to identify, raise awareness of and offer support to any pupil who looks after someone at home.

Background and Context

All children deserve a childhood. Young people with caring responsibilities have all the challenges of being young, with all the responsibilities of being an adult, and they're often left to face these alone.

Some people start giving care at a very young age and don't really realise they're carers. Other young people become carers overnight.

- There are approx. 800 000 Young Carers in England alone
- One in 5 children are Young Carers
- One in ten Young Carers is under the age of ten
- 10,000 Young Carers are age 5- 7

The young person does not have to be doing any physical caring but may be suffering from a lack of support or attention at home due to another family member needs. There are 40 children identified as Young Carers at Alexandra Primary School.

Impact of being a young carer

Being a young carer can make young people feel good about themselves and proud of the useful skills they learn. However, many young carers don't see themselves as carers and miss out on getting the help and support they often so desperately need and deserve.

Young carers take on caring responsibilities not just occasionally but as part of their everyday lives, often over a long period of time, meaning they also often miss out on opportunities that other children have to play, learn and be young.

Many struggle educationally with being able to focus on school whilst overwhelmed by other

worries or can be bullied for being 'different'. They can become isolated, with no relief from the pressures at home, with 1 in 3 young carers saying that caring makes them feel stressed. As many as 1 in 5 children and young people are young carers in the UK.

- 23% of young carers in the UK said that their caring role had stopped them making friends.
- eight out ten Young Carers say they feel lonely in the holidays
- Two in three Young Carers have been bullied

Further information can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WoSQLrvf6E0>

Definition of a Young Carer

A young carer is someone aged 25 and under who cares for a friend or family member who, due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction, cannot cope without their support. Older young carers are also known as young adult carers and they may have different support needs to younger carers. Being a young carer can have a big impact on the things that are important to growing up.

- Young Carers are already likely to have significantly lower educational attainment than their peers.
- Young Carers may have missed out on school and urgent support is needed if they are not to be left behind their peers.
- Caring can also be an isolating experience but having the right support in place can give young carers a better chance of succeeding in all parts of their lives.

What do young carers do?

A young carer might support someone who has a disability, a long-term illness, or a problem with alcohol or drugs. Without this help, they would struggle or not be able to cope.

The responsibility of a young carer is wide and varied. Young carers often do a lot of helpful things, such as:

- Practical tasks, such as cooking, housework and shopping.
- Physical care, like helping someone out of bed.
- Emotional support, including talking to someone who is distressed.
- Personal care, such as helping someone dress.
- Managing the family budget and collecting prescriptions.
- Helping to give medicine.
- Helping someone communicate.
- Looking after brothers and sisters.
- Help with the shopping
- Give personal care
- Help their special person move and get out of the house
- Give emotional support
- Keep an eye on things generally

Supporting Young Carers at School

At Alexandra Primary School (APS), we believe all young people have a right to an education, regardless of their situation at home. When a young person has a caring responsibility, they may need extra support to help them get the most out of school.

These children may go unnoticed, although school staff might notice:

- Children being late for school or absent more than others, without an explanation.
- Children often appearing tired and grumpy for no reason that they can explain to you.
- their appearance may be unkempt
- packed lunches might seem minimal.
- difficulty completing homework or handing it in on time.
- A reluctance to take part in extra curricula activities

We define a Young Carer as a young person who has caring responsibilities for a family member with a disability, physical / mental health condition or substance misuse issue. This may include siblings with SEND i.e. ADHD, behavioural difficulties and ASD etc.

Young carers may provide physical care, personal care, help with medication, practical tasks, or provide emotional support.

Staff responsible for Young Carers

Mrs. Bird is the Young carers operational lead and Mr. Norton is the SLT lead.

- Speak to Jo Bird or John Norton if you **suspect** a child is a Young Carer
- We will then speak to the child and parent
- The child will be included in the weekly Young Carers Group which takes place on a Tuesday afternoon, where they are free 'to be a kid' and will have peer support from other Young Carers.
- We may refer to the Brentford Young Carers Group for activities outside of school

School Responsibilities

- APS has a member of staff with special responsibility for young carers, and informs all new pupils who the member of staff is and what they can do to help.
- School will provide training and information to staff members on how to identify young carers and signpost them to the relevant support (Annually).
- Staff will proactively identify young carers and raise awareness of the issues they face as well as signpost support that is available (for example during regular class time, assemblies, PSHE / Circle Time sessions).
- The views of young carers are regularly sought and acted upon where appropriate.
- APS will provide a safe and confidential space for peer support groups, usually on Tuesday afternoons), overseen by a member of staff, allowing young carers in the school to provide emotional support to each other regarding their caring role.

- School will make referrals to the Young Carers Project where appropriate with the family and young person's permission.
- APS will provide information about support for young carers on our website for current and prospective pupils and parents.
- APS will consider alternatives if a young carer is unable to attend extra-curricular activities due to their caring role.
- APS will seek to provide alternatives if a young carer is unable to attend school because of their caring commitment.
- School will provide information about young carers available at prospective open days, and proactively ask about caring responsibilities during the admissions process.
- APS is physically accessible and has accessible information available to parents who have mobility or communication difficulties.
- School will not make assumptions about family members with disabilities, mental and physical health conditions or substance misuse issues, or label young people and their families.
- APS respects the young person's right to privacy and only shares information on them and their family with people who need to know. Their home situation and caring role will not be discussed in front of their peers.
- School treats young carers in a sensitive and child-centred way, upholding confidentiality. The young person's caring role is acknowledged and respected.
- APS encourages young carers to share their views and opinions on the school's Young carer provision.
- Staff Include young carers in any existing transition package so that relevant support is highlighted to and for the young person.

Partners, External Support and Networks

APS works closely with a range of external providers:

- Brentford Football Club Community Sports Trust, provide support after school and during school holidays. <https://www.brentfordfccst.com>
- Young Carers Trust - <https://carers.org/about-caring/about-young-carers>
- Barnardo's - <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/get-support/young-carers>
- Fairholme Primary School - <https://fairholme.hounslow.sch.uk/>
- Southville Primary School - <https://www.southville.hounslow.sch.uk/>
- The Orchard Primary School - <https://www.tops.hounslow.sch.uk/>

Links to other policies

- Allegations against staff
- Attendance
- Anti-bullying
- Behaviour
- Children Missing in Education
- Equalities
- Health & Safety
- Intimate Care
- Medical Policy
- Online safety
- Physical intervention
- Remote Learning
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Safer Recruitment
- Sex and Relationships Education
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Use of children's images
- Whistleblowing
- Whole, Happy, Healthy strategy

Monitoring and Evaluation

School will see the successful application of this policy through the continued identification of Young Carers and in continuing to develop the provision for Young Carers. School will further develop opportunities for Young Carers to aspire, perform and succeed and to achieve our school aims.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly with Governors and staff.