NEW HEIGHTS SCHOOL
Focus · Learn · Achieve

Young Carers Policy

Status	**Non-Statutory**
Responsible Governors' Committee	**Full Governing Body**
Date last approved by GB	**November 2025**
Responsible Person	**Co-Headteachers**
Review Date	**November 2026**
Last Amended Date	**October 2022**

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1.0 Policy Statement

At New Heights School, we are committed to and fully recognise our responsibilities for supporting young carers; this policy has been developed to ensure that all adults are working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of young carers. We will ensure timely and effective identification of students who are taking on a caring role.

2.0 Scope

This policy is a guide to all staff – including non-teaching and governors – outlining New Heights School's approach to identifying, assessing, and supporting young carers.

It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

This policy is written with regard to the **Children and Families Act 2014 – Section 96, the Care Act 2014 – Section 63, and the Care Act 2014 – Section 64.** The Government recognises that schools have a vital role to play and are ideally positioned to identify young carers and to initiate support.

To reinforce this Ofsted recognises young carers as a vulnerable and disadvantaged group. It has strengthened its guidance in The Common Inspection Framework: Education, Skills and Early Years (Ofsted, 2015) stating that "in making judgements inspectors will pay particular attention to young carers".

3.0 Policy Aims

- To provide staff with the framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of young carers.

- To ensure consistent good practice across the school by increasing understanding and awareness of, and communication about, young carers.

- To ensure students at New Heights School with caring responsibilities are identified and supported so they can play a full and active role in school life, remain healthy, and achieve their academic potential.

- To enable staff to understand how and when to request a statutory young carers assessment via the Early Help Assessment Tool.

- To encourage students who are impacted by parental ill-health, disability or substance misuse to self-identify and that the school works to a whole family approach and will signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support through the Early Help Framework.

4.0 Key Staff Members

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to identify young carers.

The name of the member of the School's Senior Leadership Team that Young Carer's Champion is E Fillingham (KS2) and J Hughes (KS3) and J Smith (KS4)

They will act as a point of contact for on-going information, advice and guidance via the commissioned young carers' service.

Other key members of staff have specific roles to play:

- Pastoral Staff including learning mentors
- Mental Health First Aid Champion
- RSE Co-ordinator
- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Form Tutors
- SENDCO
- Parent Engagement Workers

5.0 Raising Awareness of Young Carers

Who are they?

A young carer is defined in law as a 'person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person'. This includes 'providing practical or emotional support' (Children and Families Act 2014).

The scale

The 2011 census identified over 166,363 young carers in England, although research conducted in 2010 by the BBC and the University of Nottingham suggests that as many as 700,000 young people could be providing unpaid care. This is 1 in 12 children.

In Liverpool according to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment over 5,100 people in Liverpool aged under 25 identified themselves as providing unpaid care, equating to 3.5% of that group. The level of unpaid care provided by young people in the city is the highest among the eight core cities in England, and significantly above both national and regional levels.

What do Young Carers do?

The tasks and level of caring undertaken by young carers can vary according to the nature of the illness or disability, the level and frequency of need for care, and the structure of the family as a whole.

Young carers often take on practical and/or emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult.

These can include:

- Practical tasks – cooking, housework and shopping.
- Physical care – lifting or helping someone use the stairs.
- Personal care – dressing, washing, helping with toileting needs.
- Emotional support – listening, calming, being present.
- Managing the family budget, collecting benefits and prescriptions.
- Medication management.
- Looking after younger siblings.
- Helping someone communicate.

How does caring affect a child or young person's life?

Physical health: Young carers are often severely affected by caring through the night, repeatedly lifting a heavy adult, poor diet and lack of sleep.

Emotional wellbeing: Stress, tiredness and mental ill-health are common for young carers.

Socialisation: Young carers often feel different or isolated from their peers and have limited opportunities for socialising. A quarter of young carers in the UK said they were bullied at school because of their caring role. Locally this was reported as high as 60% (Schools Anti-Bullying Audit).

Stable environment: Young carers can experience traumatic life changes such as bereavement, family break-up, losing income and housing, or seeing the effects of an illness or addiction on the person they care for.

As a result, caring responsibilities have a significant impact on a pupil's learning:

- 27% of young carers of secondary school age in England experience educational difficulties or miss school (Dearden and Becker, 2004).
- If left unsupported, young carers can continue to struggle with school and have significantly lower educational attainment at GCSE level – the difference between nine Cs and nine Ds (The Children's Society, 2013).
- Young carers are more likely than the national average not to be in education, employment or training (NEET) between 16 and 19. Of these, 75% had been NEET at least once (compared with 25% of all young people) and 42% had been NEET for six months or more (compared with 10% of all young people) (The Children's Society, 2013).

Why Young Carers can be hidden

- Their parent's condition is not obvious, so people don't think they need any help.
- They do not realise that they are a carer or that their life is different from their peers.
- They don't want to be any different from their peers.
- They believe that the school will show no interest in their family circumstances.
- They want to keep their identity at school separate from their caring role.
- It's not the sort of thing they feel can be discussed with friends.
- There has been no opportunity to share their story.
- They are worried about bullying.
- They worry that the family will be split up and taken into care.
- They want to keep it a secret and/or are embarrassed.

- They see no reason or positive actions occurring as a result of telling their story.

6.0 Possible indicators

- Low attendance - lateness to or absence from school.
- Achievement – failing to reach their potential.
- Presentation –tired/ hungry/ unkempt.
- Not taking part in extracurricular activities.
- Social skills – under or overdeveloped.
- Isolated/ being bullied.
- Homework /coursework is late or poor quality.
- Anxiety/constantly worried.
- Behavioural problems and poor concentration.
- Physical problems.
- No obvious signs – school may be a break from caring.

7.0 Early Help and Liverpool Young Carers Pathway

We will ensure that staff, students and parents/carers are aware of the right to a young carers' assessment, as well as the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services.

Within the school (noticeboards, common rooms, toilets etc.) and through our communication channels (newsletters, websites), we will share and display relevant information about young carers and how they can access support as well as who they can talk to in school.

Young Carer's Assessment

We will utilise the Early Help Framework and if it appears a student has identified needs related to and associated with the negative impact of caring.

Barnardo's Action with Young Carers is a city-wide community-based service that ensures young carers and young adult carers in Liverpool are identified and can receive a carer's assessment, support plan and review under the statutory duty of the Council.

A request to Barnardo's Action with Young Carers Service for a Young Carers Assessment (for students under 18 or those transitioning to work, further / higher education or training) should then be made by the school using the Early Help Assessment Tool (EHAT).

The service can be contacted directly for advice and discussion about the pathway and if required guidance to complete the EHAT.

Young carers themselves and /or family members are encouraged to contact the service to request the assessment and seek support.

Once assessed, the young carer will have an agreed support plan taking into account the needs of the whole family and aims to reduce the negative impact of caring on the child/young person.

8.0 Support at School

School-Based Support

During the admissions process we provide opportunities for young carers and their families to self-identify and make them aware what support is available to them.

All identified Young Carers are provided with the opportunity to engage in 1-1 Thrive Intervention sessions with our Intervention Manager and have access to support from the school's mental health leads / practitioners if and when needed.

We will allow young carers to use a school phone to call home during breaks and lunchtimes to reduce the worry that they may have about a family member.

We actively seek feedback from our young carers and their families to look at how we can improve the support we put in place for young carers.

Pupil premium funding will be used where possible to minimise any barriers to education and learning experienced by an eligible young carer.

Local Support

We recognise some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health and this includes young carers. In Liverpool, there is a range of organisations and groups offering support, including the **CAMHS partnership**, a group of providers specialising in children and young people's mental health wellbeing. These partners, which include Action with Young Carers, deliver accessible support to 8 children, young

people and their families, whilst working with professionals to reduce the range of mental health issues through prevention, intervention, training and participation.

https://www.liverpoolcamhs.com/

9.0 Whole School Approach

We will ensure all appropriate policies reflect the needs of young carers and have mechanisms in place to monitor how many students are taking on a caring role and the outcomes for this group.

10.0 Supporting Parents

During the admissions process we provide opportunities for young carers and their families to self-identify and make them aware what support is available to them.

All parents of Young Carers have the support from the school's Parent Engagement workers and the Young Carers Champion (E. Fillingham – KS2, J. Hughes – KS3, J. Smith - KS4).

All parents of young carers are offered support via phone / online meetings / home visits to overcome any barriers they may face regarding attendance on school site for meetings due to their ill health and / or disability.

11.0 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years as a minimum. The next review date is **November 2026**

In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes.