Step 4

Tool 1: Young Carers Schools Operational Lead duties checklist

Purpose

Schools should assign a Young Carers' School Operational Lead who has responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school's provision for young carers and their families.

To help you identify which member of staff is best placed to take up this role as part of their wider work within the school, the checklist below sets out the actions that need to be carried out at an operational level to ensure the effective identification and support of young carers in schools.

Guidance

Schools will be at different stages in the journey to implementing support for young carers. To enable schools to identify what to do next, these duties are categorised into three categories:

- The basics.
- Building on the basics.
- Best practice.

To effectively identify and support young carers, all schools should review progress regularly with a view to increasing the number of actions being carried out and ultimately achieving best practice.

N.B. Should the school not wish to delegate day-to-day management, the responsibilities below should be incorporated within the role of the school's Senior Leadership Team Young Carers Lead (see **Step 3, Tool 1: How to identify a Young Carers Senior Leadership Team Lead**).

YOUNG CARERS IN SCHOOLS

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The Basics

- Develop and maintain up-to-date knowledge about issues relating to young carers and their families, as well as relevant national and local developments, including changes in legislation and guidance (See **Step 1: Gaining an understanding about young carers**).

- Conduct a baseline review of the school's provision for young carers and their families and create a clear action plan to be agreed with the Senior Leadership Team Young Carers' Lead. This action plan should identify strengths, weaknesses and recommendations, highlighting staffing and resource needs and identifying regular progress review dates (see **Step 2: Reviewing your school's provision for young carers**).

- Report strengths, weaknesses and recommendations to the SLT ensuring that staffing and resource needs are highlighted (See **Step 2, Tool 2: A template proforma for making recommendations to school leaders**).

- Develop a whole school commitment regarding the identification and support of pupils who are young carers and reflecting safeguarding requirements to display on the school website, intranet and noticeboards (see **Step 5, Tool 1: Recommended points to include in a whole school commitment**)

- Establish and ensure targeted interventions are available to pupils, including young carers, for example, homework/coursework support; emotional support; health support; peer mentoring or peer support groups. Make sure colleagues take the needs of young carers into account when planning and delivering this support, for example run homework support at lunchtime (see **Step 6, Tool 1: Checklist of support young carers might need**).

- Implement a flexible approach across the school, for example on mobile phone usage – so that where appropriate young carers are able to use a telephone to call home during breaks and lunchtimes so as to reduce any worry they may have about a family member; and teachers negotiate deadlines for homework and coursework.

- Establish a timetable of drop-in sessions and/or surveys for young carers to ensure they are listened to.

- Develop and maintain young carer material on staff noticeboards and intranet which highlights disability and young carer issues, how staff can identify and signpost young carers, and displays the whole school commitment to young carers and their families. Ensure the information is endorsed by the SLT (see **Step 7: Raising awareness of school staff about young carers**).

- Develop and maintain a pupil noticeboard and online information highlighting disability and young carer issues, support available and how to contact the Young Carers' School Operational Lead. (See **Step 8: Raising awareness of pupils and families about young carers**).

- Provide ad-hoc support and advice to staff about how to support young carers in their quality first teaching and, where appropriate, targeted interventions.

Beyond the Basics

- Identify own CPD needs in relation to young carers and access local and national support to develop practice (See **Step 4: Introducing a Young Carers School Operational Lead**).

- Develop school policy that recognises young carer issues and sets out the measures the schools is taking to meet the needs of this pupil group. This can either be a stand-along young carers policy or the revision of an existing policy to include young carers (see **Step 5: Acknowledging young carers in principal school documents**).

- Ensure young carers' needs are reflected in relevant school documents (see **Step 5: Acknowledging young carers in principal school documents**).

- Inform the development of policy and provision by gathering and using young carers' views (See **Step 2 Tool 2: How to gather young carers' views about your school's provision**).

- Establish and maintain a working group of school staff to support the needs of young carers, including links with external agencies, such as the school nurse and local young carers' service (see **Step 6: Setting up systems to identify, assess and support young carers**).

- Check that existing protocols for sharing information with internal and external staff ensure the young carer does not have to repeat their story multiple times.

- Ensure the school flags identify young carers on its internal management system.

- Make sure that as part of the pupil enrolment process and process for checking pupil information at the start of the new year the school asks questions regarding disability and illness in the family.

- Ensure training on young carer issues is included in all staff inductions and incorporated into continuous professional development (see **Step 7: Raising awareness of school staff about young carers**).

- Ensure pupil noticeboards also contain information signposting young carers to other resources, for example details of local young carers' service, school nurse support and emotional support (see **Step 8: Raising awareness of pupils and families about young carers**).

- Deliver regular assemblies to raise awareness of young carer issues which incorporate positive messages about illness and disability (including a mental health problem or an addiction).

- Work with relevant colleagues to ensure related aspects of the curriculum (e.g. PSHE) include teaching that explores the roles and responsibilities of young carers, promotes positive images of disability and challenges stereotypes.

- Provide families with information about young carers issues, available support and how to contact the Young Carers School Operational Lead.

Best practice

- Use proactive engagement with pupils (drop-in sessions, consultation and surveys) and their families, and tracking of attendance and attainment on internal management systems to carry out regular reviews of school policies and practice. Reviews should identify the impact of the school's approach on the wellbeing, attainment and attendance of young carers and ensure alignment with national and local developments (see **Step 2: Reviewing your school's provision for young carers**).

- Support the school's processes for planning and reviewing its use of Pupil Premium funding by providing timely and relevant information regarding the needs of young carers, many of whom are in receipt of free school meals and would benefit from targeted support.

- Implement effective assessment mechanisms. Be that in school – perhaps using the MACA/PANOC tools (see **Step 9: Identifying, assessing and supporting young carers and their families**) – or by other agencies if deemed more appropriate. Encourage pupils to discuss any barriers they may face, and enable families of young carers to discuss any difficulties they may have in accessing the school.

- Ensure individual pupil support plans, transitional plans for young carers entering and leaving the school, and/ or provision maps, recognise the pupil's specific needs as a young carer are regularly reviewed.

- Identify those young carers at risk of falling into the not in education, employment or training category and take appropriate actions to address this.

- Agree processes with external agencies for inter-agency working. This will include establishing information sharing protocols with your school nurse, young carers service and health and social care services to ensure that, with the appropriate consent, they tell you when they identify young carers attending, or about to start your school. Develop formal joint working together agreements and information sharing protocols, where appropriate (see **Step 6, Tool 5: Working with school nurses to support young carers and their families** and **Step 6, Tool 6: Working in partnership with young carers' services**).

- Work with feeder and linked schools, colleges, training providers and universities to plan and implement support for young carers and their families through transitions, agreeing how information will be shared between the Young Carers School Operational Leads, with the appropriate consent

- Understand and ensure the referral process to local authority support for adults/disabled siblings is followed and/or whole family work is undertaken to support in order to prevent or reduce a caring role.

- Ask families of young carers about any barriers they may have in accessing the school and its communications and ensure the school and its communications are accessible (see **Step 6, Tool 11: Checklist of support that families of young carers may need**).

- Ensure the needs of individual young carers and their families are regularly reviewed through tracking their attendance, attainment and progress on the school's internal management system, by engaging with the pupil and through pupil progress meetings.

- Shares practice examples and provide support to other schools (see **Step 10: Sharing good practice with others**).