



Young Carers Challenge

The role of a Young Carers Champion & raising awareness with staff and pupils

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Why do we need the Young Carers Challenge?

- 40% either 'never' or 'not often' get help in education to help balance caring and school, college or university work
- 33% did not feel that their needs were understood either 'at all' or 'very well' by their school, college or university.
- 33% said they 'always' or 'usually' struggle to balance caring with school, college or university work
- More support in education was one of the top priorities for support

- 79% of schools recorded having 0 young carers on their 2023 School Census return
- Keeping Children Safe in Education:
*"**All** school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who... is a young carer."* (Para 20)





What is the Young Carers Challenge?



Have a **Young Carers Champion** in school so that every young carer has a trusted adult in school they can go to if things are difficult, or they need more support.



Raise awareness of young carers with staff and pupils to help ensure young carers are identified and they know what support is available.



Have a **young carers agreement / policy** (ideally designed with young carers) so that every young carer knows what support is available to them in their school.



Ensure **young carers are correctly identified** in their school pupil information system, monitor indicators such as attendance and attainment alongside other potentially vulnerable groups of pupils and include young carers within enrolment/transitions processes.



Have **linked in with their local young carer service** so they know what support is available for young carers outside of school.



Young Carers Champion

To ensure the effective management of the school's provision for young carers, it is crucial that each school identifies a member of staff who will act as a Young Carers Champion in the school.

This member of staff should understand young carers' issues and be clearly identifiable to pupils, families and staff.



As part of their wider role within the school, the Young Carers Champion should:

- Manage the school's provision for young carers and their families on a day-to-day basis.
- Act as the main contact for young carers and their families in the school.
- Advise and support school staff about how to identify and support young carers.
- Be the contact point for external agencies (e.g. local young carers service), and feeder/linked schools, supporting effective inter-agency working to meet the needs of young carers.

Which member of staff should carry out this role?

Depending on the size and structure of the school, SLT may decide the role should be within the wider work of the school's SLT or should be delegated to another member of staff. This may be, for example, your school's Inclusion Manager or Officer, Pastoral Lead, SENCO, a Learning Mentor or another member of staff with specific interest in this work.

Have a **Young Carers Champion** in school so that every young carer has a trusted adult in school they can go to if things are difficult, or they need more support.



Young Carers Champion

Step 4 Tool 1: Young Carers School Operational Lead duties checklist supports schools by setting out actions to be carried out on an operational level to ensure the effective identification and support of young carers in schools.



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Practical examples of what a Young Carers Champion could do:

- Develop and maintain a pupil noticeboard and online information on the website highlighting young carer issues, support available (including external) and how to contact the Young Carers Champion.
- Develop and maintain a staff noticeboard and intranet highlighting young carers issues, how staff can identify and signpost young carers. Ensure this is endorsed by SLT.
- Raise awareness of young carers with families, including support available in school. This can be through a letter. Ask about any barriers they may face in accessing the school.
- Establish a relationship with external agencies (e.g. the local young carers service), to include information sharing protocols and referral processes.
- Establish a timetable of drop-in sessions so young carers have the opportunity to meet with other young carers if they want to.
- Establish a private method of communication with the Young Carers Champion e.g. an email address or a message box.



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Young Carers Champion

- Establish and ensure targeted interventions are available for young carers e.g. homework/coursework support, emotional and health support, peer mentoring.
- Implement a flexible approach across the school e.g. on mobile phone usage, on homework clubs and detentions at lunchtime rather than after school.
- Deliver regular assemblies to raise awareness of young carers.
- Ensure training on young carers issues is delivered to staff (including at induction) and incorporated into CPD (your local young carers service may be able to support with this and the assemblies).
- Check that existing protocols for sharing information with internal and external staff ensure young carers do not have to repeat their story multiple times.
- Ensure the schools flags young carers on its internal management system and monitors attendance and attainment, as well as in the enrolment/transition process.
- Support the school's processes for planning and reviewing its use of Pupil Premium.
- Establish a whole-school commitment for young carers by writing a Young Carers Policy that specifies in detail how the school will identify and address young carers' needs (we will cover this in the next webinar).



Young Carers Champion

The SLT and governing body are accountable for ensuring the school provides a highly cohesive learning environment which fosters equal opportunities and meets the diverse needs of the pupils at the school.



To fulfil this role effectively, the SLT and governing body should be aware that many pupils attending their school will have caring responsibilities.

Step 3 of the YCiS Guide is focused on securing senior commitment. It is crucial that the development and implementation of the school's provision for young carers is led at an SLT and governing body level so that:

- Young carers' needs are reflected in whole school planning e.g. the whole school improvement plan.
- There is appropriate timetabling of staff training and curriculum planning.
- Use of school resources such as the Pupil Premium funding to target young carers.
- All school staff know how to identify young carers, for example, office staff can identify a young carer when registering a late pupil, the School Attendance Officer can recognise potential young carers when discussing attendance issues with pupils and/or teachers notice signs that a pupil is a young carer.

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Raising awareness with staff



Raise awareness of young carers with staff and pupils to help ensure young carers are identified and they know what support is available.

To meet the needs of young carers in your school, it is vital that all school staff:

- Understand why young carers need support to enjoy and achieve at school.
- Sign up to the school's whole school commitment for young carers.
- Know the simple things they can do to identify, support and signpost young carers as part of their wider roles within the school.

It is important all staff members understand young carers issue because:

- It'll help deliver a positive whole school ethos where young carers and their families are respected and valued and feel safe and confident to access support.
- Many young carers are hidden. To effectively identify young carers, all school staff should understand the possible signs that a pupil is a young carer and what to do when they identify a young person.
- A young carer may self-identify to any member of staff they feel they can talk to and share their worries/concerns with.
- Targeted interventions may need to be flexible to young carers' needs e.g. homework clubs at lunchtime.
- All staff should know why it may be important for young carers to have access to the phone to check on a family member.
- All staff should know not to discuss a pupil's caring role in front of their peers.

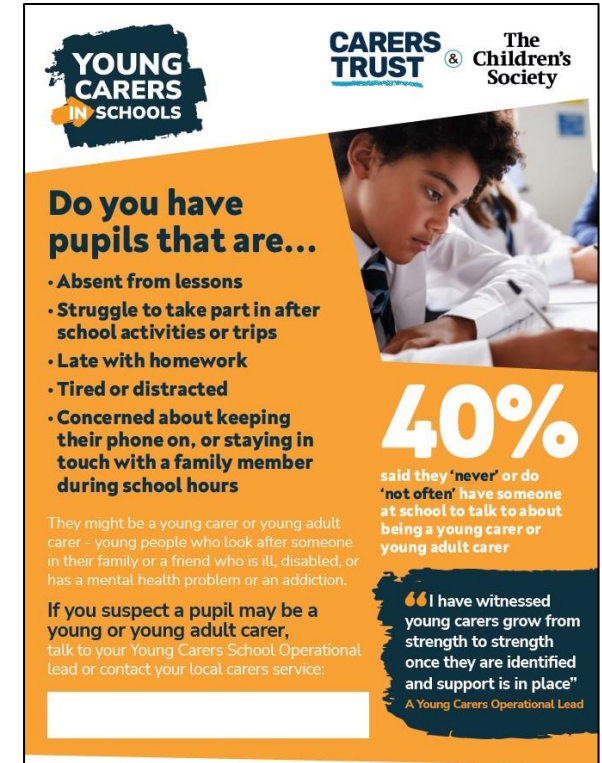
Raising awareness with staff

Step 7: Raising awareness of School Staff about young carers provides schools practical examples and suggestions for raising awareness of young carers. Examples include:



Raise awareness of young carers with staff and pupils to help ensure young carers are identified and they know what support is available.

- Develop and maintain a staff noticeboard and intranet highlighting young carers issues, how staff can identify and signpost young carers. Ensure this is endorsed by SLT and shares the name and contact information of the Young Carers Champion. **Step 7 Tool 2** provides exemplar staff noticeboard material.
- Share with staff a checklist of signs a pupil is a young carer (**Step 7 Tool 1**) and how they can support young carers as part of their wider roles within the school (**Step 7 Tool 3**).
- Ensuring there is training on young carer issues in all staff inductions and features regularly as part of staff CPD e.g. as part of staff INSET day, staff meetings or twilight sessions. **Step 7 Tools 4-7** can support this.



YOUNG CARERS IN SCHOOLS **CARERS TRUST** & **The Children's Society**

Do you have pupils that are...

- Absent from lessons
- Struggle to take part in after school activities or trips
- Late with homework
- Tired or distracted
- Concerned about keeping their phone on, or staying in touch with a family member during school hours

40% said they 'never' or do 'not often' have someone at school to talk to about being a young carer or young adult carer

They might be a young carer or young adult carer - young people who look after someone in their family or a friend who is ill, disabled, or has a mental health problem or an addiction.

If you suspect a pupil may be a young or young adult carer, talk to your Young Carers School Operational lead or contact your local carers service:

"I have witnessed young carers grow from strength to strength once they are identified and support is in place"
A Young Carers Operational Lead



Raising awareness with pupils and families

To counteract the reasons why many young carers are hidden, schools should proactively raise the awareness of pupils and their families about a) what it means to be a young carer, and b) illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction, with a focus on dispelling common stereotypes.



Raise awareness of young carers with staff and pupils to help ensure young carers are identified and they know what support is available.

Raising awareness in these areas can help pupils and their families self identify as a young carer. It can also create more:

- Empathy towards pupils with caring responsibilities.
- Understanding as to why they may sometimes seem unsociable, stressed, worried or angry.
- Appreciation of the complicated responsibilities that young carers can have and why this can mean they can't attend clubs or why they have to rush off after school.

Not only will this help remove the stigma associated with certain illnesses, disabilities, a mental health problem or an addiction, thus helping to prevent bullying, but it will also help young carers to talk about their caring roles with their peers.



Raising awareness with pupils and families

Step 8: Raising awareness of Pupils and Families about young carers provides schools practical examples and suggestions for raising awareness of young carers. Examples include:



Raise awareness of young carers with staff and pupils to help ensure young carers are identified and they know what support is available.

- Develop and maintain a pupil noticeboard and online information on the website highlighting young carer issues, support available (including external) and how to contact the Young Carers Champion. **Step 8 Tool 1** provides exemplar pupil noticeboard material.
- It is important this information it also on the website, so it is accessible to families.
- Deliver regular assemblies to raise awareness of young carers. **Step 8 Tool 2** provides a template PPT.
- PSHE covers the roles and responsibilities of young carers, promotes positive images of disability and challenges stereotypes. **Step 8 Tool 3** provides a young carer quiz.
- Sending a letter home to parents/guardians which provides information about young carers and how to contact the Young Carers Champion. **Step 8 Tool 4** provides a template letter

YOUNG CARERS IN SCHOOLS & **CARERS TRUST** & **The Children's Society**

Lots of pupils look after someone in their family or a friend who is ill, disabled, or has a mental health problem or an addiction.

They may help by:

- Shopping, cooking, cleaning
- Managing medicines or money
- Providing personal care
- Helping get people out the house
- Keeping an eye on someone
- Providing emotional support

“We spend most of our time at home or school, so it's vital that schools recognise and understand our needs, wants and aspirations”
A pupil who looks after someone at home

You might be a young carer or young adult carer and there's support available for you.
Whether you are looking for advice, support, or just someone to talk to, get in touch with the Young Carers School Operational Lead:

“Having time with other Young Carers is good because they know how I feel.”
A pupil who looks after someone at home

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Good practice example

Liz Smith

Young Carers Service Manager
Devon Carers





Good practice example

Vicki Houselander

Young Carers in Schools Development Worker

Carers Support Centre Bristol & South Gloucestershire



Carers Support Centre
Bristol & South Gloucestershire



Tracey & Pippa

Christ Church Junior School

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Thank you

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