

# WEST SUSSEX YOUNG CARERS

## **Identifying and supporting Young Carers in primary school**

**A Learning Resource for staff and pupils**

# Foreword

We are pleased to be able to jointly present and recommend this *Identifying and Supporting Young Carers in Primary School* learning resource. Our aim is to help your school provide an environment that is 'Young Carer aware' and 'Young Carer sensitive' and a safe place in which young carers can learn and develop with the same opportunities as their peers.

The learning resource with film has been developed by West Sussex County Council (WSCC) Young Carers Service in collaboration with children's theatre companies – Tangled Feet Theatre Company and Half Moon Theatre, and is inspired by the experiences of young carers.

Research into young carers tells us that they do less well at school than their peers.

**80% of young carers say they miss out on what other children their age are doing because of their caring role.**

The key to good outcomes for young carers is early identification. This helps prevent young carers from taking on inappropriate caring roles. It also enables schools, along with other agencies, to ensure young carers are safe by addressing the needs of both young carers and those they care for.

Schools are in the best position to identify young carers if they adopt a whole-school approach. We hope that your school will take every opportunity to incorporate this learning resource into the curriculum as well as your school's policies and procedures.

The learning resource is full of informative and creative activities for staff and pupils and will be available to download electronically from WSCC schools' website.

***"This is a powerful resource that reaches out to young carers in a totally unique way. It will allow young carers to identify themselves as such and enable them to ask for help."***

*Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead Teacher*

We would like to extend a special thank you to all the young carers who have helped develop this resource by the telling of their stories.



**Andrew Fraser**  
Interim Director of Family Operations



**Paul Wagstaff**  
Director of Education and Skills

# Acknowledgements

## Design and development of this learning resource

Lorraine Butcher, Manager – WSCC Young Carers Team

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## Contributors

Nathan Curry, Co-Artistic Director – Tangled Feet Theatre Company

Emily Eversden, Participation Director – Tangled Feet Theatre Company

Carers Trust. [www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org) – downloadable materials

## Young Carers – Helping Hands film

(Adapted from the original play *Need a Little Help* co-produced by Tangled Feet Theatre Company and Half Moon Theatre)

**Director** – Nathan Curry

**Creators** – Nathan Curry, Emily Eversden, Lorraine Butcher and Emma Capon

## Actors

*Ella* – Sarah Rutherford,

*Dad* – Ciaran Kellgren

**Film maker** – Tristan Shepherd

**Sound Engineer** – Pietro Giordano

**Lighting design** – Phil Clarke

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# **Part 1**

## **Introduction**

**Young Carers in context**

**Young Carers: Who are they?**



## Young Carers in context

The Young Carers Team (YCT) is part of West Sussex County Council's Integrated Prevention and Earliest Help (IPEH) Service. We have a brief to raise awareness of Young Carers and provide an assessment and support service for young carers and their families.

The YCT commissioned Tangled Feet Theatre Company to adapt their powerful play 'Need a Little Help' into a film. This film has been incorporated into this Young Carers Learning Resource aimed at primary school staff and pupils with the purpose of raising awareness of young carers and the support they need to get the most from their education. The film explores the impact on a young child in a family where a parent becomes disabled and is aimed at helping younger children and their teachers understand what it is like to be a young carer.

Young Carers in West Sussex are defined as children and young people under 18, who take on a physical, practical or emotional responsibilities at home because someone in their family is disabled, has been ill for a long time, experiences mental ill health, has a learning disability or has a problem linked to alcohol or drugs. It is well documented these additional responsibilities can push young carers to grow up too early and the often miss out on the opportunities that other children have.

Research undertaken by the BBC in 2010 suggest that as many as 1 in 12 children and young people in the UK may be young carers and the 2011 census figures indicated the number of young carers rose by 20% compared with figures 10 years before, and figures for infant young carers aged 5–7 in England and Wales was up 83%.

A survey carried out by Carers Trust in 2018, revealed *"a very harsh reality for the very youngest young carers in the UK today, almost half of whom are regularly being required to get up during the night in order to look after their unwell family members"* CEO Carers Trust.

The survey also revealed

- More than 80% are carrying out caring duties every day or most days of the week
- 1 in 10 young carers in primary schools go to the shops unaccompanied to buy essentials for the family
- 75% of these very young children are providing emotional support and feeling responsible for cheering up family members when they are sad.

In addition, over 25% of young carers consistently report being bullied due to their caring responsibilities with 1 in 20 young carers missing school due to looking after family members.

Many young carers however remain unidentified and 'invisible' – hidden from support services and with schools often unaware of their existence.

Schools have a vital role to play in raising awareness at the earliest opportunity as research suggests that young carers can fulfil their potential with the right level of support and acknowledgement in place at the right time.

In 2014 the Carers Trust and the Children's Society launched a *Young Carers in Schools* programme and initial feedback from schools who have taken part found that 94% had identified more young carers in their school, 94% said they had noticed improvements in the wellbeing and confidence of young carers at school, 91% had seen a positive impact on the achievement of young carers in school, and 74% had noticed improved attendance among young carers at school (see pages 28–29 for more information).

The Common Inspection Framework published in 2015 sets out how Ofsted inspects maintained schools and academies and includes Young Carers as a group that inspectors will pay particular attention to when observing how well a school helps children and learners to make progress and fulfil their potential. Where appropriate, by using a small proportion of the Pupil Premium to support young carers, schools can mitigate some of the inequalities and barriers that young carers face, raise pupil attainment, and improve the life chances for this significant and vulnerable group.

Since the Care Act (2014) and Children and Families Act (2014) Local Councils have a statutory duty to assess the needs of young carers and in 2017 a report by the Children's Commissioner for England again concluded that many young carers are still under the radar and said "*Not all children with caring responsibilities will need support from their council but it is vital that those who do are properly assessed and the right help put in place.*"

This learning resource contains a wealth of information for school staff and an imaginative film with lesson plans which can be used in the classroom. It is hoped that primary schools will find this a creative and flexible way of raising awareness about young carers amongst staff and pupils so that Young Carers can be best supported within the school environment.

Download the *Identifying and Supporting Young Carers in Primary School* learning resource at: <http://schools.westsussex.gov.uk/Page/7645>

To access training and information sessions, as well as for individual case consultation and general advice, please email us at [youngcarers@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:youngcarers@westsussex.gov.uk)

**Lorraine Butcher**

Young Carers Team Manager

# Young Carers: Who are they? What do they do?



## Who are young carers?

A young carer is someone **under 18** who helps look after someone in their family, or a friend, who is ill, disabled or misuses drugs or alcohol.

# 1 in 5

secondary school children have a caring role



## How many young carers are there?

- There are **800,000 secondary school pupils in England with a caring role.**
- This means there are six young carers in every secondary school classroom.



The average age of a young carer **= 13** but one in ten (10%) are aged under ten

## What might a young carer do?

- Practical tasks, such as cooking, housework or shopping.
- Physical care, such as helping someone out of bed.
- Emotional support, such as 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.

Being a young carer can have a big impact on a young person's development.

### Health

- Young carers are more likely to have anxiety or depression than other young people their age.
- 50% of young carers often feel stressed and 46% of young carers say they often feel lonely as a result of their caring roles.
- Almost half of young carers under eight get up in the night to care, interrupting their own sleep.

### Education

- One in ten young carers are late for school at least once a week because of caring.
- 26% of young carers say they have been bullied because they are caring for someone.
- Young carers are more than twice as likely as their peers not to be in education, training or employment when they leave school.

### Friends and family life

- 23% of young carers say their caring role has made it harder for them to form friendships.
- One in five young carers has never had a summer holiday with their family.
- More than 80% of young carers felt that their caring role affected their opportunity to take part in leisure activities.

**1 in 10** young carers are providing a high level of care.

**80%** of young carers may not be receiving the support they need from their local authority.

## Young carers should have:

- The time to be a young person.
- The same opportunities as their friends.
- Good support for themselves and the person they help look after.
- Their rights acknowledged.
- Help for their own support needs.



**Information Carers.org**

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# Part 2

**How to use this learning resource**



## How to use this learning resource

This pack is designed to increase understanding of young carers and inform the development of support networks across the school community with staff and pupils. Activities encourage each school to find their own solutions to supporting young carers – what works best in their school for their pupils.

### **This resource includes:**

- Information about young carers, how to identify them and provide support in school
- Guidance notes on how to use this learning resource with the film
- Ideas for awareness raising activities to do with staff in 10 minutes, 30 minutes and 60 minutes
- Activity/Lesson plans with relevant resources for use with staff and pupils, and links to further sources of information.

Each activity/lesson plan includes a list of materials you will need in addition to the materials provided in this resource. This may include a whiteboard, flipchart stand/paper/pens, iPads, pens and paper for participants to use

The film will require relevant equipment to show in assembly and in the classroom

The materials are designed to be flexible so you can adapt them to your needs.

### **Who can deliver the activities in this learning resource?**

Any teacher, pastoral member of staff can deliver this resource. Before delivery it is recommended that staff:

- Do the 60 minute Young Carers Awareness training for school staff which includes watching the film *Young Carers – Helping Hands* (see part 3)
- Read the Young Carers Top Tips, Signs to look out for, Questions to ask yourself when identifying young carers, and advice from WSCC Young Carers Service (see part 3)
- Read the guides in part 5 of this resource, and do additional research as necessary using the links provided
- Understand who young carers are and their support needs particularly in and around school
- Know what support/help is in place in your school for young carers, and how to access it
- Talk to known young carers about these resources, and how and when you will be using them in your school.

This resource provides a brief overview of Young Carers, if you want further information go to:

[www.westsussex.gov.uk/youngcarers](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/youngcarers)

[www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org)

## **Good times to use this resource in assembly and lessons**

In September/October with Year 1, 2 and 3

Young Carer Awareness Day (last Thursday in January)

Carers Week (second week in June)

Carers Month (November)

Carers Rights Day (last Friday in November)

## **Young Carers - Helping Hands film**

(adapted from the play *Need a Little Help*, co-produced by Tangled Feet Theatre Company and Half Moon Theatre)

Based on the experiences of young carers, the film explores what it means to look after someone else when you are young. *Young Carers – Helping Hands* is a story about a father and daughter, which was inspired by working with Young Carers. The story is about what happens when the father becomes ill/incapacitated and can no longer do all the things he used to.

The daughter takes on more responsibility and cares for her dad, she cleans, shops, tucks him in and gets herself ready each morning. But she has no time to play and gets sad. Towards the end of the play she needs more help.

*Joe and Ella are a great team – they make each other laugh, help each other out and tackle all the chores their busy lives throw at them. But one morning things begin to change when Joe gets all tangled up and Ella has to do things alone. What will Ella do now? Will she be able to continue as before or will it all get too much? If only she had a little help...*

The film aims to raise awareness of Young Carers, recognise the issues they face, and the impact of their caring role on their home life, wellbeing and education.

The film running time is approximately 22 minutes.

The film is shot over 5 chapters which must be shown consecutively for the story and related activities/lessons to make sense. After each chapter the actors ask questions for the staff and pupils to consider, and suggest activities that can be done in the classroom to raise awareness, and increase the identification and understanding of young carers and the issues they face. These activities also highlight the practical support that can be put in place in school to help and support a child in a caring role whilst maintaining their educational opportunities.

Download the *Identifying & Supporting Young Carers in Primary School* learning resource at: <http://schools.westsussex.gov.uk/Page/7645>

## **Terms and Conditions**

The film *Young Carers – Helping Hands* may be shown in any context (assembly, in class, on personal computers) and at any time without payment of any fee. However, it must be shown in its entirety and not edited or linked to new material. West Sussex Young Carers Service, Tangled Feet Theatre Company and Half Moon Theatre must be referenced and cited as the owners and creators of this film.

The copyright material may not be cut or altered without the permission of the copyright holders and this can be negotiated with the Participation Director (Emily Eversden) of Tangled Feet Theatre Company via the contact details below.

### **All copyright correspondence**

**Email:** Emily Eversden – [eeversden81@gmail.com](mailto:eeversden81@gmail.com)

**Website:** [www.tangledfeet.com](http://www.tangledfeet.com)





# Part 3

## Young Carer awareness training for school staff

Raising awareness with school staff

Young Carer awareness training for staff

Young Carers quiz

Young Carers quiz - answers

Young Carers case study

Identifying young carers

Questions for staff to consider when identifying Young Carers

WSCC Young Carers Service provide advice and guidance on supporting young carers in school

Awards for schools supporting Young Carers



# Raising awareness with school staff

**Resources for school staff** (also available to download at <http://schools.westsussex.gov.uk/Page/7645>)

**Part 3**, this part of learning resource contains information for staff on identifying and supporting young carers in school, signs to look out for, questions for staff to consider when identifying young carers, top tips from young carers, a quiz, case studies, and information about advice and support available from WSCC Young Carers Team.

**Part 4** of this learning resource contains five lesson plans using the *Young Carers – Helping Hands* film, and an activity for assembly. Both are designed to raise awareness and support the identification of young carers.

## Additional resources

*Supporting Young Carers in School: A Step-by-step Guide for Leaders, Teachers and Non-teaching Staff.* [www.carers.org.uk](http://www.carers.org.uk)

*Pupil Premium: Support for Young Carers – Targeting the Pupil Premium to support young carers in primary schools.* [www.carers.org.uk](http://www.carers.org.uk)

*School Leaders and Governors Young Carers in Schools Guide.*  
WSCC Young Carers Service (see part 5 of resource)

*Young Carers – Information for pastoral and other support staff in schools.*  
WSCC Young Carers Service (see part 5 of resource)

*The Resilient Classroom – A Resource Pack for Tutor Groups, and Pastoral School Staff.*  
[www.boingboing.org.uk](http://www.boingboing.org.uk)

## Notes

The training for staff, film, lessons and activities in this resource will encourage staff and pupils to consider issues relating directly to themselves or their family and friends. Support in school should be readily available, widely promoted, and easy to access.

Discussing these issues in school where teachers and pupils are well informed will create an accepting and understanding environment where young carers feel safe, able to share their stories, and be supported by adults and their peers.

# Young Carer awareness training for staff

## 60 minute activity

- Title:** Supporting young carers in your school
- Audience:** Teachers, pastoral support staff
- When:** Professional development meeting/INSET day
- Approximate time:** 40 minutes film and activities, 20 minute group discussion
- Materials:** *Young Carers – Helping Hands* film (on DVD in part 5 of resource and downloadable at <http://schools.westsussex.gov.uk/Page/7645>), projector with DVD player and audio, SMART board/pens
- Aim/outcome:** To raise awareness of issues facing young carers, and develop an action plan of practical support to be implemented in your school
- Activity:**
- Introduce** the *Young Carers – Helping Hands* film – explain it was created by West Sussex Young Carers Service in partnership with Tangled Feet Theatre Company and Half Moon Theatre. The film explores what it means to look after someone else when you are young. It is a story about a father and daughter, what happens when the father becomes ill/incapacitated and can no longer do all the things he used to. The daughter takes on more responsibility and cares for her dad, she cleans, shops, tucks him in and gets herself ready each morning. But she has no time to play, is torn between staying at home to look after him and going to school. Towards the end of the play Ella gets sad, she needs more help.
- Play the film** (approximately 22 mins) chapter by chapter consecutively and answer the question posed by the actors after each chapter. At the end of the film facilitate a short discussion asking “*What signs might you see in your role at school that Ella is a young carer?*” “*Is it OK for her to be treated differently from other pupils?*” (10mins).
- In small groups ask** “*What support could be put in place at your school for young carers like Ella?*” (10mins).
- Record feedback from the groups.** Feedback to be shared with Head Teacher and SENCO (the facilitator will take responsibility for doing this).

**Close the session** by stating the support already available in your school for young carers and people to talk to. Include their photos and contact details on any information shown e.g. School Nurse, Pastoral Lead, teacher, support staff etc.

**Share** the *Young Carers give top ten tips* (part 3 of resource), *Quick guide to setting up a young carers group in your school* (part 5 of resource), *Information poster for young carers in your school* (see part 5 of resource), and *WSCC Young Carers Service provide advice and guidance on supporting young carers in school* (part 3 of resource)

**Questions for the facilitator to consider prior to delivering the session:**

1. Is it OK for young carers to be treated differently from other students?
2. How might young carers be best supported in your school?
3. How will these ideas be implemented?
4. What are the next steps to achieving this?
5. How long will it take?
6. Who's responsible for making it happen?
7. When will this be done by?
8. Who will follow up to make sure it happens?

# Young Carers quiz

## 10 minute activity for school staff

- 1. Approximately how many young carers are there in West Sussex?**  
300    3000    6000    9000
- 2. How many young carers do you think there might be in your class?**  
0    3    6    9    12
- 3. A young person can't be a young carer until they're eight years old**  
True or False
- 4. Most teachers know who the young carers are in their class**  
True or False
- 5. Young carers do better than their peers at GCSE level**  
True or False
- 6. Young carers are often bullied at school because of their caring role**  
True or False
- 7. Most young carers don't want to go to college or university**  
True or False
- 8. Young carers often have their own health problems**  
True or False
- 9. The number of recognised young carers is increasing**  
True or False
- 10. Name one thing that your school could do to support young carers:**

.....  
.....

## Young Carers quiz - answers

1. Based on national statistics scaled down to our local population there are approximately **6000** young carers in West Sussex.<sup>1</sup>
2. There may be **3** young carers in your class. Around 1 in 10 secondary school age children are likely to be young carers.<sup>2</sup>
3. **False.** Recent figures highlighted almost 10,000 young carers aged 5–7.<sup>3</sup>
4. **False.** A recent survey found that 42% of young carers said there was not a particular person at school who recognised them as a carer and helped them.<sup>4</sup>
5. **False.** Young carers don't do as well at GCSE level as their peers (juggling caring and education can be tough!)<sup>5</sup>
6. **True.** In recent research, a quarter (26%) were bullied at school because they are helping or caring for someone.<sup>6</sup>
7. **False.** The majority (84%) in a recent survey said they intended to go to university or college.<sup>7</sup>
8. **True.** 2011 census revealed that more than 2000 young carers have 'bad' or 'very bad' health. Young carers are one and a half times more likely to have a long standing illness or disability or special educational need than their peers.<sup>8</sup>
9. **True.** Recent figures have shown an increase across all age ranges. The most startling increase was in young carers aged 5–7 with a growth of 83% since 2001. <sup>9</sup>
10. **Ideas for supporting young carers in schools** <sup>10</sup>
  - Make it clear to young carers that they (or their families) will not be in trouble because they are helping to look after someone.
  - Have a key person/named contact in school who keeps up to date with young carer's issues and services in West Sussex so that they can signpost young carers to appropriate support.
  - Provide a school noticeboard displaying information on community projects, support and resources available to young carers and their families including the school's named contact.
  - Consult with identified young carers about their school experience and find out/learn what else your school could put in place.
  - Consider additional support in transition times, for example with the move from primary to secondary school or with College/University applications.
  - Provide flexibility with homework deadlines and offer additional support if necessary.
  - Use 'Young Carer's ID cards' to enable young carers to identify themselves without having to explain their situation.

## Sources

- 1 Census 2011 (England and Wales)
- 2 The BBC, with assistance from The Princess Royal Trust for Carers, surveyed 4,029 pupils in ten secondary schools and found 337 had caring responsibilities
- 3 Census 2011 (England and Wales)
- 4 Sempik, J, Becker, S (2013), *Young Adult Carers at School: Experiences and Perceptions of Caring and Education* (Carers Trust)
- 5 Sempik, J, Becker, S (2013), *Young Adult Carers at School: Experiences and Perceptions of Caring and Education* (Carers Trust)
- 6 Sempik, J, Becker, S (2013), *Young Adult Carers at School: Experiences and Perceptions of Caring and Education* (Carers Trust)
- 7 Sempik, J, Becker, S (2013), *Young Adult Carers at School: Experiences and Perceptions of Caring and Education* (Carers Trust)
- 8 Census 2011 (England and Wales)
- 9 The Children's Society May 2013. *Hidden from View – the experiences of young carers in England*
- 10 WSCC Young Carers Service

# Young Carers case study

## 30 minute activity for school staff

Using the case studies on the following pages consider the questions below in small groups.

Exercises	Prompts
<p><b>Empathy Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Imagine being in the shoes of each young carer – write down a possible typical day for each of them</li> <li>● Write down the possible current impact on the child of their caring role</li> <li>● Write down the possible longer term impact on these children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How much does the YC need to look after themselves?</li> <li>● What do they not get to do?</li> <li>● What is the impact on their relationship with their peers?</li> <li>● How might they be feeling throughout the day?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Questions related to Identifying Young Carers</b></p> <p>Looking at the case studies and remembering that Young Carers may not readily talk about their situation in school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discuss in groups how schools might identify these young carers?</li> <li>● What might you need to look out for?</li> <li>● What might help a young carer come forward?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Making disability and illness an issue which is visible and talked about</li> <li>● Promoting information on young carers</li> <li>● Problems getting homework done, lateness, regular absence from school, withdrawn, acting out due to stress, target of bullying, exhaustion, unable to engage in extracurricular activity, wanting to phone home during the day, parents difficult to contact</li> </ul>
<p><b>Supporting Young Carers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What might be important to remember when responding to a young carer about their circumstances?</li> <li>● What support might these young carers need from adults around them at this point? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In school</li> <li>○ In Family</li> <li>○ Outside of school</li> <li>○ Specialist support</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Fact- finding , recognising and reflection skills</li> <li>● Awareness of fierce loyalty often held by young carers</li> <li>● Regular check in/Space to talk – circumstances can change very quickly</li> <li>● Parents accessing support for their own needs</li> <li>● Early Help Plan and/or Young Carers Assessment + Support</li> </ul>



## Young Carer case studies

The following four stories are either real, or based on the real story of a young carer.

### 1. Amir

Amir is 11 and lives at home with his mum, dad and younger sister Sara who is 14. His dad has severe anxiety which has resulted in him not feeling confident to leave the house anymore. Amir's mum works long hours which means that Amir helps take care of his dad when mum is not there. Amir makes sure his dad takes his medication at the right time and he spends time each day sitting with his dad because he knows that his dad gets really lonely.

*"I do want to help out at home because I love my dad, but worry all the time about what is going to happen to my Dad and I find it difficult to concentrate in lessons. I also get bullied at school about my family.*

*I get really fed up that I can't do all the things that my friends are able to do.*

*We are really close as a family but I worry that I am going to have to do more and more when my sister gets a job and isn't around as much."*

### 2. Chloe

Chloe is 9 and lives at home with her mum and her older brother Joshua who is 12 and her younger brother Frankie who is 2. Mum has Fibromyalgia and suffers with depression. (Fibromyalgia is a physical condition that can mean your body is in constant pain and you are exhausted a lot of the time).

*"My mum has been ill for a long time. So I help my brother Joshua do things like the hoovering and cooking the dinner. Sometimes Mum asks me to help her wash or get dressed. I don't mind helping out sometimes but sometimes I wish I could just go out and play.*

*I don't get to see my friends after school because my brother collects me from school and then we are needed at home. I worry about my mum and Frankie when I am at school and because I know my mum can't leave the house.*

*Sometimes if she is really poorly or sad, we stay at home to look after her and Frankie. I find it hard to see my mum in so much pain and I miss doing stuff with my friends."*

### **3. Jack**

Jack is 8 and lives at home with his mum who has epilepsy. His mum frequently has seizures and usually needs medical attention. After the seizures mum can be disorientated and unable to move around. Jack is doing lots of the housework and sits with his mum while she has seizures and sometimes has to call for an ambulance. He has also started to stay up late at night so he can watch over her as he is so worried about her. Jack is very tired at school struggling to concentrate, and he can have angry outbursts in class. His dad now lives in Manchester.

*"I would like it if I could go to my friend's house or go to the skate park while someone looks after mum."*

### **4. Zofia**

Zofia is 6 and lives at home with her mum, dad and her baby brother Stefan who is 3. Stefan has Cerebral Palsy and a learning disability (Cerebral Palsy is a physical condition that affects movement, posture and co-ordination and it is usually diagnosed at birth or in early childhood). Zofia helps out with her little brother, changing his nappy, keeping him entertained, and often it is only Zofia who can calm him down when he is upset. It is really difficult for Zofia to have friends home for tea or for the family to go out together as a family. Zofia loves her brother but also resents the attention he demands of her parents.

*"I don't like it when people stare at my brother."*

# Identifying Young Carers

## Signs to look out for

Every young carer is unique and young people's ability to hide their responsibility can be vastly different, as can the willingness to trust and confide in professionals.

However there may be some identifying features which may bring care responsibilities to the attention of professionals.

- Anxiety or concern over an ill or disabled relative
- A need or desire to be in regular contact with home
- Often late or missing from school
- Secretive about their home life
- Often tired, distracted, withdrawn or anxious
- Low self-esteem and self confidence
- Isolated or victims of bullying
- Poor relationship with peers
- May take on a caring role with younger children
- May demonstrate confidence when interacting with adults
- Isolation or withdrawal or behaviour that may be deemed as challenging in a school or youth group situation but is the opposite of behaviour demonstrated at home
- Back pain or other related pain
- Outbursts or amplified response to events due to the emotional strain they may be under.

The sooner Young Carers are recognised the easier it is to prevent them from taking on inappropriate levels of care and staff in schools can play a key role in the identification process. A young person may be doing personal care, practical care, emotional care, all of which may impact on their schooling and lives.

*Source: NHS England*

# Questions for staff to consider when identifying young carers

## Which of your pupils...

- Regularly arrive late?
- Regularly miss days?
- Appear physically neglected, missing breakfast, lacking clean clothes or uniform, etc.
- Appear to be regularly tired?
- Regularly complain of aches and pains?
- Regularly appear withdrawn or anxious?
- Regularly challenge adult authority? (Some young carers struggle with switching between an adult role at home and a child role at school).
- Appear more emotionally mature than their peers?
- Have regular problems concentrating on work?
- Regularly fail to hand in homework on time?

## Which of your parents...

- Regularly fail to answer communications?
- Regularly miss Parents' Evenings?
- Are on low incomes, receive Pupil Premium or unable to afford school expenses?

## Young carers give top ten tips for schools

1. Recognise that our responsibility as carers can affect our education and schoolwork.
2. Find out about us, what we need and how we are not like other students.
3. Take time to find out about individual problems at home. Sometimes we're too embarrassed to tell you ourselves.
4. Don't automatically punish us if we're late. Sometimes we can't help being late because we're helping out at home.
5. Provide more support such as lunchtime drop-ins or homework clubs.
6. Be flexible – give us more time and help to do homework or coursework.
7. Include information about young carers and disability issues in PHSE lessons.
8. Let us phone parents if we need to find out if they are OK.
9. Make sure there is a clear and up to date community notice board which has support information for us and where else we can get help in the community.
10. Ensure teachers are offered training on young carers and disability issues both at university and on INSET days.

*Source: Children's Society Young Carers Festival*

## **WSCC Young Carers Service provide advice and guidance on supporting young carers in school**

- Speak to your school's leadership team about young carer's issues being discussed in lessons and assemblies (see ideas for activities and lesson plans in part 4 of this resource).
- Make it clear to young carers that they (or their families) will not be in trouble because they are helping to look after someone.
- Have a key person/named contact in school who keeps up to date with young carer's issues and services in West Sussex so that they can signpost young carers to appropriate support.

### **Schools can provide support for young carers in three key ways:**

- Providing flexible and sensitive support to the young carer themselves, especially when their role is very stressful.
- Helping the family, if they're willing, to contact appropriate services for more support.
- Consider a multi-agency response if there are complex issues affecting the young person or their family. This reduces the need for the young carer to take on inappropriate levels of care.

### **Here are some examples of the support that schools can provide:**

- Flexible deadlines on school work, and offer additional support if necessary.
- Someone for the young carer to talk to e.g. a counsellor, support staff, class teacher.
- A young carer 'identity card' so young carers can identify themselves and leave lessons without having to explain their situation.
- Access to a telephone, so a young carer can contact home if they're worried during the day.
- Assisting parents with a disability to attend parents' evenings, making sure meeting rooms are accessible, or communicate with them in some other way e.g. email.
- Support to access school trips and extra-curricular activities.
- An in-school support group for young carers – see part 5 of this resource for a Quick Guide to setting up a Young Carers group in your school, and Young Carers school information poster.
- Provide a school noticeboard displaying information on community projects, support and resources available to young carers and their families including the school's named contact.

### **Further examples of the support that schools can provide:**

- Consult with identified young carers about their school experience and find out/learn what else your school could put in place.
- Consider additional support in transition times, for example with the move from primary to secondary school.
- Talks on disability, ill-health and caring as part of PSHE or assembly to raise awareness amongst pupils.
- A young carers champion e.g. school nurse, who is 'visible, accessible, and confidential'.
- Utilise *The Resilient Classroom – A Resource Pack for Tutor Groups, and Pastoral School Staff* – <http://www.boingboing.org.uk/schools-academic-resilience>

### **Support strategies and procedures for supporting young carers**

- Embed the topic into INSET days and staff development meetings
- Members of staff could undertake WSCC online training module 'Young Carer Aware' and the Healthy Schools e-learning Young Carers module
- Information sharing with staff
- Regular newsletter & school website articles
- Incorporate into Home-School Agreement
- WSCC Young Carers Service posters and leaflets displayed and available in the school (see part 5 of resource)
- Pupil questionnaire to identify young carers (record details on pupil files).

### **What can the West Sussex Young Carers Service offer teachers and other school staff?**

We have lots of experience of working with young carers and their families and can assist schools in supporting their young carers by:

- Providing consultation to discuss the needs of a particular young carer and find ways to support them
- Provide information and training sessions as part of INSET days
- Helping to find resources for assemblies, primary PSHE lessons.

For consultation or to discuss training needs please email [youngcarers@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:youngcarers@westsussex.gov.uk)

## **The aims of West Sussex Young Carers Service**

- Make sure the young carer is safe and being looked after
- Reduce the amount of caring a young person has to do if it is too much for them, by thinking about the needs of the whole family
- Help the young carer to get more support at school or college
- Make sure that the young carer gets a regular break and time for friends and fun
- Check that the young carer is supported by other adults and professionals in their lives
- Make sure that the young carer has someone to talk to when things are difficult
- Check that the family are receiving all the support or financial benefits available to them
- Improve the life opportunities of the young carer.

## **To request our service please contact your local Early Help Hub via email:**

**Adur & Worthing** – AdurWorthingHUB@westsussex.gov.uk

**Arun** – ArunHUB@westsussex.gov.uk

**Chichester** – ChichesterHUB@westsussex.gov.uk

**Crawley** – CrawleyHUB@westsussex.gov.uk

**Horsham** – HorshamHUB@westsussex.gov.uk

**Mid-Sussex** – MidSussexHUB@westsussex.gov.uk

## **Useful links**

### **For young carers**

Online information, advice and support in the UK from Carers Trust – action, help, advice.  
[www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)

The Children's Society Include programme – supporting young carers and their families.  
[www.youngcarer.com](http://www.youngcarer.com)

Sibs – for brothers and sisters of disabled children. [www.sibs.org.uk](http://www.sibs.org.uk)

### **For professionals**

*Whole Family Pathway: A Resource for Practitioners* – a free online resource for all practitioners working across all sectors including Adults and Children's Statutory Services, Health and Education. ([www.youngcarer.com/pdfs/Whole%20Family%20 Pathway.pdf](http://www.youngcarer.com/pdfs/Whole%20Family%20Pathway.pdf))

[www.carers.org/professionals/young-carers](http://www.carers.org/professionals/young-carers) (Information about supporting young carers)

[www.westsussexcarers.org.uk](http://www.westsussexcarers.org.uk)

# Awards for schools supporting Young Carers

Your school can receive an award for the work it does with and on behalf of young carers and their families.

**Young Carers in Schools** is a free England-wide initiative that makes it as easy as possible for schools to support young carers, and awards good practice.

The award is jointly run by Carers Trust and The Children's Society, who are working with schools across England to share good practice, provide relevant tools and training, and to celebrate the great outcomes that many schools achieve for young carers.

Over the page schools reveal the positive impact of adopting the Young Carers in Schools programme.

## Why take part?

The Young Carers in Schools programme enables schools to:

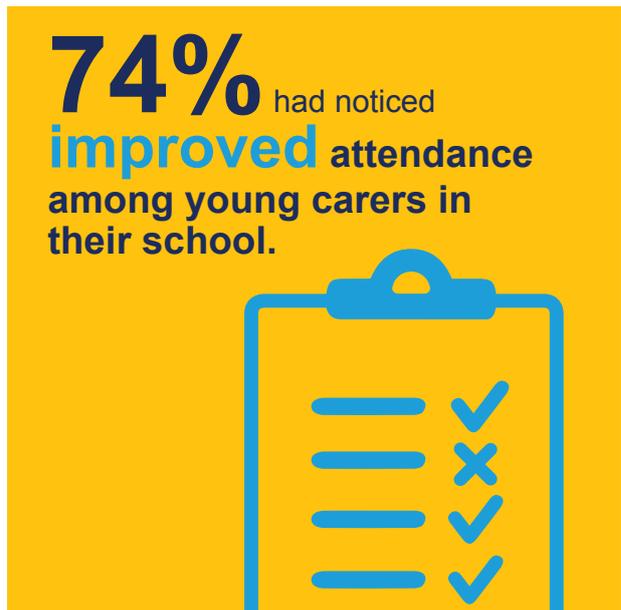
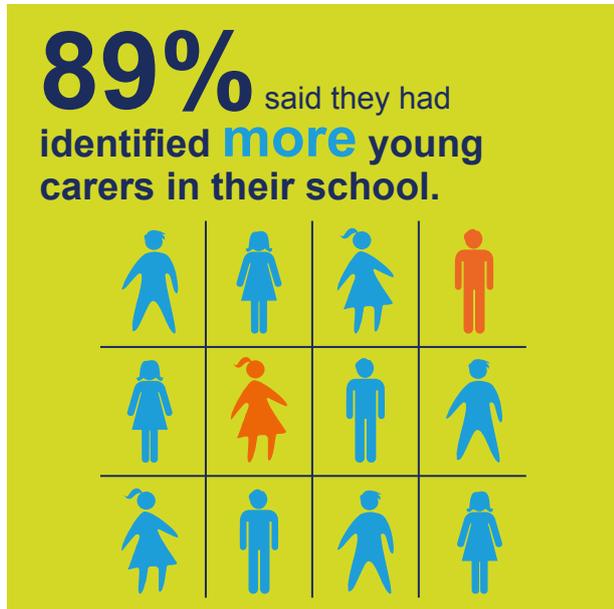
- Gain national recognition for raising outcomes for young carers through the Young Carers in Schools Award.
- Demonstrate to Ofsted that your school is meeting the needs of young carers, specifically mentioned in the Common Inspection Framework, 2015.
- Identify manageable steps to improve educational outcomes for this vulnerable pupil group – the programme breaks down the actions schools can take so that your school can prioritise what to do next.
- Access additional support including tools, templates and good practice examples, webinars and professional development events

For more information about the award go to: [www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org)

*Adapted from <https://carers.org/young-carers-schools>*

# Young Carers in Schools

What schools have told us about the impact of the programme



We asked 72 schools who had received a Young Carers in Schools Award about the impact of implementing the programme.

Carers Trust is a registered charity in England and Wales (1145181) and in Scotland (SC042870). Registered as a company limited by guarantee in England and Wales No. 7697170. Registered office: 32–36 Loman Street, London SE1 0EH.

The Children's Society is a registered charity number 221124. Registered Office: Edward Rudolf House, Margery Street, London, WC1X 0J

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# Part 4

## Raising awareness with pupils

Assembly activity

Using the film *Young Carers - Helping Hands* in lessons

Five lesson plans



# Assembly activity

**Title:** Supporting young carers in school

**Audience:** Year 1 – 6 pupils

**Exercise:** 1

**Approximate time:** 30 minutes

**Materials:** SMART board or flipchart and pens, props e.g. apron, mop and bucket, saucepan, sieve, empty pill bottles, towel, cheque book, shopping bag, lever arch file (homework), translation dictionary, phone, 'bag of worries', listening ear, shower cap, empty wine bottles or cans, symbol of adult problems, washing line with pegs, laundry basket, shoulder to cry on etc. A volunteer from the audience.

**Aim/outcome:** To raise awareness of young carers and the tasks they might be undertaking. To let pupils know who they can talk to at their school.

**Activity:** Explain who young carers are using this definition – *"A young carer is someone under 18 who helps look after someone in their family, or a friend, who is ill, disabled or misuses drugs and alcohol"*.

**Ask the audience** how they would know someone was a young carer

**Ask for a volunteer** from the audience to come and stand at the front of the room

**Ask the audience** – *"What are all the things a young carer might be doing?"* When they mention a physical task or emotional response for which you have a prop give it to the 'young carer' to hold (10 minutes). If you don't have a prop then write it on the SMART board or flipchart.

**The idea is that the volunteer will end up weighed down juggling lots of tasks and emotional responsibilities.**

**Highlight the fact** that young carers take on all sorts of tasks and can be significantly impacted by their caring role at home and at school. There is an emotional impact of caring for someone (worry, stress, adult problems, shoulder to cry on, limits to social life etc) in addition to the tasks a young carer might be undertaking.

**Ask the audience** – “How would you know someone was a young carer in your school? What might you notice about them? Are there any benefits to being a young carer?” Young Carers often feel proud and special, valued by their family members, and may have a level of confidence and independence, and a wider range of life skills than their peers.

Close the assembly by stating the support available in your school for young carers and people to talk to – include their photos and contact details on the SMART board e.g. School Nurse, Pastoral Lead, SENCO, teacher, support staff.

### **Questions for the facilitator to consider prior to running this session:**

1. Is it OK for young carers to be treated differently from other pupils?  
If so, when? If not, why not?
2. How might young carers be best supported in your school?
3. Who’s responsible for putting this support in place?
4. What policy and procedures are needed to endorse and inform the practical support?
5. What help, advice and support is available from other organisations?

### **Additional resources:**

*Quick guide to setting up a young carers group in your school.* WSCC Young Carers Service (see part 5 of resource)

Information poster for young carers in your school. WSCC Young Carers Service (see part 5 of resource)

*Supporting Young Carers in School: A Step-by-step Guide for Leaders, Teachers and Non-teaching Staff.* [www.carers.org.uk](http://www.carers.org.uk)

*School Leaders and Governors Young Carers in Schools Guide.* WSCC Young Carers Service (see part 5 of resource)

*Young Carers – Information for pastoral and other support staff in schools.* WSCC Young Carers Service (see part 5 of resource)

*The Resilient Classroom – A Resource Pack for Tutor Groups, and Pastoral School Staff.* [www.boingboing.org.uk](http://www.boingboing.org.uk)

## Using the film *Young Carers – Helping Hands* in lessons

The film is approximately 22 minutes long and is broken up into an introduction followed by 5 chapters. Each chapter ends with the actors posing a series of questions for the class to consider. There are 5 lesson plans – one linked to each chapter.

The chapters must be played consecutively for them to make sense to the pupils and aid understanding of what is happening to Ella and her Dad.

### **Play the introduction and Chapter 1 including the first set of questions posed by Ella and Dad**

- Q1. What is caring?
- Q2. Who cares for you?
- Q3. How do those people care for you?
- Q4. Who do you care for?

### **Ask the class to answer the questions and then do the activity on the corresponding lesson plan (see over)**

### **Repeat for Chapters 2–5**

Based on the experiences of young carers, the film explores what it means to look after someone else when you are young. *Young Carers – Helping Hands* is a story about a father and daughter, which was inspired by working with Young Carers. The story is about what happens when the father becomes ill/incapacitated and can no longer do all the things he used to.

The daughter takes on more responsibility and cares for her dad; she cleans, shops, tucks him in and gets herself ready each morning. But she has no time to play and gets sad. Towards the end of the play she needs more help.

*Joe and Ella are a great team – they make each other laugh, help each other out and tackle all the chores their busy lives throw at them. But one morning things begin to change when Joe gets all tangled up and Ella has to do things alone. What will Ella do now? Will she be able to continue as before or will it all get too much? If only she had a little help...*



## Lesson plan

# Chapter 1 - These Are The Hands

Learning Objective – To understand how we are cared for by others		
Class discussion	Timing	Resources
<p><b>Q1.</b> What is caring? <b>Q2.</b> Who cares for you? <b>Q3.</b> How do those people care for you? <b>Q4.</b> Who do you care for?</p>	15 minutes	Paper Pencils/Pens Scissors Colouring pencils
Activity	30 minutes	
Give out paper. Ask pupils to draw around one of their hands, then cut it out. Ask them to fill the hand in the colour you think represents care. Pupils to write on the fingers/thumb the people who care for them.		

## Lesson plan

# Chapter 2 - Something Changes

<b>Learning Objective – To understand the feelings of the characters when life changes for them</b>		
<b>Class Discussion</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Resources</b>
<b>Q1.</b> What has happened? <b>Q2.</b> How does Ella feel? <b>Q3.</b> How does Dad feel?	15 minutes	<i>These are the hands</i> resource sheet (see over)  Pencils/Pens
<b>Activity</b>		
<b>1.</b> Trust exercises using hands. Ask pupils to get into pairs, label themselves A and B. Hold hands and pull back, feet together, lower themselves carefully to the floor whilst keeping hands held. Come back to standing. Now try to repeat whole exercise but now A can only use one hand (other hand behind back), ask pupils to adjust their technique. Ask pupils what is difficult about this? What did you have to change?	20 minutes	
<b>2.</b> <i>These are the hands</i> poem. Give out attached resource as template for pupils to complete the poem (6 sentences) that lists what their hands can do.	30 minutes	

# ***These Are The Hands***

These are the hands that .....

.....

.....

By: .....

## Lesson plan

# Chapter 3 – Morning Routine

<b>Learning Objective – To understand how Ella starts to feel responsibility for her Dad</b>		
<b>Class Discussion</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Resources</b>
<p><b>Q1.</b> Why <i>doesn't</i> Ella want to go to school?</p> <p><b>Q2.</b> Also, why <i>does</i> she want to go to school?</p> <p><b>Q3.</b> How might Ella feel when she is at school?</p>	15 minutes	Chair
<b>Activity</b>		
<p>Hot seating as Ella and Dad. Teacher to choose higher ability student to model hot seating activity (links to literacy framework). Higher ability pupil sits in a chair (hot seat) at front of class and assumes the character of Ella (using improvisation skills to put themselves 'in the shoes' of Ella). The group asks questions of 'Ella', pupil responds in character. Repeat hot seating activity with another higher ability pupil playing Dad.</p>	10 minutes	
<p>Ask pupils to get into pairs. Continue this activity in pairs so each pupil gets the opportunity to play one of the characters and respond to questions from their partner.</p>	10 minutes	

## Lesson plan

# Chapter 4 - Ella Needs Help

<b>Learning Objective – To know who we can ask for help and to understand how we can help others who might be a young carer</b>		
<b>Class Discussion</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Resources</b>
<p><b>Q1.</b> How does Ella feel?</p> <p><b>Q2.</b> How does Dad feel?</p> <p><b>Q3.</b> What other things could stop Dad caring for Ella? (illness, disability, injury)</p> <p><b>Q4.</b> Who could you ask for help if you were Ella?</p> <p><b>Q5.</b> How could WE help Ella?</p>	20 minutes	Large sugar paper Pencils/pens/markers Acrostic poem resource sheets (see over)
<b>Activity</b>		
<p>Put class into small groups of 4/5.            Ask them to list the tasks Ella has to do in the morning e.g. making porridge/let cat out/ answer phone/ etc.            Record this on sugar paper.</p>	15 minutes	
<p>Together pupils are going to help Ella by acting out each of these tasks, one person in each group to do each of Ella's tasks. Together they are helping Ella.            Groups to rehearse the acting out of the tasks.            Could possibly add sounds and words too.</p>	20 minutes	
<p>Each group to perform to the class.</p>	20 minutes	
<p><b>Extension Activity</b> – give out acrostic poem resource to complete. Using word HELP or CARE to complete poem based on Ella's story.</p>	30 minutes	

**Acrostic poem**

**'CARE'**

**C**

**A**

**R**

**E**

By: .....

## Acrostic poem

**'HELP'**

**H**

**E**

**L**

**P**

By: .....

## Lesson plan

# Chapter 5 - Ella and Dad work together

<b>Learning Objective – To understand the value of working together and caring for and helping each other</b>		
<b>Class Discussion</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Resources</b>
<p><b>Q1.</b> What do Ella’s hands do?</p> <p><b>Q2.</b> What other things will Ella and Dad have to work together on in the future?</p> <p><b>Q3.</b> Ella seems happier now. Why do you think this is?</p> <p><b>Q4.</b> What does this scene represent?</p>	20 minutes	Decorated hands from Scene 1 activities Large roll of paper (used for board covering) Glue
<b>Activity</b>		
<p>Ask pupils to collect the hand they decorated from Scene 1 activity. Place all the hands together on the large sheet of paper.</p> <p>Work together to form the shape of one big hand from the individual hands (to give Ella a hand/help).</p> <p>This BIG hand can then be used for display around the school/in the classroom.</p>	15 minutes	

# Part 5

**Quick Guide to setting up a Young Carer group  
in your school**

**Young Carers in your school - information poster**

**WSCC Young Carers Service leaflet - Information  
for Families and Professionals**

**WSCC Young Carers Service poster**

**Young Carers - information for pastoral  
and other support staff in schools**

**Young Carers Supporting Young Carers in Schools.  
A guide for School Leadership Teams and Governors**





**QUICK GUIDE**

# Setting up a group for Young Carers in your school



### Questions to answer before starting!

- Who has the lead for Young Carers at your school?
- What does your school's Young Carers' policy say about these children and how they will be supported to achieve academically?
- Who will be responsible/accountable for any group that is set up? You will need at least 2 members of staff to cover absences, etc.
- What is the budget to run this group? Refreshments, activities, resources.
- What are the aims and objectives of the group?

### Practicalities

- How will young carers be involved in setting up the group, and in any future development? (see 'Involving young carers' section below).
- How will you measure the impact of the group? For example, improvement in attendance, increase in self-confidence, increase in self-esteem, improved resilience, achieving educationally.
- When and where will it run? Over lunchtime or after school.
- How often? How long? Is it a safe and private space?
- What is the intended culture of the group?
- Will there be access to a phone?
- How and where will you advertise the group? See the poster included with this guide.

### Involving young carers

- How will you consult them prior to set up?
- What do they want/need from the group?
- When, where, how often, how long, etc?

- How do they want to spend the time?
- What do they want the group culture to be? The group rules?

### YOUNG CARERS GIVE TOP TEN TIPS FOR SCHOOLS

1. Recognise that our responsibility as carers can affect our education and schoolwork.
2. Find out about us, what we need and how we are not like other students.
3. Take time to find out about individual problems at home. Sometimes we're too embarrassed to tell you ourselves.
4. Don't automatically punish us if we're late. Sometimes we can't help being late because we're helping out at home.
5. Provide more support such as lunchtime drop-ins or homework clubs.
6. Be flexible – give us more time and help to do homework or coursework.
7. Include information about young carers and disability issues in PHSE lessons.
8. Let us phone parents if we need to find out if they are OK.
9. Make sure there is a clear and up to date community notice board which has support information for us and where else we can get help in the community.
10. Ensure teachers are offered training on young carers and disability issues both at university and on inset days.

### Other resources

#### WSSC YOUNG CARERS SERVICE

- **Identifying and supporting young carers in primary school: a learning resource for staff and students.**  
<http://schools.westsussex.gov.uk/Page/7645>

#### CARERS TRUST

- **Supporting young carers in School: an Introduction for primary and secondary school staff.**  
<http://static.carers.org/files/supporting-young-carers-in-schools-booklet-6860.pdf>
- **Supporting young carers in school: a step-by-step guide for leaders, teachers and non-teaching staff.** STEP 6. Tool 2: running a peer support group for young carers. <https://professionals.carers.org/stepbystep>

### RESEARCH

Find famous people who have had a young carer role and display pictures of them in your school.

Jade Ewan is a singer/songwriter, who used to be in the girl group Sugababes, and used to be a young carer for her mum and dad.



Both myself and two Leaders of Year and Student Managers have looked at the guide and posters and think they are both informative and factual.

Assistant Headteacher  
Bourne Community College

# Young Carers at

Insert your school name here

**A young carer is someone under 18 who helps look after someone in their family, or a friend, who is ill, disabled or misuses drugs or alcohol.**

**Young carers do all kinds of things to help out at home...**

We do chores, cook meals, do the washing and cleaning, help a parent or sibling get up, washed and dressed, order, collect and give medicine, do the shopping, make phone calls, translate, deal with professionals, pay bills, and provide a shoulder to cry on.

I also have to try to get to school on time, do my schoolwork, and then my homework, make time for my friends and find some time for myself.

**Who's here to help young carers in our school?**

Young Carers Lead:

The Pastoral Lead:

School Nurse:

Anyone else:

**Come along to our school's Young Carers group**

When:

Where:

Time:

## Get in touch

Parents, young people and professionals are all welcome to contact us.

It will be helpful to have some information on the care being undertaken and the impact of this on the child/young person and family.

If you are a professional making a referral on behalf of a young carer and their family please ensure you have consent to do so and you have talked to them about how they hope to benefit from the involvement of the Young Carers Team.

## Contact details

To request our service please contact your local Early Help Hub via email:

**Adur and Worthing –**  
[AdurWorthingHUB@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:AdurWorthingHUB@westsussex.gov.uk)

**Arun –**  
[ArunHUB@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:ArunHUB@westsussex.gov.uk)

**Chichester –**  
[ChichesterHUB@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:ChichesterHUB@westsussex.gov.uk)

**Crawley –**  
[CrawleyHUB@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:CrawleyHUB@westsussex.gov.uk)

**Horsham –**  
[HorshamHUB@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:HorshamHUB@westsussex.gov.uk)

**Mid-Sussex –**  
[MidSussexHUB@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:MidSussexHUB@westsussex.gov.uk)

# WEST SUSSEX YOUNG CARERS

**Information for  
families and  
professionals**



"Before I went to Young Carers I thought I was the only one – now I know I am not!"

"He's been able to be a child again"

"I did not think that anyone would be able to help my situation but the young carers team have"



For more information:

email [youngcarers@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:youngcarers@westsussex.gov.uk)

website [www.westsussex.gov.uk/youngcarers](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/youngcarers)

phone 01903 270300



## Who are Young Carers?

Young carers are young people and children under 18, who take on physical, practical or emotional responsibilities at home because someone in their family is disabled, has been ill for a long time, experiences mental ill health, has a learning disability or has a problem linked to alcohol or drugs.

Lots of children and young people want to help out and feel proud that they are lending a hand. At the same time the impact of these caring responsibilities may cause difficulties at home, in school/college or elsewhere.

Sometimes it can be difficult to recognise someone as a young carer – but does this sound like your family or a family you know?

Did you know there are thousands of young carers in West Sussex?

## What can help Young Carers?

- Acknowledging that they are in a caring role.
- Supporting the person who is cared for so that children and young people do not have to do so much.
- Having regular breaks from caring and ensuring they have the same opportunities as other children and young people of their age.
- Meeting other young carers and knowing they are not alone.
- Having someone to speak to who understands.

## How we work

We meet with young carers together with their family at home to discuss the needs of the young carer and to consider the needs of the whole family. We may call some families and this discussion will take place over the phone.

Once we have made an assessment we develop a plan of support to meet the needs of the individual and their family. Our priorities are to:

- Reduce the amount of caring a young person has to do if it is too much for them.
- Increase young carers awareness and confidence to manage their situation.
- Help the young carer to get more support at school or college.
- Make sure that the young carer gets a regular break and time for friends and fun.
- Improve the life opportunities of the young carer.
- Ensure that the young carer is supported by other adults and professionals in their lives.
- Make sure that the young carer has someone to talk to when things are difficult.
- Check that the family are receiving all the support or financial benefits available to them.
- Make sure young carers are supported at times of significant life changes and the transition to adulthood.

## What we can offer

As part of the Integrated Early Help service our team offers direct support to families and works with other agencies to provide a range of services which can include:

- Specialist assessments, advice and information.
- Advocacy and co-ordinating support.
- Counselling/play therapy for young carer.
- Local young carers groups.
- Regular activity days and time out with groups of young carers.
- Help to access activities and clubs in local areas.
- Events and network for young carers who are 16+.
- Support for Parents.
- Volunteer Mentors for Young Carers.

## Raising awareness

We want to make sure that children and young people with caring responsibilities get support from all the different adults in their lives.

We therefore offer information sessions and training workshops to a wide range of other professionals so they can have a better understanding about what children and young people do to care and how it effects them.

# WEST SUSSEX YOUNG CARERS



**LOADS OF YOUNG PEOPLE LIVE IN FAMILIES WHERE SOMEONE IS DISABLED OR HAS A LONG-TERM ILLNESS**

**Did you know there is a team dedicated to supporting YOUNG CARERS?**

**To find out more call 01903 270300**

**Email [youngcarers@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:youngcarers@westsussex.gov.uk)**

**Web [www.westsussex.gov.uk/youngcarers](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/youngcarers)**



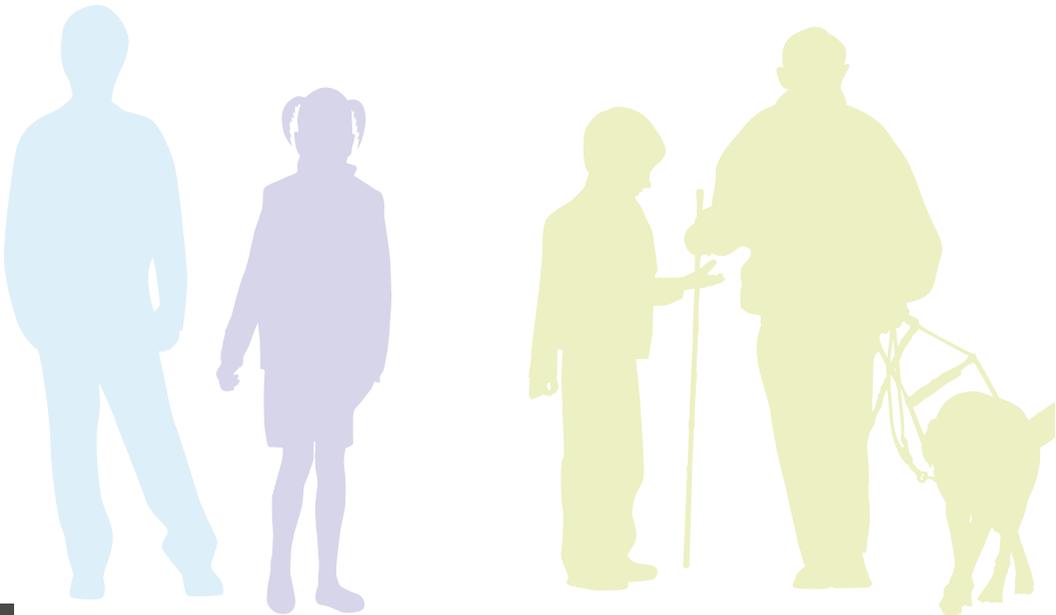


# Young carers

Information for pastoral and other support staff in schools



west  
sussex  
county  
council





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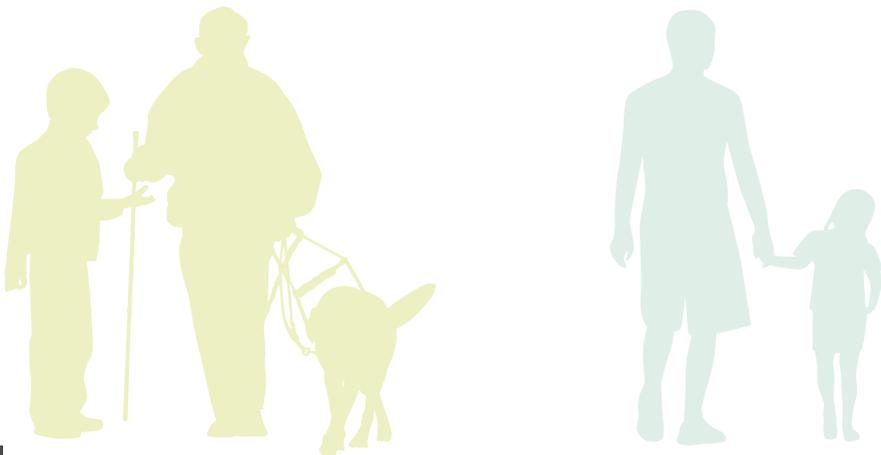
# Who are Young Carers?

Young Carers are young people under the age of 18 whose lives are affected by the care needs of someone they live with. This is usually a parent, sibling or grandparent.

The person they care for could have physical disabilities, learning difficulties, mental health issues or problems with drug and alcohol use. Sometimes they may be affected by domestic violence.

Young carers may help to provide practical and personal care and it is also important to realise the emotional impact of living with someone with disabilities or long-term illnesses, and that this is often more difficult to understand.

Some tasks a young carer may undertake may be expected for someone of their age (e.g. babysitting or domestic chores) but the level to which a young carer is relied on to do this is often a lot higher than would be normal for a young person of their age. Some tasks may be considered inappropriate for a young person to undertake, especially in the case of personal care.





# Difficulties associated with being a young carer

Being responsible for managing finances, attending hospital appointments, administering medication or being a shoulder to lean on is likely to put huge pressure on a young person. They may find it difficult to concentrate at school on top of everything else.

Differences in roles, responsibilities, routines and issues with finances are more likely in families in which someone has a long term health issue or disability. This can affect relationships and some young carers can appear much older than their years.

Some young carers experience difficulties with their personal health and may develop problems with their own mental health, because of their caring roles and high levels of stress and anxiety.

## How does this affect education?

**Attendance:** as well as missing school, some young carers may find it hard to get to school on time. This may be due to their caring roles, transport issues and other difficulties. Young carers may miss school trips and outings, especially if there is a cost involved or if they will be away from home for longer. Young carers are less likely to stay after school for clubs/sports, etc. This leads to further isolation from their peers and communities which could cause low self-esteem.

**Behaviour:** some young carers may find it difficult to mix with their peers, who may have very different lifestyles. Young people deal with stress differently, some may be quiet and withdrawn, whereas others may be disruptive. Some young carers think of their school time as their chance to be 'normal' and so may not want to draw attention to themselves at all.

**70%**

of young carers have experienced bullying associated with caring

Transition times can be particularly difficult times

One fifth of young carers miss school due to their caring responsibilities

The average age of a young carer is 12

Young carers are less likely to enter further education

**40%**

of young carers affected by drug and alcohol misuse miss school



**Achieving:** busy home lives, problems concentrating, lack of time to complete homework and their own stress and fatigue are all factors which may affect a young carer's chances of reaching their full potential. Many young carers underachieve.

**Home – School Liaison:** some parents with disabilities and longterm illnesses may find it difficult to come into school for consultation evenings/parent-teacher meetings and other events. They may find it difficult to read letters or reports sent home, which further reduces their involvement in their child's education and makes it harder for staff to make links between a young person's difficulties and their caring role.

**Transition:** these times (primary, secondary and leaving school) are particularly challenging for some young carers. They may have received a great deal of support at primary school, and don't know who or how to tell about their situation at their new school, where they may feel anonymous and they no longer have one teacher who can get to know them.

Schools can help by making sure that relevant information is passed on at the point of transition. It may also be a good to ask a young person, at the point of admission into your school, if anyone in their family has a disability or long-term health issue.

Young carers may benefit from being part of special transition groups for children who need extra support when leaving primary education.

Leaving secondary school and deciding what to do next may also be difficult as a young carer may feel trapped by their caring role or feel that they should become a full-time carer and can not continue their education. These young people may need advice and support to think through their options so they don't feel restricted and can make choices which suit their situation, or they may need information about benefits or other support services.

I want the teachers to know, but not make a big deal about it!

Sometimes I feel like I've done a day's work before I even get to school..

If I have to stay after school, people at home may go without the care they need.

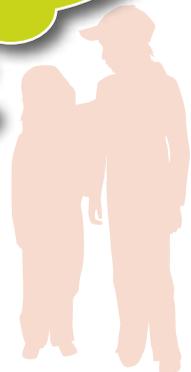
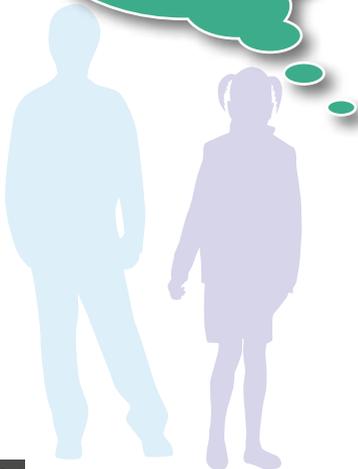
I worry when I'm at school... If I'm not concentrating, it's for a reason..

Some days I just want to stay in the background in class.

I need my mobile on. I feel better knowing I can be contacted straight away.

I just don't get chance to do my homework, then I get a detention which puts even more pressure on me...

It's difficult to explain things to the teachers, there's never a good time or place.





# How can school staff help?

**(Remember we are here to support you with this!)**

- Speak to your school's leadership team about young carer's issues being discussed in lessons and assemblies (see additional pack)
- Make it clear to young carers that they (or their families) will not be in trouble because they are helping to look after someone.
- Have a key person/named contact in school who keeps up to date with young carer's issues and services in West Sussex so that they can signpost young carers to appropriate support. Our website has useful, up-to-date information. Please go to [www.westsussex.gov.uk/youngcarers](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/youngcarers)
- Provide a school noticeboard displaying information on community projects, support and resources available to young carers and their families including the school's named contact.
- Consider a multi-agency response if there are complex issues affecting the young person or their family.
- Consult with identified young carers about their school experience and find out/learn what else your school could put in place.
- Key members of staff could undertake our online training module 'Young Carer Aware' and the Healthy Schools e-learning Young Carers Module.
- Consider additional support in transition times, for example with the move from primary to secondary school or with College/University applications.
- Provide flexibility with homework deadlines and offer additional support if necessary.
- Use 'Young Carer's ID cards' to enable young carers to identify themselves without having to explain their situation.

- If parents can't make it into school, find other ways to communicate such as by email. Make sure meeting rooms are accessible.
- Provide access to a telephone so that a young carer can call home during the day and alleviate worry.
- Make space for young carers to meet together in school for peer support and to discuss the issue they face.

## What can the West Sussex Young Carer's Team offer teachers and other school staff?

We have lots of experience of working with young carers and their families and can assist schools in supporting their young carers by:

- Providing consultations to discuss the needs of a particular young carer and find ways to support them.
- Provide information and training sessions as part of INSET days.
- Helping to find resources for assemblies, primary and secondary PSHE lessons.

## Our aims

It is important that we:

- make sure the young carer is safe and being looked after;
- reduce the amount of caring a young person has to do if it is too much for them, by thinking about the needs of the whole family;
- help the young carer to get more support at school or college;
- make sure that the young carer gets a regular break and time for friends and fun;
- check that the young carer is supported by other adults and professionals in their lives;



- make sure that the young carer has someone to talk to when things are difficult;
- check that the family are receiving all the support or financial benefits available to them; and
- improve the life opportunities of the young carer.

## Useful links

Online information, advice and support for young carers in the UK:

- [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)
- [www.youngcarer.com](http://www.youngcarer.com)
- [www.sibs.org.uk](http://www.sibs.org.uk)

### For professionals

- **Whole Family Pathway: A Resource for Practitioners** – a free online resource for all practitioners working across all sectors including Adults and Children’s Statutory Services, Health and Education. ([www.youngcarer.com/pdfs/Whole%20Family%20Pathway.pdf](http://www.youngcarer.com/pdfs/Whole%20Family%20Pathway.pdf))
- [www.carers.org/professionals/young-carers](http://www.carers.org/professionals/young-carers)  
(Information about supporting young carers)
- [www.westsussexcarers.org.uk](http://www.westsussexcarers.org.uk)

## How to contact us

To get information about training and information sessions, as well as for individual case consultation and general advice, please email us at [youngcarers@westsussex.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:youngcarers@westsussex.gcsx.gov.uk)

To make a referral to the team in order for a young carer to be considered for additional support, please see contact details on the back of this booklet.

Anyone, including parents/guardians can make a referral. If a professional makes a referral, the family’s permission is needed.

## Contacting us

 **01903 270300** Young Carers Service

 **youngcarers@westsussex.gov.uk**

 **[www.westsussex.gov.uk/youngcarers](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/youngcarers)**



**WEST SUSSEX**  
**YOUNG**  
**CARERS**

If you require this publication in an alternative format,  
please contact us on 01243 642105.



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(Also available at [www.westsussex.gov.uk/youngcarers](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/youngcarers))

## ***Introduction***

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This guide has been produced by the West Sussex Young Carers Team to ensure that School Leadership Teams and School Governors in the County have access to relevant information and advice in order to provide quality support for young carers within their educational setting.

School leadership teams should be aware that young carers have specific needs. Many young carers face enormous barriers to learning. It is vital that the leadership of the school puts in place measures to identify and support young carers. Subsection 12 of the Care Act 2014 places a requirement of Local Authorities to monitor the numbers of young carers in their Authority. Schools have a pivotal role to play in assisting with this.

The Common Inspection Framework published in 2015 sets out how Ofsted inspects maintained schools and academies, and includes Young Carers as a group that inspectors will pay particular attention to when observing how well a school helps children and learners to make progress and fulfil their potential. Where appropriate, by using a small proportion of the Pupil Premium to support young carers, schools can mitigate some of the inequalities and barriers that young carers face, raise pupil attainment, and improve the life chances for this significant and vulnerable group.

The guide is designed to be a starting point for schools wishing to establish or update their policy and procedures for supporting young carers. It contains information about the needs of young carers, a model which could be used to set up a framework for support, checklists for school leadership teams and governors, appointing a school lead for young carers, staff training and lesson/assembly ideas.

The West Sussex Young Carer's team have also produced a booklet for pastoral and support staff within schools, which offers practical advice and guidance for supporting young carers within school and should be used alongside this guide.

### ***1. Young carer definition***

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A young carer is a young person under the age of 18 whose life is affected by the care needs of another person, who may have any disability or long-term illness. This could be anybody with a physical or learning disability, long term physical illness, mental health problem, someone who misuses drugs or alcohol, has HIV/Aids, or is elderly and frail.

The care they provide could be personal, practical or emotional. The person they care for is usually someone they live with and could be a parent, sibling, grandparent or other relative.

Young carers provide, or help to provide regular or continuing care and emotional support to that person and take on a level of responsibility usually associated with an adult.

A young carer becomes vulnerable when the level of care-giving and responsibility to the person in need of care becomes excessive or inappropriate for that child.

## 2. School issues for YCs, facts and figures

---

In October 2012, Edward Timpson, the minister for Children and families said:

*"Schools have a key role in identifying and supporting all young carers. We look to schools to create a supportive environment that responds to each child's personal circumstances. It is important that head teachers and governors are allowed the necessary local freedom to exercise their welfare responsibilities in the most appropriate way. Ofsted take particular interest in the experiences of more vulnerable children, including young carers, during inspections."* (Hansard, 2012).

*"Schools have a key role in identifying and supporting young carers. We must ensure that every child has the opportunity to meet their full potential".* (Department of Education, 2013)

### Some facts and figures:

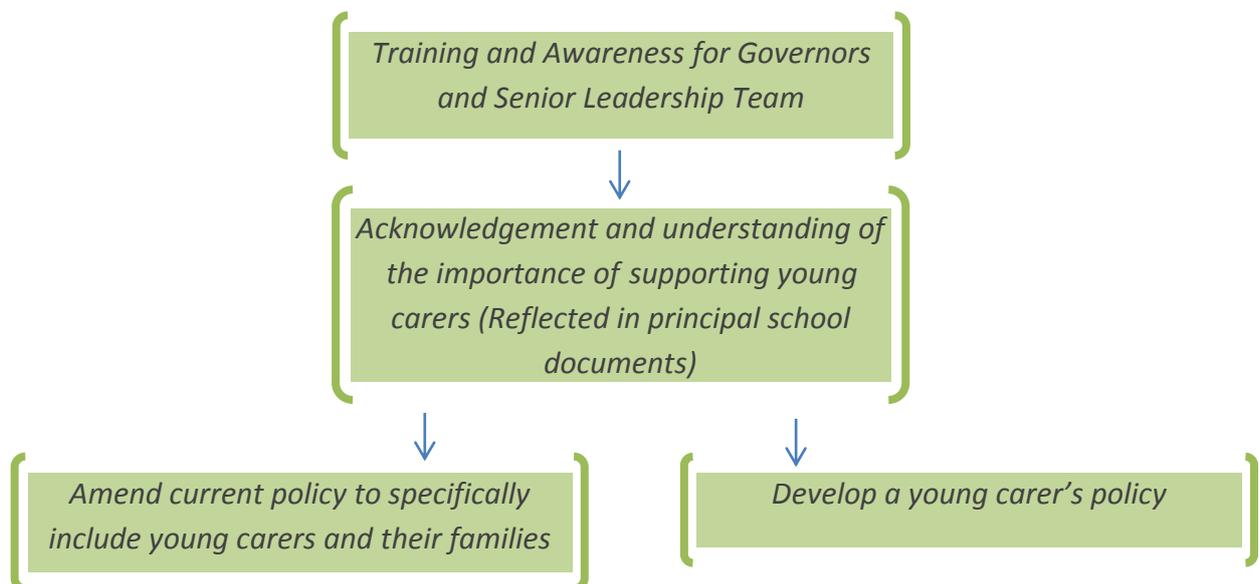
- **27%** of young carers (secondary age) experience educational difficulties or miss school, this rises to **40%** where pupils are caring for someone who misuses drugs or alcohol.
- **68%** of young carers experience bullying at school
- **39%** said that nobody in their school was aware of their caring role.
- Case Study: Oxfordshire County Council mapped attainment at Key Stage 4. In 2009, before the school started an initiative to support young carers, **only 13.5% achieved 5 GCSE A\* - C grades**. In 2012, this had risen to 40%.
- **One in 12** young carers is caring for more than **15 hours per week**. Around **one in 20** misses school because of their caring responsibilities.
- Young carers have significantly lower educational attainment at GCSE level, the equivalent to nine grades lower overall than their peers e.g. the difference between nine B's and nine C's.
- Young carers aged between 16 and 18 are twice as likely to be not in education, employment or training (NEET) (Audit commission 2010)
- Experience shows us that whatever the caring role a young person is taking on, it is likely that while a young carer is at school or college, they will be anxious about what is happening at home and that this can affect their ability to learn and succeed.

### 3. Model for setting up a Framework of support – Policy

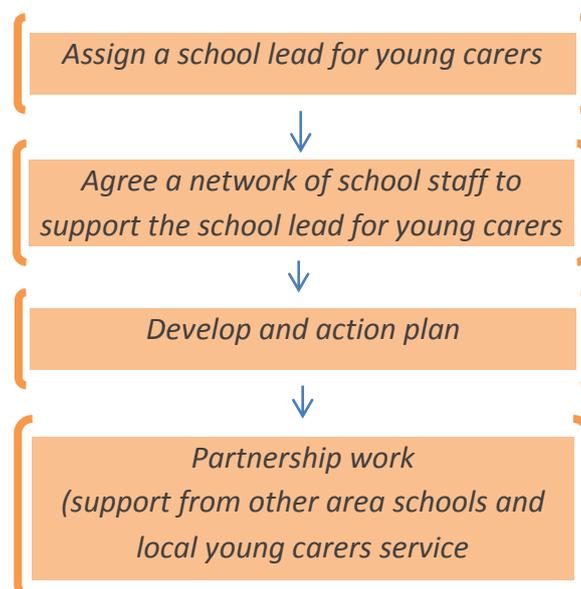
Supporting Young Carers in School: An Introduction for Primary and Secondary School Staff, (Carer's Trust, 2013). This guidance suggests a model for a framework of support and a model for working with young carers in school. This enables schools to look at the resources and support they already have to offer young carers and to ensure that this is developed in to a robust and realistic policy.

#### Setting up a framework of support: a model

##### Phase 1: Sign up and vision



##### Phase 2: Introduce a School Lead and Support Structure

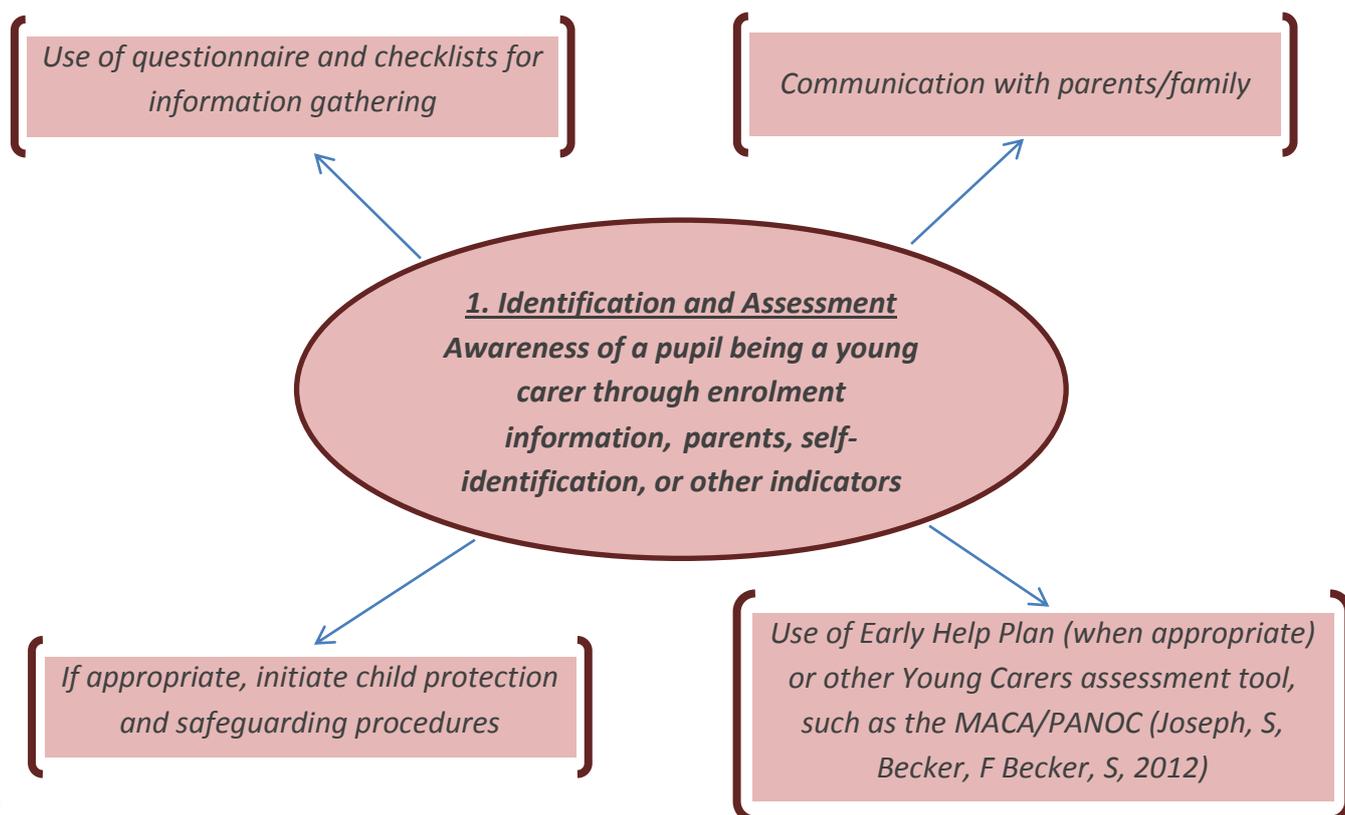


### Phase 3: Awareness and support systems



### Working with Young Carers: a model

### Phase 4: Identification and support of young carers



School Lead for young carers/personal tutor

Young Carers Service

**2. Establishing involvement of staff and other professionals as appropriate**

Team around the child (when appropriate)

Lead Professional (when appropriate)

**3. Support**  
Use a multi-agency approach, for example with young carers' service, counselling service, education welfare, educational psychology or careers service. Support for the whole family to consider parent/family needs, including health and social care needs and parenting support.

Parent support advisers

Adult Services

Health Services

Adult Carer's Services

Respite care for the family

Personalised plan

Telephone access

Young Carer Card

Emergency or crisis plan

Regular review of attendance and attainment and implement support

Homework/exam support

Transport support

Staff to talk to/Counselling

Peer support group and After School Clubs

Support with transition to secondary school/college/university

**Be mindful that  
Pupils and  
Family's situations  
may change  
rapidly**

***Phase 5: Monitoring and revising of policy, provision and action plans***

On-going formal and informal monitoring is important. It may be necessary to re-visit any of the above phases and reviews of policies should be embedded in senior leadership and Governors meetings.

See checklists for School Governors and Leadership Teams – sections 4 and 5.

## 4. How can school governors help?

---

This checklist helps you to evaluate where you feel your school is now in terms of supporting carers and demonstrates what needs to be achieved in order to provide further support. The following questions assume that evidence is available to support the responses. (Developed in Hampshire as part of The Children's Society/Include partnership.)

### **Checklist for Governors**

#### **Management**

Has the school begun to identify young carers?

Yes	No	Notes:

Has a school lead has been identified?

Yes	No	Notes:

Does the school have adequate and funded provision for care, personal development, SEAL, etc?

Yes	No	Notes:

Points to consider:

- Has your school established procedures to support young carers and if so, how effective are they?
- Has any budget allocation been made to support the particular needs of young carers?
- What funding streams is the school accessing to support young carers in school?

#### **Policy**

Do school policies reference the needs of particular groups of vulnerable pupils in the school, including young carers?

Yes	No	Notes:

Do all relevant documents (Self Evaluation Form (SEF), Prospectus, School Profile, etc.) show reference to groups of vulnerable pupils, including young carers?

Yes	No	Notes:

Points to consider:

- Is there a whole-school policy on young carers? Is appropriate reference made to young carers in other school policies and is this effective?
- Are the needs of and provision for young carers expressed clearly in the Ofsted Self-Evaluation Form sections
- Are the needs of and provision for young carers expressed in other major school documents?

### Provision

The school is making provision for groups of vulnerable pupils in the school, including young carers, enabling them to make appropriate progress throughout the school.

Yes	No	Notes:

Young carers have the same access to a full education and career choices as their peers.

Yes	No	Notes:

The school is supporting the particular and identified needs of young carers with a whole-school approach.

Yes	No	Notes:

The school uses appropriate curriculum opportunities, such as Personal, Health, Social and Citizenship Education (PHSCE), Rights, Respect and Responsibilities (RRR) and Health and Safety within the curriculum, to address the needs of all pupils including young carers.

Yes	No	Notes:

Points to consider:

- Is the school taking steps to ensure that young carers are given every opportunity to be fully involved in school life and activities?

- ➔ How effectively does the school link with outside agencies and support young carers to access them? Does the school signpost children and young people to them?
- ➔ How does the school communicate with the parents of the young carers and how effective is this?
- ➔ Has there been a rigorous review of the curriculum and assessment that takes account of vulnerable pupils, including young carers?

## 5. School Leadership Teams

---

School leadership teams should be aware that all schools will have young carers and that these young carers have specific needs. Many young carers face enormous barriers to learning. It is vital that the leadership of the school puts in place measures to identify and support young carers.

Use this checklist to ascertain what steps your school has taken so far:

### **Checklist for School Leadership Teams**

#### **Policy and Planning**

Is a nominated school lead in place and has a team been identified to support this role?

Yes	No	Notes:

Is a regular programme of awareness-raising for all staff about the needs of young carers in place?

Yes	No	Notes:

Is there adequate and funded provision for care, personal development, SEAL etc. Are the needs of young carers (and their families, where appropriate) reflected in all policies and practice?

Yes	No	Notes:

#### **Management**

Are there secured pastoral arrangements supporting the needs of young carers and are these linked with available support out of school?

Yes	No	Notes:

Are there appropriate communication systems in place for the parents of young carers?

Yes	No	Notes:

Is there reference to young carers in appropriate sections of the Self Evaluation Form (SEF)/school profile/school development plan.

Yes	No	Notes:

## Monitoring, evaluation and review

Are there opportunities to develop all pupils' awareness of the needs of particular groups of vulnerable pupils, such as young carers in, for example, PHSCE, SEAL and RRR work?

Yes	No	Notes:

Have steps been taken to ensure that young carers are given every opportunity to be fully included in school life and activities?

Yes	No	Notes:

Have systems been established to monitor the well-being and academic progress of young carers?  
Are there robust and regular programmes of self-review to monitor and revise provision for young carers?

Yes	No	Notes:

## 6. A School Lead for Young Carers

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Ofsted (2009) recommended that Councils and partners should 'ensure that professionals within universal services are aware of the needs of young carers, so that they can be identified and supported'

Principle 4 from the *Key Principles of Practice (The Children's Society 2008)* recommends that:

***"Schools and colleges take responsibility to identify young carers at an early stage and have a named staff member with lead responsibility for young carers"***

- a) To ensure that they have the same access to a full education and career choices as their peers; and

- b) To be responsible for promoting and co-ordinating the support they need and liaising with other agencies as appropriate.”

It is recommended for the School Lead to pull together a small team of appropriate staff members to support them with this role.

There is further guidance about the role of the school lead at:

**[www.youngcarer.com/sites/default/files/imce\\_user\\_files/Resources/Professional/school\\_lead\\_exemplar\\_2012.pdf](http://www.youngcarer.com/sites/default/files/imce_user_files/Resources/Professional/school_lead_exemplar_2012.pdf)**

An exemplar job description is included in Appendix 1 of this booklet

## ***7. Lessons and Assemblies***

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Bullying experienced by young carers can sometimes be the result of the stigma associated with some disabilities, mental and physical ill-health and substance misuse.

Raising awareness of young carers’ issues amongst pupils in school will help young carers to gain understanding and support from their peers.

Young carers themselves have suggested that young carers’ and disability issues be included in PSHE education lessons, assemblies and other relevant parts of the curriculum.

### **Steps to take before-hand**

It is strongly recommended that a whole school support system is already in place before your school actively begins to identify young carers and raise awareness of young carers amongst pupils. Raising awareness may encourage some pupils to consider issues relating directly to themselves for the first time and so it is important for them to see that support is already available before they speak to an adult.

### **This should include:**

- ➔ A named person within the school that pupils can talk to following the assembly or lesson.
- ➔ Establishing ground rules with the class to provide a safe environment should a young person identify themselves within the lesson.
- ➔ Sensitivity around case studies or materials you use, ensuring they reflect positive images of disability and the reality of being a young carer.

As well as the suggestions in Appendix 2 of this booklet there are many ideas for lessons and assemblies which will help to raise awareness of disability/illness and young carers at:

<http://static.carers.org/files/33-raising-awareness-amongst-all-pupils-5905.pdf>

## 8. Staff Training, Awareness and Further Information

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There are 2 online training modules which are ideal for ensuring that all staff in schools have a good understanding of the needs of young carers:-

- 1) Part of a resource from '**Healthy Schools**', which focusses on supporting young carers in the school environment. The module is suitable for both primary and secondary school staff and can be accessed here:  
<http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/Young-Carers-Web-Pub-v13/player.html>
  
  - 2) '**Young Carer Aware**' is an e-learning module aimed at all professionals who may come into contact with young carers in West Sussex. This is currently available through the West Sussex Young Carers Team via the West Sussex Learning and Development Gateway (WSSCC). <http://www.westsussexcpd.co.uk/cpd> (Search for 'Young Carer Aware' and select 'Online Learning' under event type.
  
  - 3) '**Identifying and Supporting Young Carers in School**' – a learning resource for staff and students produced by West Sussex Young Carers Service. This resource provides top tips, advice, guidance and training for school staff, in addition to lesson plans.
- ➔ Further information about the support that West Sussex Young Carer's Team offers and how to access our service is available at [www.westsussex.gov.uk/youngcarers](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/youngcarers)
  
  - ➔ The current Young Carer's Strategy for West Sussex can be found at the above web address
  
  - ➔ There is an additional resource produced by West Sussex Young Carers – A booklet aimed at staff in a Pastoral or Support role. This gives practical advice and ideas for supporting young carers in school. Copies can be requested from the team by emailing [youngcarers@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:youngcarers@westsussex.gov.uk)

## 9. References

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- **Hidden From View: The Experiences of Young Carers in England. (The Children's Society 2013)**  
[http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/tcs/report\\_hidden-from-view\\_young-carers\\_final.pdf](http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/tcs/report_hidden-from-view_young-carers_final.pdf)
- **Supporting Young Carers in School: An Introduction for Primary and Secondary School Staff. (Carer's Trust 2013)**  
<http://static.carers.org/files/supporting-young-carers-in-schools-booklet-6860.pdf>
- **Care Act 2014**  
<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2013-14/care.html>
- **School Lead for Young Carers and their Families: An exemplar job description. (The Children's Society 2012)**  
[www.youngcarer.com/sites/default/files/imce\\_user\\_files/Resources/Professional/school\\_lead\\_exemplar\\_2012.pdf](http://www.youngcarer.com/sites/default/files/imce_user_files/Resources/Professional/school_lead_exemplar_2012.pdf)
- **Supporting young carers: A resource for schools. (Original publication by The Princess Royal Trust for Carers and The Children's Society, 2010 – updated 2011.)** <http://professionals.carers.org/young-carers/articles/schools-resource-pack,6282,PR.html>
- **Healthy Schools e-learning module**  
<http://static.carers.org/e-learning/>

## Appendix 1

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### **School Lead for Young Carers and their Families: an exemplar job description**

Please read in conjunction with the following information - i) Supporting Young Carers: A resource for Schools @ [www.carers.org/professionals](http://www.carers.org/professionals) , ii) The Princess Royal Trust for Carers Guidance: Delivering Every Child Matters for Young Carers, iii) [www.youngcarers.com](http://www.youngcarers.com)

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

#### **Leadership, management and strategic development**

As an active member of the school Leadership Team you will:

- Ensure whole school commitment in meeting the needs of young carers so that they are enabled and encouraged to attend and enjoy school
- Ensure the Head Teacher and Governing Body are fully informed about the strengths and areas for improvement in the teaching and learning of young carers ensuring that staffing and resource needs are highlighted
- Lead, manage and develop whole school policy and practice with young carers and a clear action plan
- Monitor the effectiveness of relevant existing policies such as anti-bullying and review them on a regular basis to ensure that the needs of young carers are recognised and met within them
- Participate fully in a whole school evaluation of the various barriers to learning faced by young carers in different areas of their lives
- Monitor school practice and evaluate its impact on the well-being of all young carers. Report strengths, weaknesses and recommendations to the Senior Leadership team for inclusion in the school development plan
- Identify those young carers at risk of falling into the “Not in Education, Employment or Training” (NEET) category and take appropriate actions to address this

## **Ensure systems are in place to identify young carers**

- Offer support to the young person and their family during the transition process, with sharing information with their new school/College Lead for young carers and their families
- Use and evaluate data effectively to identify and monitor the progress made by young carers. Highlight barriers to achievement such as low attendance rates, issues with attitudes to well-being, learning, and behaviour etc. and work with appropriate colleagues to address these

## **Identifying young carers**

- Support colleagues to understand the reasons why young carers and their families may be reluctant to self-identify
- Put in place systems and appropriate opportunities for young carers and their families to identify themselves
- Help develop a school ethos where young carers and their families feel safe and able to self-identify
- Encourage young carers to self-identify, by paying due regard to confidentiality, their right to privacy and the sharing of information when appropriate
- Identify through the school enrolment process for new pupil, whether:
  1. The pupil has parents or other family members who have disabilities or other long term physical or mental health problems?
  2. The pupil helps to look after them (either practically or emotionally) and what impact this has on his/her education
- Ensure that the needs of young carers are appropriately assessed. Be that in school – perhaps by using an Early Help Plan – or by other agencies if deemed more appropriate

## **Teaching and learning in relation to all pupils**

- Use relevant aspects of the curriculum (The National Healthy School Programme, SEAL, PHSCE, RRR etc.) to encourage positive approaches by all teachers and staff working with young carers
- Ensure the curriculum promotes a full understanding, acceptance of and respect for the issues such as caring, disability and impairment (e.g. ensure there is a range of books (including novels) with a young carers theme)

- Encourage the effective use of the PSHE curriculum to explore the roles and responsibilities of young carers and the impact these can have. Use opportunities such as PSHE lessons as vehicles to promote positive images of disability and challenge stereotypes

## **Professional Development**

- Support colleagues to understand and appreciate how SEAL relates to young carers and their families
- Ensure training on young carers' issues (including the needs of young carers from different groups such as sibling carers, those caring for parents with mental ill-health and refugee and asylum seeking families) is included in all staff inductions and incorporated into ongoing professional development (be aware that training sessions may raise issues for any staff who were young carers themselves)
- Keep up to date with national and local developments and with legislation and guidance affecting young carers and their families. Inform staff of these developments as and when necessary
- Lead on, develop and enhance the practice of other staff by supporting them in recognising young carers and their needs
- Liaise with other staff such as school nurses, the Healthy Schools Coordinator, PSHE Coordinator, inclusion staff and other professionals working in the school

## **Pastoral support for pupils**

- Ensure that all pupils (and staff) are fully aware that there is an identified School Lead with special responsibility for young carers and how the support can be accessed
- Ensure pupils have access to staff to talk to and to understand their individual circumstances
- Encourage pupils to discuss any barriers they may face – e.g. around homework and extra-curricular/extended schools activities
- Investigate and use creative approaches such as peer mentoring and peer support groups to meet the needs of young carers
- Access support through outside agencies and professionals such as a local young carers' service

## **Supporting Disabled Parents**

- Evaluate how accessible the school is to parents who have mobility and communication difficulties. Put processes in place to address any barriers
- Be aware of the legal requirements of the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005 and how it relates to school transport and disabled parents, disseminating this information as appropriate
- Advise on how young carers can communicate between home and school during school time e.g. discreet phone home card
- Encourage parents to discuss any barriers they may face and any additional help they may need in supporting their child so that they may engage fully in their child's education – e.g. around homework and extra-curricular/extended schools activities

## **Communication**

- Ensure that young carers and their families receive coordinated support by communicating effectively with internal and external support agencies – working in partnership where appropriate
- Ensure noticeboards display up to date information, additional support and resources for young carers and their families
- Advertise the contact details of the young carers service and other support agencies in the local area e.g. community noticeboard
- Provide translated materials or interpreters to involve parents who do not speak English in their child's education
- Be aware of the legal requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005 and how it relates to communication with disabled parents, such as sending letters in audio format

## ***Appendix 2 – Resources for lessons and assembly***

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### **‘Identifying and Supporting Young Carers in School’ – a learning resource for staff and students:**

This is available to download from <http://schools.westsussex.gov.uk/Page/7645>. The resource contains lesson plans for assembly and PSHE education, and lessons in Art, Music, English and Drama in both primary and secondary schools.

### **Lesson Ideas from Supporting Young Carers: A Resource for Schools:**

#### ***DVD on listening to young carers***

Produced by The Princess Royal Trust for Carers and The Children’s Society in partnership with The National Young Carers Forum for England, this DVD is divided into short chapters in which the young carers talk about the common issues they face and the solutions that will help to improve their lives. It powerfully informs the viewer how it feels to be in their situation and is a useful tool for all agencies working with these families.

[www.youngcarer.com](http://www.youngcarer.com)

#### ***Teachers TV***

Young carers describe the hardships they face at home and how difficult this can make coping at school.

[www.teachers.tv](http://www.teachers.tv)

#### ***Quiz***

Consider starting the lesson or assembly with an interactive quiz to get pupils to learn more about young carers. Ask pupils true or false or multiple choice questions. You can find up to date facts and figures about young carers to include in your quiz at: [www.youngcarers.net](http://www.youngcarers.net) or

[www.youngcarer.com](http://www.youngcarer.com)

#### ***Case studies***

Case studies produced by The Princess Royal Trust for Carers and The Children’s Society can be used to help raise awareness. Here are some examples as to how they can be used: are available to use with young people in the classroom.

→ Write a diary entry from the young carer’s perspective.

→ With the young carers’ family in the centre, draw a mind map of all the different challenges the young carer and their family may be facing. Add to the map how each family member might be supported and by whom.

- With the young carer in the centre, map what problems, concerns or worries the young carer may have in different situations (at home, at school, with friends, with leisure time, in the future).
- From the perspective of a best friend, write the young carer a letter of support that shows respect for what they do and how they cope.
- From the perspective of a young carer write a letter to a best friend.

### ***Exercise: A day in the life of a young carer***

Get pupils to think about the day in the life of a young carer, including a list of responsibilities and any thoughts and feelings that a young carer may have, for example:

**06:15** - Get up and make breakfast and a cup of tea for mum.

**06:45** - Wake up brother and feed him.

**09:15** - Get to school. Late and have to explain why, again.

**12:00** - Call mum at lunch and check she's okay.

**15:00** - Get home.

**17:00** - Make tea and get everyone organised for the next day.

**21:00** - Finally sit down and watch some TV.

### ***Research exercise***

Use the website [www.youngcarers.net](http://www.youngcarers.net) to research information about:

- Facts about young carers.
- Different illnesses and disabilities.
- How caring may affect a young carer.
- What sort of support there is for a young carer.

Ask pupils:

- By viewing the films of young carers featured on [www.youngcarers.net](http://www.youngcarers.net) what would you say are young carers' main worries?
- If you were given a pot of money to be used for helping young carers, what would you do with it?

## Contacting us

☎ **01903 270300** Young Carers Service

✉ **youngcarers@westsussex.gov.uk**

🏠 **www.westsussex.gov.uk/youngcarers**



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