




# **Pennine Academies Yorkshire**

## **Young Carers Policy**

## POLICY HISTORY

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## KEY AMENDMENTS TO THIS POLICY

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## 1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

Pennine Academies Yorkshire is committed to supporting young carers to access a full education. This policy should be implemented by all staff members in order to ensure young carers at our schools are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled.

The aim of this policy is to raise awareness among school staff about the needs of young carers and to support them in establishing a whole school approach to address the issues that may arise within a school setting.

## 2. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- [Children Act 2004](#)
- [Education Act 2011](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Carers \(Equal Opportunities\) Act 2004](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [Care Act 2014](#)
- [The Young Carers \(Needs Assessments\) Regulations 2015](#)

This policy operates in conjunction with the following statutory and non-statutory guidance:

- [DfE \(2016\) 'The lives of young carers in England'](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children](#)
- [Carers Trust](#)
- [NHS Being a young carer: your rights](#)

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour/Relationships Policy

### 3. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy the following definitions are given for the below terms:

A **young carer** is someone under the age of 18 years who provides regular and ongoing care to a family member. A young carer will take on additional responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development. Young carers may be primary carers, such as caring for a parent, or a secondary carer, such as helping to care for a sibling.

The person they look after will have one or more of the following:

- Physical disability
- Sensory disability
- Learning disability
- Mental health problem
- Chronic illness
- Substance misuse problem

### 4. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The trust board and/or executive team is responsible for:

- reviewing and monitoring this policy to ensure schools follow best practice guidance

The Headteacher/SLT is responsible for:

- the day-to-day application of the policy
- considering reasonable adjustments necessary to facilitate parental engagement with their child's education

The DSL is responsible for:

- being the point of contact for young carers and their parents in school
- providing a source of support, advice and guidance for the young carer

- liaising with the wider staff on how the young carer is best supported and ensuring any dispensations are understood and provided
- signposting staff to relevant resources to help them support the young carer in school
- closely monitoring the young carer's attendance and raising concerns as required
- liaising with Children's Social Care and/or other agencies involved in supporting the young carer
- supporting the young carer to complete the Emergency Action Plan (see Appendix 1)

The wider staff are responsible for:

- monitoring the day-to-day wellbeing of the young carer
- being aware of the signs and indicators which may indicate that a child is a young carer
- ensuring they give due consideration to the needs of the young carer and adjusting their expectations to suit e.g. homework
- reporting any concerns to the DSL about known or suspected young carers in their care

## 5. ROLES OF THE YOUNG CARER

A young carer may undertake some or all of the following:

Nursing care:	giving medication, injections, changing dressings, assisting with mobility etc.
Personal intimate care:	washing, dressing, feeding and helping with toilet requirements.
Emotional care:	being compliant, monitoring the emotional state of the person cared for, listening, being a shoulder to cry on, supporting a parent through depression and trying to cheer them up. In cases where a young carer is supporting an adult with drug/alcohol misuse problem, they will often take a leading role in trying to keep that person safe.

Domestic care:	doing a substantial amount of housework, cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry etc.
Financial care:	running the household, bill paying, benefit collection etc.
Child care:	taking responsibility for younger siblings in addition to their other caring responsibilities.
Communication & Interpreting:	communicating on behalf of the adult or family with agencies/services and interpreting for a language or sensory impairment.

## 6. ISSUES FACED BY YOUNG CARERS

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 and risks jeopardising their emotional or physical wellbeing, educational achievement and life chances.

Caring responsibilities that young carers undertake can impact on young people's education in a number of different ways including, but not limited to, the following:

- Have erratic or poor school attendance
- Arrive late at school
- Decline in academic achievement
- Not complete homework
- Not attend out of school activities or school trips
- Lack motivation
- Have back problems, aches and pains patterns of being generally unwell
- Appear withdrawn, isolated from peers, have difficulties socialising
- Show, anxiety, depression, anger, self-harming behaviour
- Have poor concentration (due to worrying about the person who is cared for)
- Have poor home/ school relationship
- Have parents who do not attend parents' evening or lack of overall contact with school
- Have false signs of maturity, assuming an adult role in social situations or have difficulty enjoying childhood activities

Young carers may exhibit challenging behaviour in environments away from home in order to offset the fact that they have to take on adult responsibilities and behave in an adult fashion within the family home.

Many may be unable to develop friendships outside of school, due to reasons such as being unable to invite friends to their home, restricting the development of a pupil's social skills.

Some young carers carry out tasks for which they are physically ill equipped, this can impact on their overall health. Long-term caring responsibilities can also impact significantly on the mental health of young people, which like their physical health, can lead to poor attendance.

Some families will be dependent solely on state benefits, affecting their ability to afford proper school clothing and/or extra-curricular activities, such as school trips. Families involving a young carer may be unwilling or unable to attend school functions, leading to them becoming more isolated from the school environment and unaware of issues that the young carer may be experiencing.

It also might be difficult to engage their parents (due to fears about their child being taken into care, fears about their condition being misunderstood or their parenting skills being called into question). Schools may need to make alternative arrangements for communication about attainment.

## 7. IDENTIFYING YOUNG CARERS

During the school enrolment process for new pupils, the school will:

- Identify parents or family members who have disabilities or other long-term physical/mental health conditions.
- Clarify whether the pupil has caring responsibilities.
- Identify whether the young carer has any additional needs that need to be supported.
- Establish individual pupil plans to recognise the child's specific needs as a young carer.

Where appropriate, a young carer may be referred to the LA or other support agencies for a needs assessment. Our schools will continuously bear in mind that where a parent has a disability, mental health or substance abuse issue, the pupil might be the carer whilst showing none of the indicative signs of a young carer.



## 8. YOUNG CARERS IN SCHOOL

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, is the main point of contact for young carers in school. This appointed person is responsible for:

- Ensuring that young carers have the same access to a full education and career choices as their peers.
- Promoting and coordinating the support young carers need.
- Liaising with other agencies as appropriate, including adult services.

It is important that staff members can effectively identify young carers and that young carers feel that they can ask for help; therefore, raising awareness among staff and pupils about the issues relating to young carers and what support is available is vital. In order to ensure that staff members understand the issues faced by young carers, training and ongoing professional development about the matter is provided for staff and the governing body. Staff members will keep up-to-date with national and local developments, legislation and guidance affecting young carers and their families.

Pennine Academies Yorkshire schools aim to create a welcoming and friendly environment for all pupils, in which young carers feel comfortable to discuss their situation. The schools will publish clear information regarding how pupils and their families can access support, ensuring that all pupils are aware of this information.

The Trust Board will make provision for inclusive policies and practices that support young carers and promote good communication with their families. The curriculum, primarily PSHE lessons, will be used to promote a full understanding, acceptance of, and respect for, the role of young carers.

Our school premises are accessible to people with disabilities and/or illnesses, offering additional support to enable them to attend parents' evenings and other school events. Staff members will not discuss a young carer's personal situation and related arrangements in front of their peers. The schools will follow child protection procedures regarding any pupil who they believe to be at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring.

## 9. ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will meet with young carers on a regular basis and will liaise with teachers regarding difficulties, attendance and deadlines. Our schools will offer support to the pupil and their family during the transition process,

sharing agreed information with their new school where appropriate.

Additional support is offered in order to remove any communication barriers with parents, allowing them to be fully engaged with the education of their child. Targeted early interventions are used in order to provide support to young carers, ensuring that they are able to reach their full potential. Where appropriate, homework deadlines for young carers will be negotiated so young carers are able to complete it around caring responsibilities.

Where parents are unable to physically attend parents' evening due to their disability, medical condition or substance abuse, alternative arrangements will be considered where necessary.

Young carers are provided with opportunities to speak to someone in private regarding their role as a young carer. Staff members treat young carers in a sensitive and child centred way, upholding confidentiality. Our schools will continuously promote additional links with adult care agencies which may be able to support families and relieve care responsibilities.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1 - Young Carer Emergency Plan

Being a young carer can be difficult at the best of times, but it can be extra stressful if something unexpected happens, either to yourself or the person you are caring for. Planning ahead can help you manage these changes by being prepared, knowing what to do and who to ask for help and support.

About me and my family:

My name is	
My age	
I live at	
I care for	
My caring role involves	
Other people who live with us are	
The best contact number for me is	

Things that might happen to me:

If I am unwell and need someone to help me I will...	
If I am unwell and need someone to help the person I am caring for, I will...	

If I am stuck at school/college and I can't get home I will...	
If my situation suddenly gets worse and I am struggling to attend school/college and/or keep up with my studies, I will...	

Things that might happen to the person I am caring for:

If someone else also providing care is ill or doesn't arrive and I am left alone to care, I will...	
If the person I care for becomes unwell or has a health emergency, I will...	
If the person I care for needs to go to hospital and I am on my own at home, I will...	

Things that might happen at home:

If there is an emergency at home e.g. flood, fire, power cut, gas leak, I will...	
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If I get locked out of the house, I will...	
If there isn't enough money for food & bills, I will...	

My Emergency Contacts are:

Name	Number

**Checklist:**

Have you got your Emergency Contacts' numbers stored on your phone?	
Do your Emergency Contacts know they are on this Emergency plan and what they need to do?	
Is there a Care Plan for the person you are caring for, and is it easy to find?	

**Date this Emergency Plan was completed:**