



Hazelwood Schools

Young Carers' Policy

Reviewed and Adopted: March 2026

Reviewed by: LTS

Next Review: March 2029

Review every three years

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Young Carers' Policy Statement

At Hazelwood we believe that all children and young people have the right to an education regardless of what is happening at home. When a child looks after someone in their family with a history of long term physical or mental health illness, a disability or alcohol or substance abuse, the young person may need some extra support to help them get the most out of school.

Definition of a Young Carer

A young carer is anyone up to the age of 18 who is either the main carer, shares a caring responsibility for, or whose day-to-day life is impacted by someone in their home, which extends to a sibling or siblings, parent, both parents or a grandparent, who has a disability, illness, mental health issues, learning difficulties, misuses or is addicted to substances, or is unable to fully care for themselves. Young carers may be primary carers – i.e., caring for a parent or carer, or a secondary carer – i.e., helping to care for a sibling or older relative.

Impacts of Caring

Young carers can often find life tiring, stressful and lonely. Being a carer can affect a young person in many ways – including social isolation, bullying, difficulties with school/ college attendance and achievement, and physical and mental ill health themselves, sometimes leading to unhealthy coping strategies.

However, there are also many positive impacts of caring, such as feelings of self-worth, the development of practical and transferable skills, and other personal qualities like empathy and compassion.

When young carers are identified early and supported well in their education setting, they can go on to achieve just as well as their peers.

Identifying a Young Carer

Unless the school is advised about a child's home circumstances, Young Carers' risk first being identified by negative aspects of their behaviour or work. Some of the warning signs that might indicate that a child has unrecognised responsibilities are:

- Regular lateness or unauthorised absence, possibly increasing
- Tiredness in school
- Non-attendance
- Erratic response to homework with incomplete, late or non-compliance to set tasks
- Lack of concentration, anxiety or worry
- Under-achievement
- Challenging behaviour
- Poor health
- Poverty
- Difficulties in establishing friendships - few or no peer friendships but possibly with a good relationship with adults and presenting as very mature for their age
- Victim of bullying
- Lack of interest/participation in extra-curricular activities, especially after school
- Family isolation/involvement -apparent parental disinterest due to non-attendance at parent's meetings / attending school functions.

Identification may also come through a referral from a parent/carers, staff or external agency.

Key Objectives

Hazelwood Schools acknowledge that young carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education. Through this policy, we want to give the message that young carers' education is important. Our schools will ensure intervention is targeted and Young Carers are supported, are able to grow and enjoy life to the full.

Hazelwood's approach to supporting the educational achievement of Young Carers is based on the following principles:

- Our schools use and evaluate data effectively to identify and monitor the progress made by Young Carers.
- Our schools offer additional support e.g. interventions to support learning and progress, pastoral care, access to school journeys, trips etc
- Our schools offer additional support to remove any communication barriers with parents, so that parents are able to be fully engaged with the education of their child.
- An identified lead person will be available for any child/young person, parent or family member who wishes to discuss their family circumstances so that we can help the child/young person in achieving their potential.
- Transition support between phases will be fully supported.
- Promoting and supporting emotional well-being.
- Promoting good attendance and punctuality.

Additionally, we will provide the following support:

- Our schools will liaise with support services to ensure that families can be advised where additional help may be available to them.
- If a parent is unable to travel to parents' meetings due to family circumstances, school staff will try to make alternative arrangements. The young carer or parent may request this
- Schools will take an active role in seeking to identify and provide support to hidden young carers.
- Provide training on Young Carer issues and embed this in ongoing professional development for governors and all staff.
- Keep up to date with national and local developments and with legislation and guidance affecting Young Carers and their families.
- Ensure that information about support is available for Young Carers and how to access it is clearly available to both pupils and families.
- Use the curriculum to promote a full understanding, acceptance of and respect for, issues such as caring, disability and impairment. This will be done by embedding the challenges faced by Young Carers into PSHE lessons and the curriculum.
- Ensure that our premises are accessible and welcoming to parents with disabilities and/or illness and offer additional support to enable them to attend parents' evenings or other school events. Home visits will be considered where appropriate.
- The school meets the requirement of the Equality Act 2010.

Roles and Responsibilities

The named **Designated Safeguarding Governor** should be satisfied that:

- All Governors are fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance on the education of Young Carers.
- The school has an overview of the needs and progress of Young Carers.
- The school's other policies and procedures support their needs.

The Headteacher will:

- Appoint the lead person,
- Ensure that the lead person has received appropriate training,
- Oversee the development of the policy on young carers,

- Be responsible for all systems to support young carers and
- Report to the governing body on an annual basis on the following:
 - the number of young carers in the school
 - progress and attainment
 - the attendance of pupils, compared to other pupils
 - the number of complaints

The Lead Person

The Lead Person will serve as the contact person with specific responsibilities for young carers and offer support to children, parents, and families as outlined in this policy. The Lead Person will be responsible for effective communication and liaising with school staff and other professionals.

Complaints

If a young person, parent or social worker wishes to complain about the provision or policy, they should in the first instance raise it with the lead person, who will try to resolve the situation.

We have a clear policy on complaints which can be found in the policies section of our website.