



Young Carers Policy

April 2025

Approved by Local Governing Body

Chair of Governors: John Garner

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Introduction

At Ruislip High School, we recognise the important role that young carers play in supporting their families. This policy aims to ensure that young carers at our school are identified, supported, and given the same opportunities as their peers. We are committed to creating an inclusive and understanding school environment where young carers feel valued, respected, and able to access the help they need. Our approach includes offering practical support, working with families and external agencies, and ensuring that young carers do not face barriers to their education.

By implementing this policy, we strive to promote the well-being and academic success of all young carers, ensuring they receive the recognition and support they deserve.

Definition

A young carer is a young person who is helping to look after someone at home. Most are caring for a parent, but some may be taking responsibility for a sibling, grandparent or other relative. In some instances a young carer may care for more than one family member.

Young carers are recognised by the DfE and the school as children who are vulnerable. This is because the level of care-giving and responsibility for the person in need of care is often inappropriate for that child's age and stage of development, and risks jeopardising their emotional or physical wellbeing, educational achievement and outcomes.

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

- Physical disability (including sensory disability)
- Learning disability
- Mental health problem
- Chronic illness
- Substance misuse problem

At Ruislip High School we acknowledge that there are young carers amongst our students, and that being a young carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education. We strive to ensure we do all we can to meet the needs of these students.

Aims

The school's work with young carers is underpinned by the following aims:

- To identify young carers who attend Ruislip School
- To engage with students and families to support young carers to achieve educationally
- To promote a positive culture in which young carers are safeguarded
- To use a whole family, inter-agency approach to accessing services
- To reduce the impact of caring on the wellbeing of young carers
- To signpost enrichment opportunities for young carers such as trips and rewards

At Ruislip High School we understand the issues faced by young carers and their families, what to look and listen for and how to respond by:

- Keeping up-to-date with national and local developments affecting young carers and their families
- Displaying information about young carers on staff notice boards and the school website
- Embedding training on young carer issues in induction training and continuous professional development

The school respects the privacy of young carers and their families:

- A young carer's privacy is respected and information about their caring role is not communicated in front of their peers
- The school views young carers as any other student but understands that they have the additional pressure of caring responsibilities, which may require additional support or flexible arrangements

How the school supports young carers

The school ensures young carers and their families know how to access support by:

- Displaying information, including signposting to other resources such as the young carers service on the school notice boards and webpage
- Using the curriculum, assemblies and tutorials to promote a full understanding, acceptance of and respect for issues such as caring, disability and impairment. For example, embedding the challenges faced by young carers into the school's personal development programme

The school takes a proactive approach to identifying young carers by:

- Using student progress meetings and the internal management system to identify changes in attendance and attainment and consider whether these may be due to a potential caring role
- Using school enrollment and annual processes to check student information
- Referring to lists of children on child protection and looked-after children plans, to identify students who are living with adults experiencing mental ill health or addiction problems
- Checking School Census data on students with disabilities, to identify sibling carers
- Implementing self-identification systems for students
- Asking feeder schools to inform the school if a student has already been identified as a young carer
- Checking whether any young carer status has been recorded on the Common Transfer File when a student transfers to Ruislip High School from another and including this information when transferring a student
- Establishing information sharing protocols with the young carer services and health and social care services to ensure that the school is informed when they identify young carers

In addition to the measures taken above, a student may display certain characteristics that may identify them as a young carer. Staff are aware of the signs below and consider that the student may be a young carer when asking about the following:

- Regular or increased lateness or absence
- Concentration problems, anxiety, tiredness
- Under-achievement and late or incomplete homework: may be a sudden unexplained fall in attainment
- Few or no peer friendships; conversely the student may get on well with adults and present as very mature for their age
- Victim of bullying, sometimes explicitly linked to a family member's disability, health or substance misuse problem
- Behavioural problems, sometimes the result of anger or frustration expressed inappropriately
- Unable to attend extra-curricular activities
- Difficulties in engaging parents; parents not attending parents' evenings

The school reduces barriers to education and learning and supports the wellbeing of young carers, on a case-by-case basis, by:

- Considering the needs of young carers when planning and reviewing quality teaching
- Providing targeted interventions to students, including young carers, for example homework/coursework support; emotional support; health support; peer mentoring or peer support groups
- Being flexible, where appropriate, for example negotiating deadlines for homework and coursework
- Offering support to the student and their family during the transition process
- Identifying young carers at risk of falling into the not in education, employment or training category and taking appropriate actions to address this
- Referring/signposting young carers to other resources such as the school nurse and local young carers' service as appropriate

The school understands the needs of families of young carers by:

- Ensuring the school is accessible and welcoming to parents with disabilities and/or illness, offering additional support to enable them to attend parent's evenings or other school events. Home visits will be considered where appropriate
- Offering additional support, so that parents are able to be fully engaged with the education of their child

The school monitors and reviews policy and practice, taking into account the views of young carers and their families by:

- Implementing and reviewing individual student support plans and/or provision maps, which recognise the student's specific needs as a young carer
- Using tracking of young carers on internal management systems and actively engaging with young carers and their families
- Seeking the views of young carers regarding the school's young carer provision

Roles and responsibilities

The young carer lead, Ms Coltman, Deputy Headteacher, and the young carer operational lead, Mrs Fisher, Assistant Pastoral Director, are 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 external agencies as appropriate
- Ensuring that any existing individual student plans recognise students' specific needs as a young carer
- Meeting regularly with young carers and liaising with teaching staff regarding their educational development
- Monitoring and reviewing this policy regularly in collaboration with the headteacher

The link Governors for this policy are Mr Andrew Lunnon and Ms Jacqui Beaumont.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Attendance Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy