Kingsdown School Young Carer Policy 2025

Approved by:	Full Governors	**Date:** 15th February 2025
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1. Introduction

1.1 Rationale

At Kingsdown School we are committed to supporting young carers to access their education and reach their full potential. This policy aims to ensure young carers at Kingsdown School are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled. This support includes in-house support from our two young carer leads as well as external support from Swindon Carers Centre.

To do this we commit to:

- Supporting them to raise their aspirations;
- Giving them a sense of the control they have over their own lives;
- Fostering positive attitudes and behaviours;
- Providing continuity and 'normality' for those students who need that additional support

Definition:

Young carers are children who look after someone within their family home. This may be a parent, brother, sister or other family member who has an illness, physical or learning disability, a mental health illness or misuse of drugs or alcohol.

A young carer usually takes on practical and/or emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult.

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

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

Caring Tasks:

A young carer will take on additional responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development. A young carer might be providing the main care or share responsibilities with another family member. The caring tasks that a young carer has to deal with can range from:

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.

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 young siblings in addition to their other caring responsibilities.

1.2 Legislation and guidance

The Local Authority must be proactive in identifying young carers in its area and have a duty to assess 'on the appearance of need'. Under the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004, Local Authorities must have "a protocol, shared between Adult and Children's Services, for identifying and assessing young carers". They must take reasonable steps to identify young carers in their area. Their assessment must look at whether or not the young carer wishes to continue caring, and whether it is appropriate for them to continue caring. Any education, training, work or recreational activities the young carer is or wishes to participate in have to be taken into account.

Where a young carer's eligible needs are identified as requiring support, local councils have to offer support directly to the young carer or show that the 'cared for person's' assessment has provided adequate care and support to prevent inappropriate care or excessive care being required that may have an impact on their development.

Some young carers will need to be placed under a child protection plan in relation to their caring role but not every young carer is automatically in need of protection. What schools must do is maintain a vigilant eye on a child's circumstances and ensure that a family does not find itself in crisis.

Schools need to make sure young carers are getting extra help at school and the same access to education as their peers but it is schools themselves that need to know where to turn and what to do.

Schools are required to:

- Ensure access to a balanced and broadly based education for all Young Carers
- Prioritise recording and improving the academic achievement of Young Carers
- Prioritise a reduction in the number of exclusions for allYoung Carers
- Develop effective systems of communications and protocols
- Promote the attendance of Young Carers

2. **Procedures and practice**

At Kingsdown School to ensure support for Young Carers we will:

- Create a whole school ethos in which all staff understand their responsibility in supporting the role of a Young Carer
- Provide a safe and secure environment, which values education and believes in the abilities and potential of all children;
- Make sure that they have access to education appropriate to their age and ability. This includes access to a broad and balanced curriculum;
- Balance high levels of support with challenge and high expectation to ensure rapid progress;
- Have designated Young Carer Leads who will act as their advocate and coordinate support for them, liaising with parents and Swindon Carers Centre ;
- Ensure there is a well planned and coordinated approach to meeting the child's educational and social needs, for example, whether potentially disruptive changes in school can be prevented
- Plan for future transitions effectively including planning for transport

All staff and Governors are committed to ensuring improved educational life chances for Young Carers by ensuring that the relevant personnel have reasonable support and time to complete tasks and responsibilities. Also, to establish and maintain appropriate reporting and monitoring procedures, both within the school and with other agencies.

In addition we will:

Challenge negative stereotypes amongst students and staff; Closely monitor the social and personal progress of all Young Carers

In pursuit of this Policy we will:

Support the Young Carer Leads in carrying out their role by making time available and ensuring that they attend training to support Young Carers.

3. Support Offered

Kingsdown School acknowledges that young carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education. Through this policy, Kingsdown School is giving the message that young carers' education is important.

The designated staff member for young carers is the SENDCo, however at Kingsdown School we have a Designated Young Carer Lead who is Mrs Amanda Joachim ajoachim@kingsdownschool.co.uk who will liaise with colleagues, Swindon Young Carers

and other relevant agencies with the consent of the young carer. All pupils will be made aware of the designated link.

Kingsdown School will provide young carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private, and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers. There is a dedicated area for Young Carers in the Library Area. Kingsdown School appreciates that young carers will not discuss their family situation unless they feel comfortable. The young person's caring role will be acknowledged and respected.

Kingsdown School will treat young carers in a sensitive and child-centred way, upholding confidentiality. Kingsdown School will ensure young carers can access all available support services in school.

Kingsdown School will follow child protection procedures regarding any young carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring.

Kingsdown School will promote discussion and learning in all areas of the curriculum to facilitate fuller understanding, acceptance of and respect for the issues surrounding illness, disability and caring.

Kingsdown School recognises that flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of young carers. Available provision includes (but is not limited to):

- Access to a telephone during breaks and lunchtimes, to phone home
- Negotiable deadlines for homework/coursework (when needed)
- Access to homework clubs (where these are available
- Lunchtime detentions rather than after school detentions (where possible
- Access for parents with impaired mobility
- Alternative communication options for parents who are sensory impaired or housebound
- Advice to parents if there are difficulties in transporting a young carer to school.
- Access to a dedicated young carers area.

4. School Trips and Special Activities

We aim to ensure that Young Carers enjoy as many extra-curricular opportunities as possible by reserving places for them on trips or enrichment activities for which they are eligible and will endeavour to support them financially if required.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for the wellbeing of our Young Carers.

Our Young Carer Lead is Mrs Amanda Joachim ajoachim@kingsdownschool.co.uk and our SLT link for Young Carers is Mrs Karen Agambar kagambar@kingsdownschool.co.uk

6. Concluding notes

Schools can help young carers by making sure they are plugged into a local support group and confidential service where they can get together with others, access the help they need and have fun.

Local young carers services can offer safe, good quality support and have a wealth of expertise about young carers' issues and local needs.

This allows young carers the opportunity to say what they like and what they don't like, get their voice heard and have a break from their caring role. Services are also better placed to explain a young carers situation to school.

Schools can refer a young person who requires support they are concerned about to a project. Any person can make a referral on behalf of a young carer and young people may also self-refer. A database of local young carers services can be found at www.youngcarer.com

If there are no local young carer services available then schools can investigate links with other local groups such as the youth service, extended schools service or children's centre.

AND FINALLY....

Raising awareness of young carers across the school is paramount so that they are not hidden but monitored and evaluated regularly, in order for their needs to be met and their welfare protected. We must ensure that young carers are not educationally disadvantaged by their role.

6.1 Monitoring and review

The Headteacher and the Young Carer Leads will be responsible for briefing all staff on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

6.2 Links to other policies

Related Documentation:

- The Good Childhood Report
- Distress Signals
- Anti Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Signed by	:	Signed by	: .....
	Emma Leigh-Bennett		Luke Walduck
	Headteacher		Chair of Governors
Date	:	Date	: