

WEST HATCH HIGH SCHOOL



Young Carers Policy

Policy Date December 2025

Policy to be reviewed December 2026

Signed by the Headteacher

Schaefer. ✓

Ratified on the by the Chair of Governors

Signed:

Adrian Hug

Young Carers

At West Hatch High School, we believe that all children and young people have the right to a childhood and education, regardless of what is happening at home. When a young person looks after someone in their family who has a serious illness, disability or substance misuse problem, the child or young person may need a little extra support. At West Hatch we not only have a moral obligation but a statutory one which ensures we will provide bespoke support for all Young Carers.

Definition

A Young Carer is defined in section 96 of the Children and Families Act 2014 as 'a student under 18 years of age who provides or intends to provide care for another person of any age'. That can be a parent or sibling, grandparent or friend. It can include help for physical or mental illness, frailty in old age, a disability, physical or mental illness or because of substance misuse. Caring can take the form of physical and/or emotional care or taking responsibility for someone's safety or wellbeing. The level of responsibility assumed by a Young Carer is often inappropriate to their age and at a level beyond simply helping out with jobs at home, and as such it may impact on the education and wellbeing of the young person.

Young Carers may take on a role that would usually be expected of an adult in the household:

- Domestic tasks (e.g. regular/daily, cooking, cleaning, shopping)
- Personal care (e.g. helping with mobility, washing, dressing, giving medicine)
- Emotional support and supervision (e.g. watching over someone, providing company and a 'listening ear')
- Sibling care: Looking after an ill or disabled sibling (or a non-disabled sibling where an ill or disabled parent is unable to provide this care)
- Financial management: (e.g. helping with budgeting, paying bills)
- Self-care: Looking after themselves, where an ill or disabled parent is unable to provide this care
- Communication support (e.g. interpreting, answering phone or door)

The school respects the privacy of Young Carers and their family.

- A Young Carers' information is respected and not communicated in front of their peers.
- The school views Young Carers as it would any other pupil, but understands that they have the additional pressure of caring responsibilities, which may require additional support or flexible arrangements.

The school takes a proactive approach to identifying Young Carers by:

- Using school enrolment and annual processes to check pupil information, to ask families whether the pupil has relatives who have an illness or disability, or who are affected by mental ill health or addiction problems and whether they would like more information about the types of support available to Young Carers.
- Flagging identified Young Carers on its internal management system so that attainment and attendance of Young Carers is understood.
- Referring to lists of children on child protection and looked-after children plans, to identify pupils who are living with adults experiencing mental ill health or addiction problems.
- Checking School Census data on pupils with disabilities, to identify sibling carers on the roll.
- Asking feeder schools/early-years providers to inform the school if a pupil has already been identified as a Young Carer.
- Checking whether any Young Carer status has been recorded on the Common Transfer File (sent to the new school via the Department for Education) when a pupil transfers to your school from another, and checking and including this information when transferring a pupil.
- Asking other schools attended by siblings to tell you when the sibling has been identified as a Young Carer.
- Establishing information sharing protocols with the school nurse, Young Carer services and health and social care services to ensure that, with appropriate consent, the school is informed when they identify Young Carers attending, or about to start your school.

Support Offered

We recognise if a student is a Young Carer then they might be sensitive when approached about certain topics. We recognise that each Young Carer is an individual and therefore they may require access to an array of support. The school will also consider lunchtime detentions rather than after school ones. The school will allow Young Carers to use a telephone to call home during breaks and lunchtimes so as to reduce any worry they may have about a family member

As a school we will:

- Display information about support on school noticeboards, website and prospectus. Provide a visual board displaying leaflets, posters and details of drop in sessions and including information signposting Young Carers and their families to other resources, for example, the local Young Carers' service, school nurse and emotional support on its noticeboards and/or school website.
- Make parents/carers aware of the financial support that is available to Young Carers
- Respect a student's right to privacy.
- Raise the profile of Young Carers through assemblies, staff CPD, Young Carers Day and through PSHE lessons.
- Using the curriculum 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 PSHE lessons and delivering regular assemblies raising awareness of Young Carer issues.
- Providing families with information about Young Carer issues, available support and how to contact the Young Carers' School Operational Lead by including the whole school commitment to young carers in the school prospectus, and incorporating articles in the school newsletter.
- Liaise with subject teachers to make reasonable adjustments at times of need around deadlines for home learning.
- Allow students to meet with staff from the Young Carers Service during the school day.
- Signpost to other agencies if and where possible.
- Will consider alternatives if a Young Carer is unable to attend out of school activities e.g. detention due to their caring role.
- Liaise with appropriate Young Carers organisations when a young person reaches the age of 18 to discuss how to support transition to Adult Services.
- Allow young carers to phone home when needed, at break times, in the privacy of designated spaces.

The whole school understands 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 Carer issues on staff noticeboards and the school internet.
- Embedded training on Young Carer issues in continuous professional development training for all staff.

- Ensuring the delivering of specific staff training on how to identify Young Carers affected by stigmatised conditions (such as: parents with ill mental health, HIV and substance misuse).
- Using pupil voice and evaluation to improve our provision.

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 to remove any communication barriers with parents, so that parents are able to be fully engaged with the education of their child.
- Considering how best to support those parents who find it difficult to escort younger children to school.

The school reduces barriers to education and learning and supports the wellbeing of Young Carers by:

- Providing targeted interventions to pupils, including Young Carers by homework/coursework support, emotional support, health support, peer mentoring and peer support groups.
- The school takes the needs of Young Carers into account when planning and delivering support, for example: running homework clubs during lunchtime.
- Being flexible, where appropriate, allowing Young Carers to call home at break times to reduce the worry they may have about a family member and negotiating deadlines for work to be completed.
- All Young Carers will have an allocated key person who will conduct weekly conversations, monitor and raise concerns if needed. The Head of Year, Attendance Officer, Pastoral Managers and Safeguarding Leads are made aware of any Young Carers and the support in place. This is to ensure a triangulated and multi-faceted approach. Regular dialogue with the parent/carer will be held – this will be an informal consultation/discussion on individual circumstances. The YCT will liaise with external agencies where required ensuring all support and interventions are recorded.
- Referring/signposting Young Carers to other resources such as the school nurse and local Young Carers' service.
- Using pupil 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.
- Offering support to the pupil and their family during the transition process, sharing agreed information with their new school/college/university lead for Young Carers and their families.
- Identifying Young Carers at risk of falling into the not in education, employment or training category and taking appropriate actions to address this.
- Signposting and/or undertaking whole family work that aims to support parents/siblings in order to prevent or reduce a caring role.
- Recording Young Carer status on SIMs to ensure all staff are aware when contacting home.

The school ensures Young Carers are listened to, consulted with and given time and space to talk if they need to by:

- Gathering and using the views of Young Carers and their families to inform policy development.

The school monitors and reviews policy and practice, considering the views of Young Carers and their families by:

- Implementing and reviewing individual pupil support plans and/or provision maps, which recognise the pupil'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, for example drop-in sessions and questionnaires, to shape and improve provision for Young Carers.