



WESTLANDS SCHOOL

Young Carers Protocol

Equalities Statement

In our Trust we work to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all members of our community who hold a range of protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, as well as having regard to other factors which have the potential to cause inequality, such as socio-economic factors. For further information, please see our Equalities Policy.

Document Management

Date Approved: July 26

Next Review Date: July 27

Responsible for review: Mrs A Williams Assistant Headteacher



Key staff involved in the Young Carers Protocol:

Name	Role
Mrs A Giles	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mrs A Williams	Assistant Headteacher
Miss K Donegan	Safeguarding Administrator
Mrs K Payne	Safeguarding Support Officer
Miss E Tilley	Emotional Literacy Support Assistant

Westlands Secondary School is committed to supporting young carers to access education. This young carers protocol aims to ensure young carers at Westlands Secondary School are identified, registered and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled.

Aims

- To address any underlying inequalities between young carers and other students.
- To raise awareness of young carers among staff and to ensure the identification of all young carers as early as possible on entry to the school.
- To ensure that young carers feel as included and supported within their school community as possible.
- To foster respect and understanding towards young carers among all students.
- The school recognises that flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of young carers.

Definition

A young carer is someone under 18 who cares for a family member with a disability, illness, mental health condition, or difficulties surrounding substance abuse.



Possible effect on education

Westlands Secondary School acknowledges that there are young carers among its pupils, and that being a young carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education. Due to their responsibilities at home, a young carer might experience:

- Being late or absent due to responsibilities at home
- Concentration problems, anxiety or worry in school
- Emotional distress
- Tiredness in school
- Lack of time for homework
- Poor attainment
- Physical problems such as back pain from lifting
- False signs of maturity, because of assuming adult roles
- Lack of time for extracurricular activities
- Isolation, embarrassed to take friends home
- Limited social skills
- Feeling that no one understands and that no support is available
- Low self esteem

Support Offered

Westlands Secondary School acknowledges that young carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education. Through this protocol, we want to give the message that young carers' education is important.



Support We Offer Young Carers

At Westlands, we believe young carers' education is vital and that they may require additional support to access it equally. Here's how we help:

- **Identification:** Our school application forms include a section for parents to declare if their child is a young carer and if they are registered as one.
- **Dedicated Leadership:** We have a Young Carer Lead within the Senior Leadership Team and a dedicated staff member to oversee provision. This includes running a young carer support group and liaising with external agencies like Crossroads and Imago to stay informed about their needs. We will also work with children's social care and other statutory services where appropriate, in line with KCSiE's emphasis on multi-agency working.
- **Confidentiality and Respect:** Young carers can speak to someone privately without their situation being discussed in front of peers. We respect their decision to disclose family situations only when they feel comfortable.
- **Direct Support:** We host a monthly lunchtime club for young carers to connect with peers, receive support, and enjoy some respite. They also have access to all available in-school support services.
- **Awareness and Understanding:** We promote discussion and learning across the curriculum to build understanding, acceptance, and respect for issues surrounding illness, disability, and caring.
- **Staff Training:** Our staff receive information and training to help them recognise the signs that a child might have caring responsibilities at home.
- **Link to policies:** Concerns about young carers will be handled through WSS Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures where appropriate.



Recording and Monitoring

We will record and monitor the support provided to young carers, including:

- Information about young carers is recorded via Bromcom and all staff are able to identify if a child is a young carer via their profile.
- The impact of support on young carers attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing will be monitored.

Flexible Adjustments We Can Make

We understand that reasonable adjustments may be necessary. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Communication: Pupils can communicate with parents during the school day via Community Teams if needed.
- Homework: Negotiable deadlines for homework can be discussed directly with their class teacher or Learning Leader. Access to homework clubs is also available.
- Absence Support: In genuine crises, arrangements can be made for schoolwork to be sent home. Any approved absence (including lateness) will be time-limited and reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- Parental Access: We facilitate access for parents with impaired mobility and offer alternative communication options for parents who are sensory impaired or housebound.
- Transport Advice: We provide advice to parents if there are difficulties transporting a young carer to school.

Succession Planning

Should the Young Carer Lead leave their post, a new lead will be appointed within one school term to ensure continuity of support.

