

Young Carers Policy

Approved by:

Review frequency: 3 years

Date of last review: November 2024

Date of next review: November 2027

Contents

Who are Young Carers?
Identifying Young Carers
Possible impact on education
Supporting Young Carers
Useful links

Key School Contact Details

Head of School	John Armitage 01325 380784 Jarmitage@rydal.nalp.org.uk
Designated Safeguarding Leads	Marcus Dickinson 01325 380784 mdickinson@rydal.nalp.org.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	John Armitage (Headteacher) Katie Turnbull (Deputy Headteacher) Lily Peoples (Assistant Headteacher) Angela Galey (Assistant Headteacher) Libby Gaines (Inclusion Lead) Claire Leech (Wrap Around)
Designated Teacher LAC/PLAC	Andrew Morris 01325 380784 amorris@rydal.nalp.org.uk
Governors for safeguarding	Mark Gray (Chair of Governors) Kelly Nicholson (Link Safeguarding Governor)

Who are Young Carers?

Young carers are children and young people under 18 who help look after a family member who is disabled, physically or mentally ill or has a substance misuse problem. Young carers may be caring for a parent, a sibling, grandparent or other relative or person close to the family. In some cases a young carer may be caring for more than one family member. Many young carers also help care for younger siblings. A young carer may be a primary carer or supporting another person with caring tasks. When identifying a young carer the main

focus should be the impact on the child, rather than the hours spent, type, or level of caring tasks.

Caring Tasks

Caring can involve physical and/or emotional care, or taking responsibility for someone's safety or wellbeing. Young carers are carrying out tasks and responsibilities, which are additional to those appropriate for their age.

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

- Physical disability
- Mental health issues
- Learning difficulties
- Alcohol or drug misuse
- Long-term illness

The person they care for may be a parent, sibling, or grandparent.

A Young Carers' responsibilities may include:

- Personal care, such as bathing, dressing, feeding, changing dressings, helping with toileting needs
- Administering or prompting medication/injections
- Practical tasks, such as preparing meals and drinks
- Physical care, such as lifting, helping a parent on stairs or with physiotherapy
- Shopping
- Domestic tasks, such as cleaning, shopping, managing the family budget, paying bills, collecting benefits and prescriptions
- Emotional support, such as staying at home to keep the person they care for company.
- Looking after or 'parenting' younger siblings
- Interpreting, due to hearing or speech impairment or because English is not the family's first language

Identifying Young Carers

Factors which may indicate that a young person is caring include:

- Illness or disability in the family
- Being late or absent frequently (due to caring responsibilities at home)
- Assuming a parental role to other siblings
- Poor concentration and/or often tired
- Academic performance below potential
- Homework often uncompleted
- Isolation from peers or problems interacting with peers

- Not making use of out of school activities
- Mature and responsible but can 'let go' and behave immaturely when in a safe environment
- Behavioural problems
- Limited contact with school by parents

Possible Impact on Education

The Rydal Academy acknowledges that there are likely to be a number of young carers in school and that being a young carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education.

Due to responsibilities at home, a young carer might experience:

- Being late or absent to school frequently
- Poor concentration, anxiety or worry in school
- Emotional distress
- Tiredness in school
- Lack of time for homework
- Poor attainment or drop in attainment expected
- Physical problems such as back pain from lifting or pushing a wheelchair
- False signs of maturity, due to assuming an adult role
- Behavioural problems (taking out their anger or frustration)
- Lack of time for extra-curricular activities
- Isolation, embarrassed to take friends home
- Limited social skills or not age appropriate
- Bullying
- Feeling that no one understands and that no support is available
- Low self esteem

Young carers can feel tired, worried and isolated. Their social life is often restricted with few opportunities for fun and after school activities. It might also be difficult to engage with parents (due to fears about a child being taken into care, fears about their condition being misunderstood or their parenting skills being called into question). They may be unable to attend school open evenings and events.

In addition, young carers may be reluctant to share their own experiences. The Rydal Academy will train and support school staff to make them aware and be sensitive to the issues faced by young carers and their families. The school will develop a culture where the school and pupils celebrate the positive contribution young carers make to their families and communities and the school's success in supporting young carers in school allowing them to fully participate in all aspects of their learning, personal development and school experience.

Supporting Young Carers

The Rydal Academy is committed to supporting any children who have caring responsibilities within their family and have a designated Young Carers' Champion – Marcus Dickinson (DSL). School support Young Carers through:

- Our Parental Information record sheet includes a section to identify young carers and asks what support may be required
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the needs of Young Carers and have access to the appropriate information regarding the support that is available.
- Providing information to the young person about Young Carers and what information and support is available
- Liaison with appropriate services and are aware of the referral process to Darlington Young Carers organisation
- Offer access to our free school bus service where this is possible
- Offer access to breakfast club and wraparound care on a case by case basis
- Considering alternatives and being flexible when responding to the needs of Young Carers. E.g access to a telephone at break times, opportunities outside structure learning times to complete work and access to pastoral care throughout the day
- Providing opportunities to share concerns with trusted adults within school
- Providing a room for Young Carers to meet with their key workers
- Include issues around disability, mental ill health and Young Carers in the PHSRE curriculum
- Highlighting the role of Young Carers in assemblies
- Avoiding stigmatising or labelling pupils who are Young Carers and provide guidance on preventing bullying
- Ensuring parents can access school for open evenings and school events etc. If this is not possible then considering how links can be made with home through home visits or virtual meetings
- Thinking about sensitivities and differences around cultural needs
- Considering how information is passed effectively and confidentially between schools and phases to ensure needs are met during transitional periods
- Including procedures for effective inter-agency work to support the young carer (including Team Around The Family (TAF) and safeguarding procedures if necessary)
- Engaging fully with the Young Carer and their parents about the delivery of support
- Including regular evaluation of the effectiveness of this policy and the support afforded to Young Carers
- Treating a young person's disclosure with sensitivity and, depending on age, talk to them about the support they would like, approaching the parents with their permission.
- Considering family group conferencing to sustain support from the wider family

Useful Links

[Being a young carer: your rights - Social care and support guide - NHS](#)

[Support for young carers and siblings - Sense](#)

[Young Carers Festival | The Children's Society](#)

[Support & Information For Carers | Young Carers | The Mix](#)

[Young Carers Darlington - Family Action](#)