



THE  
DE LA SALLE  
ACADEMY

**YOUNG CARERS POLICY**

Issue No	Author/Owner	Date Written	To Governors	Date Approved	Comments
1	DLSA	August 2018	Oct 2018		Review 2020
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## **Vision**

At The De La Salle Academy we are committed to and fully recognise our responsibilities for supporting young carers; this policy has been developed to ensure that all adults are working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of young carers. We will ensure timely and effective identification of students who are taking on a caring role.

## **Aim**

This policy aims to:

- To provide staff with the framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of young carers.
- To ensure consistent good practice across the school by increasing understanding and awareness of, and communication about, young carers.
- To ensure students at the school with caring responsibilities are identified and supported so they can play a full and active role in school life, remain healthy, and achieve their academic potential.
- To enable staff to understand how and when to request a statutory young carers assessment via the Early Help Assessment Tool.
- To encourage students who are impacted by parental ill-health, disability or substance misuse to self-identify and that the school works to a whole family approach and will signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support through the Early Help Framework.

## **Key Staff**

It is the responsibility of all staff to safeguard the wellbeing of young carers. However, the academy also has a team of young carers champions:

- Mrs M Threlkeld

These champions will act as the safe place for young carers to identify themselves with.

Other key staff with specific roles in the lives and wellbeing of young carers are:

- All heads of year
- All Form Tutors
- Ms J Booth – SENCo
- Mrs C Watson – PSHE Coordinator
- Miss A Freeman – Designated Safeguarding Lead

## **Who are our Young Carers?**

A young carer is defined in law as a 'person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person'. This includes 'providing practical or emotional support' (Children and Families Act 2014).

## **The Scale**

The 2011 census identified over 166,363 young carers in England, although research conducted in 2010 by the BBC and the University of Nottingham suggests that as many as 700,000 young people could be providing unpaid care. This is 1 in 12 children.

In Liverpool according to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment over 5,100 people in Liverpool aged under 25 identified themselves as providing unpaid care, equating to 3.5% of that group. The level of unpaid care provided by young people in the city is the highest among the eight core cities in England, and significantly above both national and regional levels.

## **What do young carers do?**

The tasks and level of caring undertaken by young carers can vary according to the nature of the illness or disability, the level and frequency of need for care, and the structure of the family as a whole.

Young carers often take on practical and/or emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult.

These can include:

- Practical tasks – cooking, housework and shopping.
- Physical care – lifting or helping someone use the stairs.
- Personal care – dressing, washing, helping with toileting needs.
- Emotional support – listening, calming, being present.
- Managing the family budget, collecting benefits and prescriptions.
- Medication management.
- Looking after younger siblings.
- Helping someone communicate.

## **How does caring affect a child or young person's life?**

- **Physical health:** Young carers are often severely affected by caring through the night, repeatedly lifting a heavy adult, poor diet and lack of sleep.
- **Emotional wellbeing:** Stress, tiredness and mental ill-health are common for young carers.
- **Socialisation:** Young carers often feel different or isolated from their peers and have limited opportunities for socialising. A quarter of young carers in the UK said they were

bullied at school because of their caring role. Locally this was reported as high as 60% (Schools Anti-Bullying Audit).

- **Stable environment:** Young carers can experience traumatic life changes such as bereavement, family break-up, losing income and housing, or seeing the effects of an illness or addiction on the person they care for.

As a result, caring responsibilities have a significant impact on a pupil's learning:

27% of young carers of secondary school age in England experience educational difficulties or miss school (Dearden and Becker, 2004).

If left unsupported, young carers can continue to struggle with school and have significantly lower educational attainment at GCSE level – the difference between nine Cs and nine Ds (The Children's Society, 2013).

Young carers are also more likely than the national average not to be in education, employment or training (NEET) between 16 and 19. Of these, 75% had been NEET at least once (compared with 25% of all young people) and 42% had been NEET for six months or more (compared with 10% of all young people) (The Children's Society, 2013).

### **Why young carers can be hidden**

- Their parent's condition is not obvious, so people don't think they need any help.
- They do not realise that they are a carer or that their life is different from their peers.
- They don't want to be any different from their peers.
- They believe that the school will show no interest in their family circumstances.
- They want to keep their identity at school separate from their caring role.
- It's not the sort of thing they feel can be discussed with friends.
- There has been no opportunity to share their story.
- They are worried about bullying.
- They worry that the family will be split up and taken into care.
- They want to keep it a secret and/or are embarrassed.
- They see no reason or positive actions occurring as a result of telling their story.

### **Signs to look out for**

- Low attendance - lateness to or absence from school.
- Achievement – failing to reach their potential.
- Presentation –tired/ hungry/ unkempt.
- Not taking part in extracurricular activities.

- Social skills – under or overdeveloped.
- Isolated/ being bullied.
- Homework /coursework is late or poor quality.
- Anxiety/constantly worried.
- Behavioural problems and poor concentration.
- Physical problems.
- No obvious signs – school may be a break from caring.

### **Supporting Young carers**

In the first instance, identifying who our young carers are is vital. Notice boards and posters are displayed around the academy to provide information to young carers as to who they can talk to.

Young carers are identified on CPOMS to ensure the right support is put in place.

Following identification, the academy will liaise with outside agencies such as Barnardo's to implement a full assessment of need. An EGAT will then be opened by the academy.

Once assessed the young carer will have an agreed support plan taking into account the needs of the whole family and aims to reduce the negative impact of caring on the child/young person.

In addition to the plan as a matter of course, the academy will:

- look to consider alternative arrangements if a young carer cannot attend after-school activities,
- consider lunchtime detentions rather than after-school detentions.
- allow young carers to use a phone to call home during breaks and lunchtimes to reduce the worry that they may have about a family member.
- actively seeks feedback from our young carers and their families to look at how we can improve the support we put in place for young carers.

### **Supporting parents**

The academy recognises that the parents of young carers will find it difficult to fully engage with the academy. The academy will seek to support parents to ensure they continue to gain knowledge of their child in school and be able to play a full part in their child's education. IN particular, visits home instead of parents evening can be accommodated to ensure parents have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress in person.

### **Training and Young Carers Award**

As part of the city's commitment to continual improvement for young carers and their families, we will participate in the young carers WFD offer which includes both multi-agency and targeted sessions for schools.

We may consider applying for the Young Carers in School award

<https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/youngcarer/schools/award>