

Beacon Rise Primary School

Young Carers Policy



Young Carers Leads: Alison King (SENCO) and Jyoti Aslam (Engagement Lead)

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1 Introduction

Our aim is to provide all children with the best possible outcomes in preparation for life-long learning. We believe it is important that children acquire skills, knowledge and confidence that can be applied to all future learning experiences, including social, physical and spiritual development. We believe this to be important to allow each individual child to develop into a responsible member of the community. To achieve this we strive to provide a school environment that is secure, stimulating, supportive and memorable, whereby each child feels valued as part of our community and encouraged to achieve their full potential. At Beacon Rise Primary School we aim to provide an environment in which members of the school and wider community are accepted, understood, safe, secure, welcomed and challenged. We believe that each person has a unique and valuable contribution to make in enhancing and enriching our community. We endeavour to raise aspirations and expectations for all pupils, including those pupils who are young carers, by working in partnership with parents/carers and listening to pupils.

Beacon Rise is committed to supporting young carers and we acknowledge that young carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education. This policy aims to ensure young carers at Beacon Rise are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled. Through this policy, the school is giving the message that young carers' education is important.

At Beacon Rise we aim:

- To improve the progress and raise the standard of achievement for young carers.
- 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 identify students who become young carers during their time at Beacon Rise as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- 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.
- To ensure that young carers take as full a part in all school activities as much as possible.

- To ensure that young carers are involved in discussions and decisions affecting young carer provision.
- To respond flexibly to the needs of young carers.

Definition- Who is a young carer?

“Young Carers are children and young persons under 18 who provide, or intend to provide, care, assistance or support to another family member. They carry out, often on a regular basis, significant or substantial caring tasks and assume a level of responsibility, which would usually be associated with an adult. The person receiving care is often a parent but can be a sibling, grandparent or other relative who is disabled, has some chronic illness, mental health problem or other condition connected with a need for care, support or supervision”.

“Factors which influence the extent and nature of young carers’ tasks and responsibilities include the illness/disability, family structure, gender, culture, religion, income, and the availability and quality of professional support and services.”

Becker, S. (2000) ‘Young Carers’, in Davies, M. (ed.) *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Social Work*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, p. 378.

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

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

Definition- What might a young care take on?

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.
- Childcare - taking responsibility for younger siblings in addition to their other caring responsibilities.

How do we identify young carers?

Staff identification: All staff, including Governors, have yearly training around identifying and supporting Young Carers delivered by either the Young Carers Lead or Bristol Young Carers service. A list of warning signs to look out for which may identify children as young carers will be circulated to staff annually. Staff are actively encouraged to discuss any concerns that they have regarding children with the young carers lead, who can then make contact with the child and their family to talk further around the caring role.

Self-identification: The annual young carers assembly led by Bristol Young Carers service and/or Young Carers Lead provides children in KS2 with information about the role a young carer takes in the home and informs them of who to talk to in school if this applies to them. They can either talk to the adults who support young carers in person or complete a form (found on the young carers notice board) in the canteen entrance to put in the post box, should they not feel confident to approach an adult in person. YC leaders then read and discuss with the pupil and parents or carers to establish if they meet criteria.

Parent identification: Parents can identify their child as a young carer either through ticking the box on the enrolment form, which will lead to a discussion with young carers lead, or through information found on the school website <https://www.beaconriseprimaryschool.co.uk/young-carers/>

Children identified as young carers will be logged as such on SIMs (school information system) and this information will be shared with new schools at transition points. This information is confidential and only for the attention of staff working with the individual to promote awareness and ensure that support is in place for them.

How can being a young carer affect education?

Beacon Rise understands that there are young carers among its pupils, and that being a young carer may have an adverse effect on a young person's education. Because of 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/poor mental health
- Tiredness in school
- Lack of time for homework
- Lower than expected attainment.
- Physical problems such as back pain from lifting
- False signs of maturity, because of assuming adult roles
- Behavioural problems (taking out their anger or frustration)
- Lack of time for extracurricular activities
- Isolation, embarrassed to take friends home.
- Limited social skills
- Bullying
- Feeling that no one understands and that no support is available.
- Low self esteem

Beacon Rise will monitor the progress, attendance and well-being of young carers and ensure that they have every opportunity to achieve their potential. Young carers are discussed termly at meetings between the young carers leads, safeguarding team and senior leaders to monitor well-being and attendance. In addition, we hold pupil progress meetings at least 3 times per year to monitor progress, and attainment.

It may be difficult to engage the parents of young carers due to stigma or fears about their condition, being misunderstood or their parenting skills being called into question. They may be unable to attend events at the school in person, such as parents' evenings, information evenings, progress meetings or other meetings with school staff. Beacon Rise commits to flexibility to ensure that parents are given

opportunity, to be kept up-to-date with the progress of their child, to celebrate achievements and share concerns whether in person, online or via telephone.

Young Carers - barriers to learning.

- May want to stay in the background in lessons as they have so much to cope with at home.
- Have very little time for homework, and probably no time if there is a crisis at home.
- Can often be worried, distracted, stressed or angry.
- Are unlikely to be able to stay after school.
- Are more likely to be bullied.
- May feel stressed sometimes - people are relying on them.
- May worry during school hours and be unable to concentrate.
- Don't want a big deal made of the fact that they are a carer.
- May have been working for several hours before getting to school.
- Need emotional and practical support at school, and with managing work.
- May need to get younger siblings to school, so are often late themselves.
- Are sometimes angry about caring, even though it is very important to them. This may make them feel guilty.

What support do we offer?

There is a designated lead for young carers, Alison King (SENCO and SLT) who is supported by Jyoti Aslam (Engagement leader). They will provide information about and to young carers, and will act as a link between young carers, Bristol Young Carers and relevant agencies offering support.

A fortnightly drop in group runs on Fridays for young carers to come along and spend time with Mrs King and Mrs Aslam, if they wish to do so. During the group the children take part in fun based activities, have relaxation and time to talk through any issues they may have. Both adults are also available to the children at playtimes and lunchtimes daily. We will provide young carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers or expect young carers to discuss their family situation unless they feel comfortable unless there are safeguarding concerns. The young person's caring role will be acknowledged and respected.

Beacon Rise will treat young carers in a sensitive and child-centred way, upholding confidentiality when appropriate, will ensure young carers can access all available support services in school and will follow safeguarding procedures regarding any young carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring or other risks inherent in their situation.

Beacon Rise 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 lunchtime, to phone home
- Negotiable deadlines for homework (when needed)
- Access to homework clubs (where these are available)
- Access for parents with impaired mobility.
- Alternative communication options for parents who are sensory impaired or housebound.
- Advice to parents and sign posting to support services as required.

Whole school understanding:

Beacon Rise 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. This

links with our annual programme of assemblies and involvement in Young Carers Action Day in March each year. Young carers leads work alongside the school Equalities team to ensure that young carers are recognised as a vulnerable group and recognition and understanding of the difficulties that they may face and the support offered are promoted within the school community.

Our PSHE curriculum ensures that throughout KS2 we promote the understanding of Young Carers roles. Children at KS2 take part in activities to raise awareness of young carers annually, in March, as part of Young Carers Action Day.

Assemblies are delivered to KS2 to further promote understanding and support for young carers during Young Carers Action Day and at the beginning of the school year.

Listening to young carers:

Young Carers views help to shape the schools Young Carers provision through consultation at Young Carers drop in and through our annual pupil survey. We also take part in the Online Pupil Survey (OPS) to gather views and establish well-being. In addition, our young carers take part in surveys from the Children's Society so that their views are fed into the national picture of young carers.

Further information:

<https://www.beaconriseprimaryschool.co.uk/young-carers/>

Advice and support for young carers | The Children's Society

www.childrenssociety.org.uk › [young-people](#) › [young-...](#)

Supporting young carers. Many young people cope well with caring. But equally it is important for all young carers to know there are places where they can get help.

Bristol Young Carers

www.carerssupportcentre.org.uk

Bristol Young Carers provides a range of services for young carers who look after an ill or disabled family member.

Young Carers | Barnardo's

www.barnardos.org.uk › [what-we-do](#) › [helping-families](#)

How we support young people who care for someone who is ill or disabled in their family.

Young carers - Young Minds

youngminds.org.uk › [find-help](#) › [looking-after-yourself](#)

Being a young carer can be difficult, and sometimes a 24/7 job. How do you care for someone while also making sure you're looking after yourself

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