Young Carer Policy

Name of policy	Young Carer Policy
Date approved	November 2026
Date to be reviewed	September 2028

Introduction

Trinity Academy is committed to supporting young carers to access education. This policy aims to ensure young carers at Trinity Academy are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled.

Definition

A young person, under the age of 18, who is helping to look after someone at home, this could be for either a short or long period of time. Most are caring for a parent, commonly in a single parent family but some may be taking responsibility for a sibling, grandparent or other relative. In some instances a young carer may care for more than one family member.

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

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

The school will support a young carer in any feasible and practical way in order to help them overcome additional barriers to learning.

Roles and responsibilities of a young carer

A young carer will take on additional responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development. They 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 relative through depression and trying to cheer them up.
- **Domestic care -** doing a substantial amount of housework, cooking, shopping, 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. Such as taking them to school, cooking for them frequently and providing emotional support outside the realms of normal expectation.

Identifying Young Carers

Whilst we would hope that students would come forward and talk to us about their situation, it is more often the case that, due to feelings of shame, embarrassment or a lack of awareness, students do not come forward. As a result staff need to be aware of other signs that could suggest the student is a young carer, which would then trigger a conversation between the student and a member of staff. A positive and trusting relationship with the school and staff is key throughout this period, so that the students and home understand that we are there to offer support and not judge.

Many of those below are often seen in teenagers, such as a change in mood or tiredness. However a combination of these might trigger the need for a conversation and we would ask staff to remain vigilant and aware of the possibility that the student may be a young carer.

Factors which may suggest a young person has caring responsibilities could be:

- Attendance and punctuality - Being frequently late due to dropping siblings at school or absent due to responsibilities at home such as hospital appointments.
- A change in their behaviour - withdrawn, excessive tiredness, change in mood or angry outbursts.
- Concentration problems, anxiety or worry in school which can be shown as having overtly emotional responses.
- Emotional distress - teary or angry responses which seem disproportionate.
- Tiredness in school - falling asleep, looking tired, withdrawn.
- Lack of time for extra curricular activities or homework due to caring responsibilities.
- Poor attainment - termly assessments show a change in their academic attainment and

classwork shows a change in attitude and effort.

- Physical problems such as back pain from lifting
- False signs of maturity, due to assuming adult roles, such as knowledge of medical / financial systems beyond their years.
- Lack of friends - Isolation, embarrassed to take friends home
- Limited social skills - withdrawn, language limited and struggles to make friends due to being used to adult company.
- Bullying - difficulty making friends and picked on by other students for issues linked to caring responsibilities
- Withdrawn - due to feeling that no one understands and that no support is available, this is often shown as an angry, dismissive response when asked if they are ok.
- Low self esteem - often shown through not trying in class, self deprecating comments about their ability
- Parental contact - Inability to contact parents and lack of attendance to parent evenings or events.

The school recognises that it may also be difficult to engage with parents – due to fears about the child being taken into care, fears about their condition being misunderstood or their parenting skills being called into question. It is therefore important that from the outset we ensure they know we are there to help and support.

Support offered

Trinity Academy acknowledges that young carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education. Through this policy, Trinity Academy is giving the message that young carers' education is important.

Young carers will have a designated link teacher in school who will oversee the support on offer for these students. They will also facilitate pastoral interventions/events to check in with students and ensure they are feeling supported and know what is on offer for them. This is in addition to universally available check-ins with their tutor and pastoral support lead, who will know that the student is a young carer. The designated teacher for young carers will liaise and update relevant colleagues, have regular contact with Bristol Carers' Support Centre and other relevant external agencies with the consent of the young carer. All young carers will be made aware of their designated link.

The support offered will vary depending on the personal circumstances of the family. Support may include:

- A designated member of staff who is aware and sympathetic to their situation
- Ensuring that students are able to phone home during school hours from the pastoral office if needed
- Conducting visits at student's home/ online if necessary rather than at schoo

- Providing a structured environment for the completion of classwork and homework
- Where appropriate, financial support for school trips, school resources and uniform.
- Access to the school nurse, school counsellor and, if appropriate, referrals to CAMHS
- Alternative arrangements for parents who are unable to attend parents' evenings
- Regular mentoring and check in with designated young carer staff
- On rare occasions, tailored curriculum and/ or timetable where necessary
- Links provided and supported with young carer agencies in Bristol.

Monitoring

The school is committed to monitoring the educational outcomes of young carers as a discreet group through line management structures and whole school graduated response systems. During safeguarding meetings, key staff will discuss those in school who are highlighted as young carers and also discuss any patterns that may be emerging from their attendance, punctuality, attainment and general behaviour. He or she will then liaise with the designated teacher for the young carers and the pastoral support lead and discuss whether they have any concerns and where there needs to be any relevant action taken.

If a student's attendance and punctuality still remains low after support has been put in place and/or their behaviour continues to prove problematic for them and the school, then young carers would be prioritised for more targeted intervention through the relevant graduated response systems. This would take place in conjunction with the designated teacher, relevant external agencies and the student's parents to find out what further support is needed.

A key route to success for young carers in school is the development of strong, trusted relationship between the school, students and their parents, so that they can notify us if further support is needed

Policies Linked to the Young Carer Policy

- Academic Enrichment Policy
- Equalities Policy
- Assessment Policy