



SUPPORTING YOUNG ADULT CARERS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Author's Name and Job Title:	Alexandra Moruzzi, Vice Principal for Student Experience & Progression		
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VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date revised	Author/reviewer	Section / page no. changed	Summary of change(s)
2.0	05/12/23	AMZ/LAB/SML	Whole policy document reviewed	Contents page update Definitions added Duties and responsibilities updated to include DSL and CiC Co-ordinator roles Staff training added

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				Safeguarding added Equality Impact Statement added
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1. Introduction

We are committed to supporting Young Carers to access education and extra-curricular activities, regardless of context. This can be difficult for a student to achieve if they have additional responsibilities at home, this policy exists to recognise, identify, and champion those who are identified as being a Young Carer

This policy is designed to support the educational achievement, welfare and progression of Young Carers who attend St Brendan's Sixth Form College.

2. Purpose and scope

This policy outlines how we will seek to identify, raise awareness of and offer support to any pupil who looks after someone at home. It seeks to provide a framework to:

- Ensure Young Carers are identified early in the application process and their support needs are known to all appropriate staff.
- Implement the transition process for Young Carers moving from school to the College.
- Ensure that the College develops appropriate academic and pastoral support for Young Carers based on their expressed needs.
- Ensure that the College has effective processes for identifying students who are Young Carers and for tracking their progress, maintaining confidentiality where requested.
- Raise the aspirations of Young Carers and support them with good information, advice and guidance to achieve their potential.
- Ensure that Young Carers have adequate financial support where criteria is met (e.g. Bursary Funding) and help with budgeting and financial management.
- Ensure that Young Carers have a say in the decisions that affect them and are involved in the various student voice processes.
- Ensure that staff are aware of the needs of Young Carers, and are sensitive to their circumstances so they may recognise and signpost avenues of support.
- Challenge any stereotyping or discrimination that Young Carers may face.
- Develop effective partnership working both with the parent(s)/carer(s) of Young Carers and any agencies involved with them.

This policy applies to the whole college community.

3. Using this policy

We believe that all young people have the right to an education, regardless of what is happening at home. When a young person looks after someone who has a serious illness, disability, a mental health issue, or substance misuse problem, they may need extra support to help them get the most out of college.

This Policy says how we will support any student who helps to look after someone who could not cope without their support.

4. Definitions

For the purpose of applying the provisions contained in this policy, the following definitions will apply:

Term / acronym	Definition
Young Carer	A young carer is someone aged 16–18 who care, unpaid, for a family member with an illness or disability, mental health condition or an addiction. A young carer might be required: to do practical tasks such as cooking, cleaning and shopping, help with physical and emotional care needs such as personal care, giving medicine and looking after siblings.
Vulnerable Young Carer	A young carer becomes vulnerable when the level of caregiving and responsibility to the person in need of care becomes excessive or inappropriate for that child and risks jeopardising their emotional or physical wellbeing, educational achievement, and life chances.

5. Duties and Responsibilities

It is important that all staff who are in contact with a child or young person are aware that they are a young carer. However, it is important that information around the reasons for the young person being a carer is shared on a need to know basis and in accordance with the wishes of the young person.

The Children in Care Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that Young Carers have the same access to a full education and career choices as their peers. This includes promoting and coordinating the support Young Carers need, liaising with external agencies as appropriate and meeting regularly with Young Carers and liaising with teaching staff regarding their educational development. The Children in Care Coordinator will also encourage and support Young Carers access a wide range of enrichment and social activities inside and outside the College.

The Finance Team will work with the Children in Care Coordinator and other relevant parties to ensure that Young Carers are identified at enrolment and their financial situation is assessed. The Finance Team will ensure that, where the criteria is met, the Young Carer receives the Bursary Fund promptly and are aware of the range of financial support that is available to them. They will also liaise with and involve parents/carers as appropriate.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will work closely with the Children in Care Coordinator and is responsible for managing any safeguarding-related concerns in relation to Young Carers and ensuring they are supported. They will also be alert to and aware of the specific needs of Young Carers.

The College Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring that the College environment is inclusive and accommodating for Young Carers. It is also responsible for monitoring and reviewing this policy in collaboration with the Children in Care Coordinator.

The Principal has overall responsibility for the application of this policy across the college and ensuring that a Children in Care Coordinator is appointed.

Governors are responsible for ensuring a Young Carer's Policy is in place and procedures relating to that policy are adhered to.

6. Supporting Young Carers

6.1 Identifying Young Carers

It is important to identify and recognise Young Carers. Unless we are advised about a student's home circumstances, Young Carers risk first being identified by negative aspects of their behaviour or work and are vulnerable to under achievement.

As such recognise that it is important to identify Young Carers as early as possible in the application process, in order to assess and meet their academic and support needs, and to support their progression. Most of this work will be carried out through the Inclusive Learning Team.

All students will be asked about their 'care' status as part of the application and enrolment process (this is now essential to identify those who require Bursary funding).

Any declaration that a student is a Young Carer will be dealt with sensitively, and students will be asked who it can be shared with. If they agree, they will be flagged up as potentially 'vulnerable' with their Progress Tutor who will prioritise meeting them to assess their support needs.

6.2 Initial Needs Assessment

During the transition process, Young Carers will be contacted by the Children in Care Coordinator to undertake an Initial Needs Assessment that identifies and records their needs and support strategies. These will be shared, as appropriate, with teachers and student support services to support the Young Carer with their transition into college.

Where appropriate, a Young Carer may be referred to the local authority or other support agencies for a needs assessment.

6.3 Additional support for Young Carers

If we believe that a student is likely to be a Young Carer, we will be sensitive when approaching them and their family about this, as we acknowledge that it may not be something they wish to disclose.

When a student is identified the following support is available:

- Reasonable adjustment to accommodate parental liaison around progress and pastoral issues

- Liaison with teachers to make reasonable adjustment at times of need around deadlines for homework/coursework etc.

6.4 Student voice

The views of the Young Carers will be treated as paramount in any decisions that are made about them. The College will also find a range of innovative ways to consult the cohort about any support required, individually or collectively, or new initiatives that they would like the College to develop to support their needs. Any meetings around the young person will be inclusive and person centred in their approach and they will be consulted about who will attend and how they will be run. The College will also actively encourage their involvement in enrichment and other social activities that will provide them with social support and enhance the range of material they have for CVs, personal statements etc.

6.5 Communication with other agencies

We will co-ordinate communication with other agencies through the Children in Care Coordinator. As part of this responsibility the Children in Care Coordinator will:

- Ensure that arrangements are in place to promote effective communication between all those involved with the Young Carers;
- Raise awareness of carers statutory right to a Carers assessment;
- Coordinate meetings to ensure that, where relevant, information about progress, attendance, achievement etc. is shared with the young person's social worker in line with any statutory needs assessment;
- Attend relevant review meetings relating to the young person whilst at College;
- Raise any concerns about their academic or pastoral support or general well-being with the appropriate agency.

6.6 Staff awareness and training

It is important that staff members can effectively identify Young Carers and that Young Carers feel that they can ask for help; therefore, raising awareness among staff and students about the issues relating to Young Carers and what support is available is vital.

In order to ensure that staff members understand the issues faced by Young Carers, training and ongoing professional development about the matter are provided for staff.

6.7 Safeguarding

Young Carers may also be more vulnerable to safeguarding concerns than other students. Many Young Carers will experience a degree of neglect of their basic needs, including:

- Physical needs, e.g., food, shelter, and clothing
- Emotional needs, e.g., nurture and stimulation
- Medical needs, e.g., not securing appropriate health care

Young Carers may also be more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. This can be inside the home, e.g., a dependant struggling with an addiction that leads to outbursts of aggression or violence; however, some students who are Young Carers may also be vulnerable to extra familial harm as a result of the loneliness, lack of emotional support or lack of supervision that can sometimes come with being a young carer.

These dangers include, though are by no means limited to:

- Being drawn into abusive or exploitative relationships;
- Being susceptible to radicalisation or grooming;
- Child-on-child abuse;
- Substance misuse and addiction;
- Mental ill health;
- Physical ill health or impaired development.

Where a member of staff thinks a student may be caring for a family member without this being officially disclosed to the College, they will be expected to bring this to the attention of the Children in Care Coordinator, or the DSL where they suspect the child may be experiencing harm.

The College, supported by the DSL, will identify Young Carers who may be in need of early help, and will follow the early help processes outlined within the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

7. Equality Impact Statement

We are committed to ensuring that, as far as is reasonably practicable, the way we provide services to our students and the way we treat our staff reflects their individual needs and does not discriminate against individuals or groups on any grounds of any of the protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act, which are age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

We will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate any individual with particular equality and diversity requirements in implementing this policy and procedure.

8. Further information

8.1 External information

Relevant legislation and statutory requirements that have been taken into consideration for this policy include:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education Statutory Guidance;
- The Young Carers (Needs Assessments) Regulations 2015;
- The Care Act 2014;
- The Children and Families Act 2014;
- DfE Advice and Guidance to Schools and Local Authorities on Managing;
- Behaviour and Attendance.

8.2 Internal information

Local policies and procedures that have been taken into consideration for this policy include:

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy;
- Student Attendance Policy;

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedure.

9. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed every three years from the date of approval.

The policy may be reviewed at an earlier date if necessary, for example, to update it in line with changes in legislation, organisational development or good practice.

Any individual who has queries regarding the content of this policy, or has difficulty understanding how this policy relates to their role, should contact the Policy Author.