



## Young Carers' Policy

**Policy rewritten November 2025 – Review date November 2026**

### **1.0 Introduction and Statutory Framework**

**1.1** At Bradford Christian School, we believe that all children have the right to an education and full access to school life, regardless of their home circumstances. We recognise the vital and often challenging role undertaken by pupils who look after a family member.

**1.2** This policy sets out the procedures for the identification, assessment, and support of any pupil who is a Young Carer, ensuring that the school meets its duties under the Children and Families Act 2014 and aligns with statutory safeguarding guidance, including 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE).

**1.3 Defining a Young Carer:** A Young Carer is a pupil under 18 years of age who helps to look after a family member who is disabled, physically or mentally ill, or has a substance misuse problem. The level of responsibility assumed by a Young Carer is often inappropriate to their age and exceeds the tasks that would normally be considered a part of growing up.

### **2.0 Roles and Responsibilities**

**2.1** The Headteacher and Governing Body have overall responsibility for promoting the welfare and safeguarding of all pupils, including Young Carers.

**2.2** The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) holds primary responsibility for:

- Leading the identification and support strategy for all Young Carers.
- Maintaining the confidential Young Carers' Register.
- Acting as the main point of contact for external support agencies, including local Young Carers' Services and Children's Social Care (CSC).
- Ensuring all staff are trained to identify and respond appropriately to the needs of Young Carers.

**2.3** All School Staff and Volunteers are responsible for being vigilant and sensitive to the potential signs that a pupil may be a Young Carer and following the internal reporting procedures set out in this policy.

### **3.0 Identifying and Registering a Young Carer**

**3.1 Identifying Hidden Carers:** Young Carers may worry about bullying or interference in their family life and may seek to conceal their role. Staff should be alert to a range of indicators, which may also point to a child being a Young Carer.

**3.2 Warning Signs:** Staff should consider the possibility of a caring role when a pupil exhibits signs such as:

- Regular lateness or unexplained absences (including frequent phone calls or requests to leave early).
- Tiredness, anxiety, or lack of concentration in school.
- Incomplete, late, or poor quality homework, or general under-achievement.
- Inappropriate emotional or behavioural responses, possibly stemming from stress or frustration.
- Isolation from peers, few friendships, but potentially a very mature presentation for their age.
- Apparent parental disinterest (e.g., non-attendance at school events) which may in fact be due to family health circumstances.

**3.3 Reporting:** Any staff member concerned that a pupil may be a Young Carer should immediately discuss their concerns with their line manager and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

**3.4 Young Carers' Register:** Once a child is identified as a Young Carer, this information must be passed immediately to the DSL, who will place the child on the confidential Young Carers' Register. This register is a vital document for monitoring and ensuring appropriate provision and support.

**3.5 Siblings and Informal Carers:** We recognise that some students may take on a caring role for siblings due to their sensitivity or temporary circumstances. While these children may not meet the statutory definition of a Young Carer, their welfare remains a priority, and internal support will be considered.

### **4.0 Assessment and Support Procedures**

**4.1 Statutory Duty (Children Act 1989 & 2004, Children and Families Act 2014):**

- Most Young Carers will meet the definition of a 'Child in Need' and may be entitled to a Young Carer's Needs Assessment from the Local Authority (Children's Social Care).
- The DSL will discuss the level of support required. Where the caring role is considered to be having a significant impact on the child's wellbeing, development, or education, the DSL must follow procedures to initiate a referral to Children's Social Care. This ensures the Young Carer's needs are formally assessed, alongside the needs of the cared-for adult (under the Care Act 2014).

#### **4.2 Internal Support (SST): Where external referral is not immediately required or while waiting for assessment, internal support will be implemented:**

- The pupil will be allocated a named member of staff (Mentor) from the SST who will have regular, private 'check-in' meetings with the Young Carer. The Mentor will be sensitive not to ask questions about the family in front of peers.
- Consent will be sought from the Young Carer (and parents/carers if appropriate) before sharing information internally on a 'need-to-know' basis.

#### **4.3 School-Based Adjustments and Flexibility: To help identified Young Carers, the school will:**

- Negotiate deadlines for homework in advance of these being set, in agreement with the Mentor/Line Manager.
- Negotiate appropriate arrangements for attendance where absence or lateness is unavoidable due to the caring role, ensuring the attendance record is coded accurately and sensitively, in consultation with the family.
- Offer alternative arrangements for parents' meetings (e.g., virtual meetings via Google Meet or a phone call) if a parent/carer is unable to attend due to family circumstances.
- Provide advice on transport and access to school.
- Run regular staff training and pupil awareness sessions/assemblies regarding Young Carers.

#### **4.4 Information Sharing and Confidentiality:**

- Information will only be shared with people who need to know in order to help the child.
- Before sharing information with anyone outside of the school (other than a statutory referral to CSC), consent will be sought from the Young Carer and/or a parent/carer.
- The school will seek to establish if the family is in contact with support services and will liaise with external agencies, such as Bradford Young Carers, to ensure the family is advised of all available help to reduce the child's reliance.

### **5.0 Safeguarding and Anti-Discrimination**

5.1 Safeguarding Escalation: If any staff member has a concern that a Young Carer is at risk of Significant Harm, the school's Safeguarding procedures must be followed immediately, and a referral made to Children's Social Care and/or the Police, without delay.

5.2 Discrimination: Young Carers are protected by the Equality Act 2010 by association with a family member who has a disability or illness. The school has a duty to ensure that a Young Carer is not discriminated against, harassed, or victimised because of their caring role.

## 6.0 Related policies

- Safeguarding policy
- Equality policy

## 7.0 Version Control

Date of Adoption of this Policy	21 November 2025
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