



Marshland
HIGH SCHOOL

Young Carers Policy

Reviewed by:	Governing Body
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Contents

1. Introduction.....	2
2. Definition.....	2
3. Caring Tasks.....	3
4. Aims and Principles.....	3
5. Possible Effect on Education.....	3
6. Identifying Young Carers.....	4
7. Support Offered.....	4
8. Staff Training and Pupil Awareness.....	5
9. Pupil Voice and Consultation.....	5
10. Succession Planning.....	5
11. Further Information.....	6

1. Introduction

Marshland High School is committed to ensuring that young carers are identified early, supported effectively, and enabled to achieve their full potential. We recognise that pupils with caring responsibilities may face unique challenges, and we aim to provide a safe, inclusive, and understanding.

Marshland High School works closely with The Benjamin Foundation (Norfolk) and Centre33 (Cambridge)

2. Definition

A young carer is a child or young person under 18 years of age who is helping to look after someone at home. Many are caring for a parent at home, 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

This policy applies to all pupils identified as young carers, or those at risk of assuming such roles. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Attendance Policy, Behaviour Policy and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy.

3. Caring Tasks

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 - monitoring the emotional state of the person cared for, listening, and providing support.
- Domestic care - Cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry etc.
- Financial care - running the household, bill paying, managing benefits, etc.
- Childcare - taking responsibility for younger siblings in addition to their other caring responsibilities.

4. Aims and Principles

The aims of this policy are to:

- Ensure young carers are identified and supported promptly and sensitively.
- Reduce barriers to learning, attendance and participation caused by caring responsibilities.
- Promote emotional wellbeing, resilience and positive mental health.
- Provide clear guidance for staff on their responsibilities in supporting young carers.
- Ensure the voice of young carers informs school practice and provision.
- Foster an inclusive school culture that recognises and values diversity of experience.

5. Possible Effect on Education

Marshland High School acknowledges that there are likely to be young carers among its pupils, and that being a young carer can 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
- Tiredness in school
- Lack of time for homework
- Poor 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 extra-curricular 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

It also might 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). They may be unable to attend parents' evenings.

6. Identifying Young Carers

During the school enrolment and transition process for new pupils, the school will:

- Identify parents or family members who have disabilities, or other long-term physical or mental health conditions.
- Clarify whether the pupil has caring responsibilities.
- Identify whether the young carer has any additional needs that need to be supported, e.g. any SEND or social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Establish the child's specific needs as a young carer.

Staff members can refer pupils who have made disclosure of young carer status for review by the Young Carers Lead.

Students can self-report through pastoral, welfare ambassadors, annual student surveys.

Where appropriate, a young carer may be referred to the LA or other support agencies for a needs assessment.

The school will continuously bear in mind that where a parent has a disability, mental health or substance abuse issue, the pupil might be the carer whilst showing none of the indicative signs of a young carer.

7. Support Offered

Marshland High School acknowledges that young carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education. Through this policy, we want to give the message that young carers' education is important.

The Young Carer Lead will be the main contact for the Young Carers in the school. The Young Carer Lead will liaise with relevant colleagues and agencies with the consent of the Young Carer and parent where necessary.

Marshland High School will:

- Provide young carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private regarding their role as a young carer.
- Appreciate that young carers will not discuss their family situation unless they feel comfortable.
- A young person's caring role will be acknowledged and respected.

- Staff members treat young carers in a sensitive and child-centred way upholding confidentiality.
- Ensure young carers can access all available support services in school.
- Follow child protection procedures regarding any young carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring.
- 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.
- Targeted early interventions are used in order to provide support to young carers, ensuring that they are able to reach their full potential.
- The school uses and evaluates data effectively in order to identify and monitor the progress made by young carers, and reviews provisions accordingly.
- Provide staff access to information and training to enable them to recognise indications that a child has a caring responsibility.
- Refer the child to outside agencies for additional support if this is appropriate.
- Identify Young Carers as a vulnerable group.

In addition, Marshland High School will recognise that flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of young carers. Available provision includes (but is not limited to):

- Negotiable deadlines for homework.
- Access for parents with impaired mobility.
- Alternative communication options for parents who are sensory impaired or housebound.
- Advice to parents if there are difficulties in transporting a young carer to school.

8. Staff Training and Pupil Awareness

To ensure an informed school environment:

- The school provides regular training and access to information for all staff.
- Young carer themes are integrated into the PSHCE and Character & Culture curriculum and reinforced through school assemblies to reduce stigma and raise awareness.

9. Pupil Voice and Consultation

Marshland High School values the "voice of the child." We commit to conducting annual surveys or focus groups specifically for young carers. Using pupil feedback to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of our support provisions.

10. Succession Planning

If the Young Carer Lead leaves post a new lead will be appointed within one term.

11. Further Information

Caring Together Charity:	Call 0345 241 0954	hello@caringtogether.org
Young Carers Matter Norfolk:	Call 0800 083 1148 info@youngcarersmatternorfolk.org	
Centre 33 Cambridgeshire:	Call 0333 4141809	hello@centre33.org.uk
The Benjamin Foundation:	Call 01603 615670	info@benjaminfoundation.co.uk