



# Handsworth Grange Community Sports College Young Carer Policy 2025-2026

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## **Changes to this Edition**

This document represents a significant re-write of the policy

## 1. Purpose

Handsworth Grange Community Sports College is committed to providing quality education for all our students, based on equality of opportunity, access and outcomes. We recognise that many students will have caring responsibilities at some point during their time at Handsworth Grange Community Sports College, and these responsibilities can impact a student's performance in any area of the curriculum; a whole school commitment is therefore necessary.

Handsworth Grange Community Sports College believes all students should be equally valued and strive to eliminate prejudice and discrimination. We aim to create an environment whereby all students will flourish and feel safe and one that seeks to remove barriers to learning and participation. The importance of enhancing positive self-esteem is also recognised, which allows opportunities for increased engagement, social development, and achievement.

## 2. Aims

Educational achievement and subsequent life chances for Young Carers are of real concern. Students who are Young Carers often require additional support and attention to improve their situation.

Our school endeavours to provide positive experiences and offer stability, safety, and individual care and attention for all our students. With this in mind, we aim to:

- Encourage students to reach their potential and to make good progress in relation to their professional, social and emotional development.
- Ensure that students enjoy high quality teaching and a curriculum which meets their needs and the requirements of legislation.
- Plan support for Young Carers realistically and use the school's resources efficiently to ensure the school meets their needs.
- Promote a positive culture in all aspects of school life.
- Help students develop their cultural, moral and social understanding.
- Raise awareness of young carers among staff and ensure the identification of all young carers as early as possible on entry to the school and make referrals when necessary.
- Foster respect and understanding towards young carers among all students.
- Address any underlying inequalities between young carers and other students in a graduated and timely manner.
- Support young carers in improving their attendance.
- Ensure young carers feel included and supported within our school community and reasonable adjustments are made to promote this.

- Protect young carers from unjust treatment due to their caring role and improve co-ordination with other agencies and support services.
- Give young carers a voice in the school community and ensure they are involved in decisions affecting young carer provision.
- Ensure staff recognise flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of young carers.

### 3. Links to other Documents

Our young carer policy considers findings and recommendations given by Barnardo's Still Hidden, Still Ignored; Who Cares for Young Carers? report (2017), the Children's Commissioner's Voices of England's Missing Children report (2022).

This policy takes into account statutory guidance:

- Children Act 1989
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE (2023) 'Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies, and student referral units in England, including student movement'
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'
- DfE (2023) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school and Trust policies:

- Admission Policy
- Behaviour and Exclusions Policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Personal Development Policy
- School Equality and Diversity Policy

### 4. Definitions

Sheffield Young Carers' definition of a young carer is somebody under the age of 25 who helps to care for somebody (a parent, grandparent, sibling or other family member) who is unable to fully care for themselves due to a physical or learning disability, long-term physical illness or condition, mental health condition, or substance misuse issues. This can include personal, practical, emotional, or financial care. For example:

- Jobs around the house
- Shopping
- Helping with personal care (bathing, getting dressed, lifting)
- Giving medication, making medical appointments, accompanying them at hospital
- Providing emotional support, listening, helping calm them down
- Helping with finances, help paying bills, working to earn money
- Looking after themselves or their siblings because nobody else is able to

Handsworth Grange Community Sports College's definition of a young carer is

*a child, under the age of 25 who is either the main carer, shares a caring responsibility for, or whose day-to-day life is impacted by someone in their home, which extends to a sibling or siblings, parent, both parents or a grandparent, who has a disability, illness, mental health condition, misuses or is addicted to substances, or is unable to fully care for themselves.*

Our school recognises anyone can become a young carer at any time. An inquiry by the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Young Carers and Young Adult Carers (2024) suggested that 10% of all students will provide high or very high levels of care – equating to at least two young carers in every class.

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

### Local Governing Bodies will:

- Ensure the school has a coherent policy for Young Carers.
- Hold the school to account on how it supports Young Carers and their level of progress.
- Review the school's policies and procedures in conjunction with legislation and statutory guidance.
- Ensure the school has a coherent policy for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Young Carers.
- Ensure that Young Carers have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and that reasonable adjustments are made, if necessary.
- Ensure the Young Carer SLT Lead and Appointed Young Carer (operational) Lead(s) have received the appropriate training.
- Ensure staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding to keep Young Carers safe.
- Ensure there are clear systems and processes in place for identifying and reporting possible safeguarding or mental health concerns amongst Young Carers.
- Receive feedback from the headteacher regarding the effectiveness of the policy.

- Appoint a Lead Governor for Vulnerable Groups which must include Young Carers.
- Ensure there is a Lead Vulnerable Groups Governor who links with the Young Carer SLT Lead in school, receives regular progress reports and provides feedback to the governing body and ensure this role is carried out in line with the Trust's Governance Handbook.
- Ensure effective liaison and communication with the Lead Trustee for Vulnerable Groups.

**Headteachers will:**

- Oversee this policy and monitoring its implementation, feeding back to the Local Governing Body on the following:
  - The number of Young Carers in the school
  - An analysis of assessment scores as a cohort, compared to other student groups
  - The attendance of Young Carers, compared to other student groups
  - The level of fixed term and permanent exclusions, compared to other student groups
- Appoint a Young Carer SLT Lead and Appointed Young Carer (operational) Lead(s), whose role is set out below. It is essential that another appropriate person is identified quickly should a Young Carer SLT Lead and/or Appointed Young Carer (operational) Lead(s) leave the school or be absent
- Allow the Young Carer SLT Lead and/or Appointed Young Carer (operational) Lead(s) the time and facilities to succeed in carrying out their duties.
- Ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the admission, progress, attendance and any exclusion of Young Carers and take action where progress, conduct or attendance is below expectations and ensure regular training is provided for all staff
- Ensure regular and effective communication between the Young Carer SLT Lead and the Lead Governor for Vulnerable groups
- Report on the progress, attendance and conduct of Young Carers to all parties involved
- Ensure staff in school receive relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and related guidance.
- Ensuring any funding for Young Carers is managed effectively.
- Promoting the advantages of actively challenging negative stereotypes of Young Carers

**Young Carer SLT Lead and Appointed Young Carer (operational) Lead(s) will:**

- Understand the issues surrounding being a young carer.
- Lead on identifying and supporting young carers in school and stay up to date on every young carer's circumstance and needs

- Understand each young carer's situation and be someone that they can talk to.
- Be an identified point of contact for other students, families, staff and external agencies.
- Taking lead responsibility for ensuring school staff understand what can affect how young carers learn and achieve and how the whole school supports the educational achievement of these students.
- Promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations.
- Leading on assessing the child's needs and ensure support is provided where necessary.
- Being vigilant in observing any potential safeguarding concerns that could arise surrounding Young Carers due to their increased vulnerability to harm and reporting these to the DSL as soon as they arise.
- Working with the headteacher to submit an annual report to the governing board, which details the progress of all Young Carers.
- Ensure all new staff undertake training about young carers in their induction.
- Ensure all staff receive training on young carer awareness, identification and support through regular CPD. e.g. yearly.
- Create an information-sharing system which all staff can access.
- Offer support via whole school systems and personalised 1:1 support where the Young Carer requires this.

In order to do this successfully, Young Carer SLT Lead and Appointed Young Carer (operational) Lead(s) will:

- Undertake training about young carers, via Sheffield Young Carers' free e-learning module or multi-agency training.
- Become a member of Sheffield Young Carers Schools or Post-16 Network, with access to other free training, resources, information, termly meetings, and support,
- Make referrals to Sheffield Young Carers/ Sheffield City Council's Young Carers Register/other agencies as appropriate.
- Stay up to date on young carers issues, through Sheffield Young Carers' briefings and newsletters.

- Contributing to the development and review of whole school policies affecting Young Carers.
- Keep up-to date records of Young Carers.
- Highlight the importance of recognising and reporting safeguarding concerns regarding Young Carers as soon as possible due to their increased vulnerability to harm.

**All staff will:**

- Preserve confidentiality, where appropriate, and showing sensitivity and understanding.
- Understand the importance of involving the student's parents or guardians in decisions affecting their child's education.
- Be a contact for parents or guardians who want advice or have concerns about their student's progress at school.
- Be vigilant for any signs of bullying towards Young Carers.
- Be vigilant for any signs of safeguarding concerns surrounding Young Carers due to their increased vulnerability to harm and reporting any concerns to the DSL as soon as possible.
- Promote the self-esteem of Young Carers.
- Respond promptly to the Young Carer SLT Lead's request for information.

## 6. Young Carer Assessment

Several methods will be used to identify Young Carers, including but not limited to:

- Admission forms
- Student questionnaire
- Assemblies
- Notice Boards

Following identification, a Sheffield Young Carer assessment will be offered to the child by the Appointed Young Carer (operational) Lead. Referrals to Sheffield Young Carers/ Sheffield City Council's Young Carers Register/other agencies may be made as appropriate. The young person is not obliged to complete a Young Carers Assessment, but they do have a legal right to it should they wish, as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014.

The Appointed Young Carer Lead will assess and create an individual support plan completed with the child to identify areas of need and support to enable them to make the expected progress and fulfil their potential, raise their aspirations and improve their life chances.

The support plan will address the student's full range of education and development needs, including:

- School attendance and behaviour support, where appropriate
- Help the child meet their aspirations, which includes:
  - Support to achieve expected levels of progress for the relevant national key stage and to complete an appropriate range of approved qualifications.
  - Careers advice, guidance and financial information about FE, training and employment, that focusses on the child's strengths, capabilities and the outcomes they want to achieve.
  - Out-of-school hours learning activities, study support and leisure interests.

Where appropriate, the support plan should take account of any Educational, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), Individual Educational Plan (IEP), Pastoral Support Plan (PSP), career plan, or any other relevant plans.

## **7. Working with Agencies and Sheffield Young Carers**

Strong multi-agency and multi-disciplinary working is vital to identifying and responding to the needs of Young Carers.

School will work proactively and collaboratively with other professionals in other agencies and organisations in line with the framework of expectations outlined in the government's [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) statutory guidance document by:

- Collaborating with services to achieve shared goals and share information.
- Learning from evidence and sharing perspective to evaluate provision.
- Prioritising and sharing resources depending on students' needs.
- Celebrating inclusivity and diversity and challenging discrimination.
- Mutually and constructively challenging others' assumptions in a respectful manner.

## **Information Sharing**

The school recognises the importance of proactive information sharing between professionals and local agencies in order to effectively meet students' needs.

Staff will be made aware that whilst the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 place a duty on schools to process personal information fairly and lawfully, they also allow for information to be stored and shared for safeguarding purposes, as data protection regulations do not act as a barrier to sharing information where failure to do so would result in the student being placed at risk of harm.

If staff members are in doubt about sharing information and data protection legislation, they will be encouraged to speak to the school's DSL.

Appropriate and specific arrangements for sharing reliable data will be put in place to ensure that the education needs of Young Carers are understood and met. The arrangements set out will include:

- Who has access to information on LAC and PLAC and how data will remain secure.
- How students and parents are informed of, and allowed to challenge, information that is kept about them.
- How carers contribute to and receive information.
- Mechanisms for sharing information between the school and relevant LA departments.
- How relevant information about individual students is passed between authorities, departments and the school when students move.

School staff will be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of students. This will include sharing information about any adults with whom a student has contact, which may impact the student's safety or welfare, where necessary.

School will aim to be as transparent as possible by telling families what information they are sharing and with whom, provided it is safe to do so.

## **8. The Voice of a Young Carer**

The Young Carer SLT Lead should act as an advocate for Young Carers. The views of Young Carers should be heard, and opportunities should be provided for these to be voiced privately, via 1:1 meetings as well as informally. Young Carers need to be clear all staff will support them and act on any concerns as their advocate and be the link with outside agencies.

Young Carers should always contribute to the assessment process and should attend review meetings wherever possible.

## **9. Safeguarding**

All staff will be trained to recognise signs and indicators of safeguarding concerns and will ensure that extra vigilance is practiced in observing and identifying these indicators amongst Young Carers as soon as possible.

Where a Young Carer has a social worker, this will inform decisions about safeguarding, e.g. responding to absence from education where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

The Headteacher will implement appropriate pastoral support services in place throughout the school to ensure that the welfare of Young Carers can be adequately protected to the extent that reflects their increased vulnerability.

Staff will be encouraged to report to the DSL any concerns they have over Young Carers in line with the processes outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

When there is reasonable cause to suspect that a Young Carer is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the school will collaborate in the multi-agency strategy discussion where appropriate to determine the student's welfare and plan rapid further action as necessary. The school's representative at any strategy discussion meetings will be sufficiently senior, skilled and experienced, and authorised to make decisions on the school's behalf. Information and analysis about the student and their family will be provided as required.

Staff will be regularly encouraged to look for signs of bullying and report in line with school procedure if they believe a Young Carer is being bullied.

## 10. Mental Health

All staff will be made aware mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator a student has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Handsworth Grange Community Sports College is aware Young Carers are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) issues which can impact their behaviour and education. The school will support the Young Carer SLT Lead and Young Carer (operational) Lead(s) in developing their knowledge, awareness, training and skills to support children with behaviour management and mental health.

The Young Carer SLT Lead and Young Carer (operational) Lead(s) will ensure school staff are able to identify signs of potential mental health issues, understand the impact issues can have on Young Carers, and know how to access further assessment and support, where necessary.

Increased frequency of mental health problems amongst Young Carers may present a barrier to adequately identifying when mental health problems are indicative of a safeguarding concern. For this reason, the Young Carer SLT Lead and Young Carer (operational) Lead(s) will ensure that they, and all staff who maintain regular contact with Young Carers are vigilant surrounding any changes in the mental health, behaviour, social inclination or mood of these students.

Each school's senior mental health lead will work alongside the Young Carer SLT Lead and Young Carer (operational) Lead(s) to promote the wellbeing and mental health of Young Carers, and will always either be a member of, or be supported by the senior leadership team and could be the pastoral lead, SENCO, or DSL.

## 10. Students with SEND

In cases where students have an EHCP, the Young Carer SLT Lead and Young Carer (operational) Lead(s) will work with the SENCO to ensure that their EHCP works in harmony with their Young Carer assessments to tell a coherent and comprehensive story of how the student's needs are being met.

Support for Young Carers with SEND, who do not need an EHCP plan, will be covered as part of the child's SEND plan reviews.

## 11. Suspension and Exclusion of Young Carers

Handsworth Grange Community Sports College will do its best to avoid excluding children.

Past experiences of Young Carers will be considered when designing and implementing the school's Behaviour Policy and Trust Suspension and Exclusion Policy.

Suspending or excluding Young Carers can make them more vulnerable to harm due to not having the protection and opportunities school provides. When responding to incidents involving Young carers the school will show full regard to the DfE's statutory guidance '[Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and student referral units in England, including student movement](#)'. The headteacher will balance this recognition alongside the need to ensure calm and safe environments for all staff and students, devising strategies that take both into consideration.

Where the school has concerns about a Young Carer's behaviour, the school will engage proactively with the family and any agencies involved to provide appropriate support for underlying issues that may be causing poor behaviour and improving this behaviour.

Suspension or permanent exclusion will only be used as a last resort. Permanent exclusion will only occur where there have been serious and/or persistent breaches of the school's Behaviour Policy or where allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others.

## 12. Transition and Admission

All Young Carers who apply to Handsworth Grange Community Sports College will be invited to attend open day/evenings.

Young Carers will have dedicated and named person to provide on-going support and to act as their first point of contact throughout their time at school.

Once enrolled, records will be requested from the student's previous school. This will provide information to inform any assessments made of the young person. Contact arrangements will be clarified at this meeting including who to call first in an emergency.

When Young Carers leave the school, either due to progression into Higher Education or transfer to another educational provider, contact will be made with the new educational establishment.

### **13. Careers Advice and Progression Planning**

All students are able to receive careers guidance within their school and 1:1 appointments can be made throughout the year for further support. Young Carers, as all other students, will have a dedicated member of staff who will support them with their progression planning, HE applications and employability skills. Destinations will be monitored and reported at the end of every academic year.

### **14. Additional Support**

The Young Carer SLT Lead and Young Carer (operational) Lead(s) should make sure that Young Carers are prioritised in any selection of students who would benefit from interventions or extra-curricular opportunities.

Referrals to other agencies e.g. counselling services will be made with the child, and family where this is required.

### **15. Communication around Young Carers**

It is important all staff within the school who are in contact with the child are aware they are a Young Carer. This will be identified on SIMS and, where appropriate, staff will receive a formal notification through email. This will be the responsibility of either the Young Carer SLT Lead, Young Carer (operational) Lead(s) or Safeguarding Lead.

Good communication is essential between professionals. It is important to exchange information if there are significant changes in a young person's circumstances e.g., there is a change in caring responsibilities, or there are significant issues such as behaviour and attendance. The Young Carer SLT Lead and Young Carer (operational) Lead(s) and/or the pastoral link will be the central point of contact.

School will endeavour to co-ordinate their review meetings e.g. to have an Annual Statement or Education Health Care Plan Review and any young carer meetings or reviews. This is necessary to ensure the child does not feel overwhelmed by the number of meetings and the same information is not having to be repeatedly shared.

The Young Carer SLT Lead will be responsible for providing reports on the progress and attendance of all children noted as a Young Carer to the Local Governing Body.

## 16. Record Keeping and Information Sharing

Appropriate and specific arrangements for sharing reliable data are in place to ensure that the education needs of Young Carers are understood and met. The arrangements set out include:

- Who has access to information on Young Carers and how data will remain secure.
- How students and parents are informed of, and allowed to challenge, information that is kept about them.
- How carers contribute to and receive information.
- Mechanisms for sharing information between the school and relevant LA departments.
- How relevant information about individual students is passed between authorities, departments and the school when students move.

The Young Carer SLT Lead will co-ordinate record keeping for all Young Carers. Young Carers status will be appropriately “flagged” on the school’s MIS.

School staff will be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of students. This will include sharing information about any adults with whom a student has contact, which may impact the student’s safety or welfare, where necessary.

Staff members will ensure fear of sharing information does not stand in the way of their responsibility to promote the welfare and safety of Young Carers. If staff members are in doubt about sharing information and data protection legislation, they will speak to the DSL.

The school will aim to be as transparent as possible by telling families what information they are sharing and with whom, provided it is safe to do so.

## 17. Partnership Working

Handsworth Grange School values the views of parents/carers. We firmly believe in developing strong partnerships with carers, parents and recognise the essential contributions external support services make in assisting Young Carers and we are committed to developing positive partnerships with all involved.

## **18. Confidentiality**

Information on Young Carers will be shared with school staff on a “need to know” basis. The Young Carer SLT Lead or Young Carer (operational) Lead(s) will discuss what information is shared with which school staff at the assessment meeting. Once this has been agreed with the young person, and other parties, complete confidentiality is to be maintained.

## **19. Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed annually. At every review, it will be approved by the Local Governing Body.

## **20. Equality Impact Assessment**

The Trust will carry out an Equality Impact Assessment in order to ensure that policies, procedures and practices cater for individuals who share protected characteristics in relation to the Equality Act 2010. The purpose of these assessments is to ensure that policies, procedures and practices within the organisation are fair to all. If unfairness is highlighted, the assessment will also seek to show how this can be changed and, where it can't be changed, how it can be improved.

The Trust will monitor the impact of the policy to assess whether there is evidence of a detrimental impact on anyone with a protected characteristic as a result of the application of this policy. The assessment will include consideration of adaptations or changes which can be made to address any issues identified.