



The Winterton Federation Young Carers Policy



Definition and Aims

Young carers are children and young people who provide care to another family member. The level of care they provide would usually be undertaken by an adult and as a result of this they take on a level of responsibility that is inappropriate to their age and development. This is likely to have a significant impact on their childhood experiences. The person/s they look after will have one or more of the following:

- Physical disability;
- Sensory disability;
- Learning disability;
- Mental health issue;
- Chronic illness;
- Substance misuse and/or alcohol issue.

The Winterton Federation is committed to enabling young carers to access education and support. This policy aims to ensure young carers at either school, are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education and other services to which they are entitled.

The Winterton Federation takes a proactive approach to identifying young carers by:

- Referring to our updated vulnerable children list which shows children on a specific plan (CP, CIN, EH, etc...), to help identify pupils who are living with adults/siblings experiencing any of the above issues;
- Checking School Census data on pupils with disabilities, to identify sibling carers on roll;
- Asking feeder schools/early-years providers to inform the Federation if a pupil has already been identified as a young carer;
- Checking whether any young carer status has been recorded on the Common Transfer File (sent to the new school via the Department for Education) when a pupil transfers to the Federation from another school;
- Obtaining up to date information from any school a child is transferring from, as well as checking whether any siblings have also been identified as a young carer;
- Establishing information sharing protocols with the school nurse, young carer services and health and social care services to ensure that, with appropriate consent, the school is informed when services identify young carers attending, or about to start attending The Winterton Federation.

Carer Responsibilities

A young carer will take on additional responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development. A young carer may 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 parent/sibling through depression and trying to cheer them up. In cases where a young carer is supporting an adult with drug/alcohol misuse, they will often take a leading role in trying to keep that person safe;
- **Domestic care** - doing a substantial amount of housework, cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry etc;
- **Financial care** - running the household, paying bills, benefit collection etc;
- **Child care** - taking responsibility for younger siblings in addition to their other caring responsibilities;



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- **Communication & Interpreting** - done on behalf of the adult or family member regarding engagement with services/agencies. The child may also need to interpret for a language or sensory impairment.

The Federation understands the needs of families of young carers by:

- Ensuring both schools are accessible and welcoming to parents with disabilities and/or illness, offering additional support to enable them to attend parent's evenings or other school events. Home visits will be considered where appropriate;
- Offering additional support to remove any communication barriers with parents, so that parents are able to be fully engaged with the education of their child;
- Considering how best to support those parents who find it difficult to escort younger children to school.

Potential Effects on Education

The Winterton Federation 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 access to education and attainment.

Due to their responsibilities at home, a young carer may:

- Have erratic or poor school attendance;
- Arrive late at school;
- Decline in academic achievement;
- Not complete homework;
- Not attend out of school activities or school trips;
- Lack motivation;
- Have aches and pains patterns of being generally unwell;
- Appear withdrawn, isolated from peers, have difficulties socialising;
- Show anxiety, depression, anger, self-harming behaviour;
- Have poor concentration (due to worrying about the person who is cared for);
- Have poor home/school relationships;
- Have parents who do not attend parents evening or lack of overall contact with school;
- Have false signs of maturity, assuming an adult role in social situations or have difficulty enjoying childhood activities. It may also be difficult to engage their parents (due to fears about their child being taken into care, fears about their condition being misunderstood or their parenting skills being called into question). The Federation may need to make alternative arrangements for communication about attainment.

The Winterton Federation reduces barriers to education and learning and supports the wellbeing of young carers by:

- Using pupil progress meetings and attendance monitoring to identify changes in attendance and attainment and consider whether these may be due to a potential caring role;
- Offering support to the pupil and their family during the transition process, sharing agreed information with their new school;
- Identifying young carers at risk of not being in education and taking appropriate actions to address this;
- Signposting and/or open an Early Help that aims to support parents/siblings and maybe even help to prevent or reduce a caring role.



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Support Offered

The Winterton Federation acknowledges that young carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education and opportunities offered through their school. Through this policy, The Winterton Federation is giving the message that young carers' education and school experience is important. The Pastoral Team are the designated adults at The Winterton Federation for young carers; they liaise with relevant colleagues, North Lincolnshire Young Carers and other relevant agencies with the consent of the young carer. The Pastoral Team ensure that appropriate information is shared with school staff so that there is an awareness of the young carer's situation.

We provide young carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private, and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers. The Winterton Federation appreciates that young carers will not discuss their family situation unless they feel comfortable. The young person's caring role is acknowledged and respected.

We treat young carers in a sensitive and child-centred way, upholding confidentiality unless any safeguarding concerns are disclosed which will then be referred to the designated safeguarding lead.

We follow safeguarding procedures regarding any young carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring.

We ensure young carers can access all available support services in school if they so wish.

We promote discussion and learning within the curriculum to facilitate fuller understanding, acceptance of and respect for, the issues surrounding illness, disability and caring.

We recognise that flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of young carers. Available provision includes (but is not limited to):

- Access to a telephone during breaks and lunchtime, to phone home;
- Negotiable deadlines for homework/coursework (when needed);
- Provision to do homework during the school day;
- Arrangements for schoolwork to be sent home (where there is a genuine crisis);
- 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;
- Access to the Pastoral Team when needed for additional support;
- Separate arrangements for getting to and leaving school if needed;
- Access to after school clubs if requested;
- Additional transition opportunities when moving to secondary school for both young carer and their parents if needed.

We are aware that the additional worries and responsibilities that a young carer may have, can greatly affect their mental health and well-being. It can also impact on their self-esteem and learning. The Winterton Federation provides positive everyday experiences so that our children have good resilience and are self-confident, with a strong sense of belonging and where they are all likely to reach their full potential. All staff facilitate this by using emotion coaching and growth mindset as well as following a



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comprehensive PHSE curriculum. For further information please see the Federation Mental Health and Well-being policy.

Equal Opportunities

In implementing this policy all members of staff take into account the Federation's Equal Opportunities policy. Staff ensure that no pupil that is a young carer is disadvantaged on the grounds of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

- The Executive Headteacher to communicate the policy to the Federation community;
- Governors, the Executive Headteacher, Senior Leaders, Teaching and Non-Teaching staff to be aware of this policy and implement it accordingly;
- Staff to support and uphold the policy;
- Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with The Winterton Federation.

The named Governor with lead responsibility for this policy is **Mrs Rosie Hoyle**.

The named lead for this policy and designated lead for Young Carers is Mrs Dawn Lovatt, however, the pastoral team will also oversee young carers who attend The Winterton Federation.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Governors will review this policy every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

The Federation ensures that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied.

Any issues identified will be incorporated into the Federation's action planning.

The Young Carers Policy written by: Dawn Lovatt: Autumn 2022

Policy revision agreed by staff: Autumn 2022

Policy revision agreed by governors: Autumn 2022

Policy Review Date: Autumn 2024