

Young Carers Policy

Review date: November 2025

Reviewed by: Ruth Ingerfield-Lapsley

Ratified by: Tracy Longmore

Review date: November 2026

Young Carers Policy

Designated professional for Young Carers

- 1) The school's designated professional for young carers is Ruth Ingerfield-Lapsley (Assistant Principal Safeguarding and Attendance) and Young Carer Support teacher is Yanique Parkes

Statement of Intent

- 2) Research indicates that 10% of pupils in the UK are young carers, whether they are aware of this or not. This means that in the average classroom in a CET school, three pupils will be young carers. Of these, 7% are providing high amounts of care and 3% very high amounts. 11% of these pupils provide between 20-49 hours of care per week. The Creative Education Trust is committed to doing all that it reasonably can to:
 - identify young carers
 - support young carers to access education, including enrichment activities
 - minimise the disadvantages that young carers face
 - have due regard to the impact of young carers' responsibilities when considering the application of sanctions upon them
 - work with external agencies to help identify the needs of individuals who have caring responsibilities with the aim of increasing the support available to them and to their families.

Definition

- 3) A young carer is a child or young person who is helping to look after someone. Many young carers are of primary school age. Most are caring for a parent, commonly in a single parent family, but some may be taking responsibility for a sibling, grandparent or other relative who lives at home or elsewhere. In many instances, a young carer may care for more than one family member. Some young carers provide care for friends who live outside of the family home.
- 4) The person they look after will have one or more of the following:
 - a) physical disability (including sensory disability)
 - b) learning disability
 - c) mental health problem
 - d) chronic illness
 - e) substance misuse problem.

Caring Tasks

- 5) 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 include:
- a) nursing care - giving medication, injections, changing dressings, assisting with mobility
 - b) personal intimate care - washing, dressing, feeding and helping with toilet requirements
 - c) emotional care - being compliant, monitoring the emotional state of the person cared for, listening, being a shoulder to cry on, supporting a parent through depression and trying to cheer them up
 - d) domestic care - doing a substantial amount of housework, cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry
 - e) financial care - running the household, bill paying, benefit collection
 - f) child care - taking responsibility for younger siblings in addition to their other caring responsibilities.

Possible effect on education

- 6) CET acknowledges that there are likely to be young carers among its pupils, and that being a young carer can present an individual with additional challenges with regard to:
- a) getting to school on time and achieving good attendance
 - b) concentrating in lessons
 - c) managing anxiety, emotional distress and low self-esteem
 - d) getting sufficient rest at home
 - e) managing time for homework and extra-curricular activities
 - f) physical problems such as back pain from lifting
 - g) false signs of maturity, because of assuming adult roles
 - h) socialising with their peers due to additional responsibilities at home.
- 7) It also might be difficult to engage their 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.

Support Offered

- 8) The academy acknowledges that young carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education. Through this policy, the academy is giving the message that young carers' education is important.
- 9) The designated professional for young carers will liaise with relevant colleagues, and other relevant agencies regarding their caring responsibilities, with the consent of the young carer. All pupils will be made aware of the designated professional. If the

designated professional is not a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team, then they will be line managed by an individual who is a member of it.

10) The designated professional will:

- a) work to identify young carers through activities such as, but not limited to; using transfer information e.g. from primary schools; holding assemblies to raise awareness with pupils and staff; working with the PSHE lead to ensure the curriculum in that subject helps to raise awareness; using the MACA assessment tool (see Appendix One) with pupils who may be young carers, including those with unexplained patterns of lateness, absence, work completion or behaviour
- b) ensure, in line with the Children's Commissioner's recommendations, that the school's records include young carers' caring responsibilities and that young carers are identified as a vulnerable group
- c) provide staff training annually, and on a 'drip-feed' basis, about young carers, and the responsibility upon all staff to ensure that they are fully supported
- d) ensure that form tutors, class teachers and other relevant members of staff know the young carers in their forms and classrooms, do all they reasonably can to identify the barriers they face, and any reasonable adjustments that they might require, whether in respect of the application of the behaviour policy, or more broadly
- e) meet with pastoral and other leaders regularly to discuss young carers' attendance, behaviour, safety, progress and personal development and how any relevant barriers might be removed
- f) meet with young carers at least termly, to discuss their provision, including their access to education and enrichment, and ascertain from them how any barriers might be removed
- g) be an advocate for young carers, helping to ensure that they do not serve sanctions that would be unreasonable, given an individual's caring responsibilities
- h) actively promote the participation of young carers in enrichment activities that might promote their personal development
- i) liaise with the Careers leader to ensure that young carers are helped to access work related learning and information about post-16 and post-18 pathways that are available to them
- J) work with external agencies to ensure that the needs of individual young carers and their families are known
- k) provide information about young carers – including, but not limited to, information

about their attendance, punctuality, behaviour and personal development - to those responsible for governance via a termly report, using the relevant CET 'impact statement' template, where requested, at AIB or Academy Council meetings.

In addition:

- l) The academy will add each young carer to the vulnerable pupils' list.
- m) The academy will provide young carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private and staff will not discuss their situation in front of their peers.
- n) The academy appreciates that young carers will not discuss their family situation unless they feel comfortable. The young person's caring role will be acknowledged and respected.
- o) The academy will treat young carers in a sensitive and child-centred way, upholding confidentiality.
- p) The academy will ensure young carers can access all available support services in school.
- q) The academy will follow child protection procedures regarding any young carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring.
- r) The academy will 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.
- s) The academy recognises 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)
 - access to homework clubs
 - identifying support for them and their family to enable them to attend school trips and educational activities
 - lunchtime detentions rather than after school detentions (where possible)
 - arrangements for schoolwork to be sent home (when there is a genuine crisis); any approved absence for a young carer will be time limited (DfES 2006)
 - 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.

Further Guidance

Further government guidance is available through the following links:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/498115/DFE-RR499_The_lives_of_young_carers_in_England.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/young-carers-and-young-adult-carers-providing-care-during-coronavirus/guidance-for-those-under-25-who-provide-care-for-someone>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/909255/COVID-19_young_carers_sasy_read_guidance.pdf

Appendix One: MACA AND PANOC

The Multidimensional Assessment of Caring Activities (MACA) is a questionnaire to be completed by young carers (an 18-item self-report measure) that can be used to provide an index (or score) of the total amount of caring activity undertaken by a child or young person, as well as six subscale scores for:

- (1) Domestic tasks,
- (2) Household management,
- (3) Personal care,
- (4) Emotional care,
- (5) Sibling care
- (6) Financial/practical care.

The MACA was designed as a very short, easy to use, psychometric instrument able to provide an index of the extent of caring activities that the young person is currently engaged in (Joseph, Becker, Becker and Regel, 2009). The MACA-YC18 is recommended for:

- Use in surveys of the amount of caring activity undertaken by children and young people.
- To compare different groups of children and young people on the amount of caring activity.
- To use before and after interventions to examine what sort of interventions are helpful in Reducing caring burden.
- To examine the association between caring activity and other factors – such as age and gender.
- To use in a one-to-one context by professionals who want to understand the types of caring tasks undertaken, but where time is short.

How to use the MACA-YC18

Care has been taken to ensure that the wording is appropriate for most children and young people so that they will be able to complete the MACA-YC18 by themselves. Although it may be appropriate sometimes to help with explanations, we recommend that children and young people are given the opportunity to complete the MACA-YC18 by themselves whenever possible. When it is necessary to provide explanations, this should be carried out by the professional involved. We do not recommend that the MACA-YC18 be completed in the presence of the person who is being supported. Young carers' responses on the MACA-YC18 should always be treated in confidence and used in line with an appropriate professional Code of Ethics and within an organisation's child protection and confidentiality policies.

Scoring for the MACA-YC18

For the MACA-YC18 each of the items are rated on a 3-point scale, 'Never', 'Some of the time', and 'A lot of the time'.

For scoring purposes:

'Never'	= 0
'Some of the time'	= 1
'A lot of the time'	= 2

Overall Score of Caring Activity

The MACA can be used to provide an overall summary score (index) of caring activity by totalling all 18 items. The lowest the young person can score is 0 and the highest the young person can score is 36. For example, if the young person ticks 'never' for each of the 18 items, they would get a total score of 0 but if they ticked 'a lot of the time' for each of the items, they would get a score of 36. Of course, most children and young people will score somewhere in between these two extremes. The average score is around 14.

Interpretation of scores on the MACA

Higher scores indicate greater levels of caring activity. The following categories are useful:

0	No caring activity recorded
1-9	Low amount of caring activity
10-13	Moderate amount
14-17	High amount
18 and above	Very high amount of caring activity

NAME.....DATE.....

Below are some jobs that young carers do to help. Think about the help you have provided **over the last month.** Please read each one and put a tick in the box to show how often you have done each of the jobs in the last month. **Thank you.**

		Never 0	Some of the time 1	A lot of the time 2
1	Clean your own bedroom			
2	Clean other rooms			
3	Wash up dishes or put dishes in a dishwasher			
4	Decorate rooms			
5	Take responsibility for shopping for food			
6	Help with lifting or carrying heavy things			
7	Help with financial matters such as dealing with bills, banking money, collecting benefits			
8	Work part time to bring money in			
9	Interpret, sign or use another communication system for the person you care for			
10	Help the person you care for to dress or undress			
11	Help the person you care for to have a wash			
12	Help the person you care for to have a bath or shower			
13	Keep the person you care for company e.g. sitting with them, reading to them, talking to them			
14	Keep an eye on the person you care for to make sure they are alright			
15	Take the person you care for out e.g. for a walk or to see friends or relatives			
16	Take brothers or sisters to school			
17	Look after brothers or sisters whilst another adult is near by			
18	Look after brothers or sisters on your own			

Positive and Negative Outcomes of Caring (PANOC)

The Positive and Negative Outcomes of Caring (PANOC) is a questionnaire to be completed by young carers (a 20-item self-report measure) that can be used to provide an index (or score) of the subjective cognitive and emotional impact of caring in young people. Research and practice have identified that many young carers are significantly affected by their caring responsibilities both negatively and positively. For this reason, the PANOC-YC20 was designed to provide two scores. One score showing how much caring is experienced negatively and one showing how much caring is experienced positively.

Scoring

The PANOC-YC20 is a 20-item psychometric instrument designed to assess the positive and negative effects of caring activity. Each item is rated on a 3-point scale, 'Never', 'Some of the time', and 'A lot of the time'.

For scoring purposes:

'Never'	= 0
'Some of the time'	= 1
'A lot of the time'	= 2

The PANOC-YC20 consists of two 10-item subscales: (1) positive responses, and (2) negative responses. Scores on both the subscales have a potential range of 0 to 20, with higher scores indicating greater positive and negative responses, respectively.

To calculate the positive response score: sum items 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 15, 18, 19, and 20.
To calculate the negative response score: sum items 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, and 17.

Interpretation of scores

Statistical analysis indicates that scores of less than 12 on the PANOC-YC20 positive scale and/or greater than 8 on the PANOC-YC20 negative scale may be indicative of concern (see Table 1). For example, this may indicate that the young person is suffering from emotional distress. In such circumstances practitioners will need to follow their usual working practices and procedures in terms of exploring the young person's feelings with them and their family and responding appropriately, perhaps in partnership with appropriate health or children's social care services.

Table 1: Interpreting scores on the PANOC-YC20

Scores Interpretation Positive

0	No positive outcomes reported – potential for concern
1-12	Relatively few positive outcomes, potential for concern
13-20	Relatively high positive outcomes reported

Negative

0	No negative outcomes reported
1-8	Relatively few negative outcomes reported
9-20	Relatively high negative outcomes reported, potential for concern

Of most concern will be those young carers who score less than 12 on the positive scale AND greater than 8 on the negative scale.

However, where there are serious concerns, we recommend that the PANOC-YC20 be used as part of a fuller assessment process by qualified health and social care professionals.

NAME.....DATE.....

Below are some things young carers like you have said about what it feels like to look after someone. Please read each statement and tick the box to show how often this is true for you. There are no right or wrong answers. We are just interested in what life is like for you because of caring.
Thank you.

		Never 0	Some of the time 1	A lot of the time 2
1 +	Because of caring I feel I am doing something good			
2 +	Because of caring I feel that I am helping			
3 +	Because of caring I feel closer to my family			
4 +	Because of caring I feel good about myself			
5 -	Because of caring I have to do things that make me upset			
6 -	Because of caring I feel stressed			
7 +	Because of caring I feel that I am learning useful things			
8 +	Because of caring my parents are proud of the kind of person I am			
9 -	Because of caring I feel like running away			
10 -	Because of caring I feel very lonely			
11 -	Because of caring I feel like I can't cope			
12 -	Because of caring I can't stop thinking about what I have to do			
13 -	Because of caring I feel so sad I can hardly stand it			
14 -	Because of caring I don't think I matter			
15 +	Because of caring I like who I am			
16 -	Because of caring life doesn't seem worth living			
17 -	Because of caring I have trouble staying awake			
18 +	Because of caring I feel I am better able to cope with problems			
19 +	I feel good about helping			
20 +	Because of caring I feel I am useful			

Appendix 2: Young Carers at Thistley Hough Academy:

Students:

At the beginning of each academic year, the Year 7 intake participate in Ambition lessons, with their form tutor, around *What is a Young Carer?* This has been planned with the support of MyTime Young Carers.

All Year 7 students also complete the MACA form. The forms are then reviewed by the Young Carer Champion. Any potential Young Carers are identified and referred to the Safeguarding Team (which includes the Young Carer Champion). All discussions with young people and parents, plus any subsequent referrals to the Young Carer Caseworker at the local authority, are logged on CPOMS for information purposes.

If a young person is identified as a Young Carer, they are placed on our vulnerable list, added to the YC email mailing list and receive a 1-1 support meeting with the Young Carer Champion to see if any additional support is required in school.

Half termly Young Carer events take place within the Academy and local community. These have included trips to restaurants, picnics at school, Ninja Warriors Adventure Park and guest speakers such as Carers First. This organisation informs the young people of additional support in forms of Youth Clubs and activity programmes.

There is a YC Safe Space offered within school, at lunch time, several times a week and young people know they can approach staff at any point for support.

Staff:

Staff CPD takes place, to ensure that adults are aware of the demands on being a Young Carer and importantly, what they can do to support within their own roles at school.

The Young Carer Champion attended the National Young Carers Summit in Bournemouth in June 2023, November 2024 and 2025 and attends MyTime Young Carer meetings. The school is part of the Level Up Young Carers Programme that looks at supporting Young Carers to achieve their full potential.

Ruth Ingerfield-lapsley (Young Carer Champion) completed the MYTime Young Carer Champion Training Programme in 2024 which is a new national initiative to raise the profile of YC within education.

The school is accredited with The Young Carers In School Award for 2024-2027 (see below)



Congratulations

Thistley Hough Academy

for successfully gaining a
Young Carers in Schools Award.

Valid from September 30th 2024 to September 30th 2027

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