

Liaising with support services and families

- Schools will liaise with support services to ensure that families can be advised where additional help may be available to them.
- If a parent is unable to travel to parents' meetings due to family circumstances, school staff will try to make alternative arrangements. The young carer or parent may request this.
- Schools will provide advice about how children can get into school where transport is a problem.
- School Nurse Service can be accessed for advice and support with the consent of the young person.

Commitment from schools and staff

School staff and services will be available for any child/young person, parent or family member who wishes to discuss their family circumstances so that we can help the child/young person to achieve their potential.

Schools will take an active role in seeking to identify and provide support to hidden young carers.

Schools are encouraged to make full use of Dundee Carers Centre staff in all relevant pupil and parent/carer engagement events including: parents' evenings, transition events and lunch-time drop in sessions with the aim of raising awareness and providing information of Young Carers Services in Dundee.

Your school's Young carer Coordinator:

Dundee Carers Centre Key Contact:

Supporting Young Carers in schools

What is meant by the term “young carer”?

A young carer is under 18 years of age and helps to look after someone in their family (or a friend) who is ill, disabled or misuses drugs or alcohol.

Caring can involve physical or emotional care, or taking responsibility for some one's safety or well-being. The person being cared for may be a parent, sibling, other family member or friend and may not necessarily be living in the same house as the young carer themselves.

The level of responsibility assumed by a young carer is often inappropriate to their age and at a level beyond simply helping out with jobs at home, which is a normal part of growing up.

Young Carers' Co-ordinator

A member of staff in each school will lead on our support work for young carers. This member of staff will be the point of contact for young carers and their families and will liaise with young carers' services. Their name and contact details will be made available in the school handbook, or by telephone, from the school office. For ease of reference, this person will be termed the Young Carers' Co-ordinator.

The Young Carers' Co-ordinator will champion all young carers matters in the school. Amongst other things, the co-ordinator, along with others, will ensure that all young carers receive the support they require to succeed at school. Importantly, the Young Carers Coordinator, following consultation with individual young carers, will ensure that all staff, as required, are fully aware of the young carer's circumstances and required supports/ interventions.

SEEMIS/Mosaic Recording

When a young carer is identified, you should record they are a young carer using the tick box in the authority tab on SEEMIS. If the young carer does not require additional supports other than reasonable adjustments provided by school, examples of which are included in this leaflet and the full policy, these should be recorded in pastoral notes.

When a young carer is identified and does require additional support from more than one agency, you should record they are a young carer using the tick box in the authority tab on SEEMIS. A young carers statement should be recorded using the Child's Plan (School) on Mosaic and the tick box in the authority tab on SEEMIS stating the young person has a young carers statement should also be ticked.

A workbook is also available, and it is a matter of good practice that the young carer has the opportunity to complete this workbook with a trusted adult of their choice – such as Guidance Teacher, Young Carer Co-ordinator, Dundee Carers Centre Worker – in advance of the completion of the statement. This ensures that the young person has the opportunity to fully contribute to their young carer statement.

Dundee Carers Centre "Link Workers"

The Dundee Carers Centre has a named member of staff allocated to liaise with every school cluster in the city. Details of these "Link Workers" can be found at: <http://dundeecarerscentre.org.uk/about-us/staff>

Young Carers' Phone Card

Young carers will be given a 'phone card' to identify themselves to school staff, if necessary, so that they may have access to a telephone, where appropriate, to contact home if they are worried about a relative without having to explain their need.

Privacy and confidentiality

School staff will talk to young carers in private and not in front of their friends unless the young carer asks for a friend to be present. In preparing and reviewing this policy, young carers themselves identified confidentiality and sensitivity from teachers and support staff as key requirements. Sensitivity to the needs of young carers includes being careful not to ask even well-intentioned questions about how the family members are when the young carer is in the presence of his or her peers.

Homework and Coursework deadlines

Where possible, schools will negotiate deadlines for homework and the submission of coursework in advance of these being set (N.B. deadlines for some things cannot be changed, such as submission of course work as part of an external course assessment).

The occasionally abrupt and significant changes to home circumstances that can occur highlight the need for deadlines to be set aside and/or re-negotiated on an individual basis.

A flexible approach is key. Where possible, schools should provide a quiet area for young carers to complete homework at the end of the school day.

Absence

When absence notes are not produced because of the known home circumstances of the young carer, arrangements are agreed for coding and recording absences. Where young carers are absent as a direct result of their caring duties, the SEEMIS code Q (Exceptional Domestic Circumstances (authorised)) should be used. Importantly, young carers will not always be in a position to evidence, other than by word of mouth, the reasons for their absence. In such circumstances the professional judgement of school staff is paramount. Use of the SEEMIS code Q is doubly important in connection with the award of educational maintenance allowances for older pupils/young carers.

Detention

When an identified young carer is given detention, schools should consider allowing this to take place at break and lunchtimes rather than after school.