



# **Roebuck Academy**

## **Young Carers Policy 2024**

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Senior Leadership team on an annual basis. This is not a statutory policy.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Senior Leadership team in September 2021

It is due for review in September 2024

Signature: Mr Andrew Mari

Head Teacher

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Roebuck Academy is committed to supporting Young Carers access to education. This policy aims to ensure Young Carers at Roebuck Academy are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled as required by the Equality Act 2010.

### **Definition of a Young Carer**

Young Carers are children aged 8-18 who look after someone in their family who has an illness, a disability, a mental health problem or a substance misuse problem. Young Carers may have whole or shared responsibility for looking after a sibling, parent, grandparent or other relative. In some instances, a Young Carer may care for more than one family member and/or may have a disability themselves. A Young Carer will take on additional responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development.

The caring tasks that a Young Carer may 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 and supporting a parent through depression
- Domestic care - doing a substantial amount of housework, cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry etc.
- Financial care - running the household, bill paying, benefit collection etc.
- Childcare - taking responsibility for younger siblings in addition to their other caring responsibilities, for example putting to bed, walking to school

### **Impact of Caring responsibilities on Young people**

Roebuck Academy acknowledges that there are Young Carers among its pupils, and that being a Young Carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education and health. These may include:

- School attainment - Be late or absent at school due to responsibilities at home, have concentration problems, lack of time for homework, behaviour problems
- Physical health - often severely affected by caring through the night, repeatedly lifting a heavy adult, poor diet and lack of sleep.
- Emotional wellbeing - stress, tiredness and mental ill health are common for young carers, anxiety or worry in school.
- Isolation- feeling different or isolated from their peers, limited opportunities for socialisation such as extra-curricular activities, bullying and harassment
- Unstable environment - traumatic life changes such as bereavement, family break-up, losing income and housing, or seeing the effects of an illness or addiction.

## 2. PRINCIPLES AND AIMS

Roebuck Academy 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.

A Young Carers Operational Lead will be appointed to be the main contact for the Young Carers in the school. **Any** child may benefit from early help, but all school and college staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who is a Young Carer, (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023)

The Young Carers Operational Lead will meet with the Young Carers on a regular basis and will liaise with the Pastoral Lead and / or Inclusion lead if Young Carer is SEND, ensuring Young Carers can access all available support services in school. The Young Carer Operational Lead will liaise with relevant colleagues and agencies with the consent of the Young Carer and parent and in conjunction with the Pastoral Lead. If the Young Carer is CLA or PLA then Designated teacher is to be involved in discussion about provision, (KCSIE 2023). At all times a Young carer's privacy is respected and information about their caring role is not communicated in front of their peers. The school views young carers as any other pupil, but understands that they have the additional pressure of caring responsibilities, which may require additional support or flexible arrangements. However, if necessary the Operational lead will follow child protection procedures regarding any Young Carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring.

It is the duty of the operational lead to ensure the whole school understands the issues faced by young carers and their families by:

- Keeping up to date with national and local developments affecting young carers and their families.
- Displaying information about young carer issues on staff noticeboards and the school intranet.
- Embedding training on young carer issues in induction training and continuous professional development for all staff.

Roebuck Academy aims to reduce barriers to education and learning and support the wellbeing of young carers by providing targeted interventions to young carers, for example homework/coursework support; emotional support; health support; peer mentoring or peer support groups. The school takes the needs of young carers into account when planning and delivering this support, for example running homework support at lunch time.

We aim to be flexible, where appropriate, for example allowing young carers to use a telephone to call home during breaks and lunchtimes so as to reduce any worry they may have about a family member; and negotiating deadlines for homework and coursework. Pupil progress meetings and the internal management systems will be used to identify changes in attendance and attainment and consider whether these may be due to a potential caring

role. If necessary, we will signpost or undertake whole family work that aims to support parents/siblings in order to prevent or reduce a caring role.

For Year 6 Pupils we will offer support to the pupil and their family during the transition process, sharing agreed information with their new school lead for young carers and their families.

### **3. IDENTIFYING YOUNG CARERS**

The school takes a proactive approach to identifying young carers by:

- Using school enrolment and annual processes to check pupil information, to ask families whether the pupil has relatives who have an illness or disability, or who are affected by mental ill health or addiction problems and whether they would like more information about the types of support available to young carers.
- Flagging identified young carers on its internal management system so that attainment and attendance of young carers is understood.
- Young Carers are shown on each classes provision map
- Referring to lists of children on child protection and looked-after children plans, to identify pupils who are living with adults experiencing mental ill health or addiction problems.
- Checking School data on pupils with disabilities, to identify sibling carers.
- Asking feeder schools/early-years providers to inform the school 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 your school from another and checking and including this information when transferring a pupil.
- Asking other schools attended by siblings to tell you when the sibling has 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 they identify young carers attending, or about to start your school.
- Delivering PSHE lessons on Young Carers to appropriate year groups to help learners understand the role of a Young Carer, giving them the opportunity to self-identify.
- Providing an opportunity for Young Carers in Year 5 and 6 to interact and talk with others in an informal setting or club.

## 4. SUPPORTING FAMILIES

The school understands the needs of families of young carers and ensures they and their families know how to access support by:

- Including information signposting young carers and their families to other resources, for example, the local young carers' service, school nurse and emotional support on its noticeboards and/or school website.
- Providing families with information about young carer issues, available support and how to contact the Young Carers' School Operational Lead by including the whole school commitment to young carers in the school prospectus, and incorporating articles in the school newsletter.
- Using the curriculum to promote a full understanding, acceptance of and respect for, issues such as caring, disability and impairment, for example, embedding the challenges faced by young carers into PSHE lessons and delivering regular assemblies raising awareness of young carer issues.
- Displaying information about available support on the school noticeboards, webpage and prospectus, and by including information in the school newsletter and communication to families on a regular basis.
- Ensuring the school is 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.
- Offer young carers an opportunity to meet with other young carers and staff and give them an opportunity to talk to each other in a relaxed, fun environment. Please see the example letter provided below.

## 5. POLICY REVIEW

The school monitors and reviews policy and practice, taking into account the views of young carers and their families by:

- Implementing and reviewing individual pupil support plans and/or provision maps, which recognise the pupil's specific needs as a young carer.
- Using tracking of young carers on internal management systems and actively engaging with young carers and their families, for example drop-in sessions and questionnaires, to shape and improve provision for young carers.

### **Useful websites for further information**

[www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org)

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

[www.youngcarers.net](http://www.youngcarers.net)

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

[www.barnardo's.org.uk](http://www.barnardo's.org.uk)

[www.carersinherts.org.uk](http://www.carersinherts.org.uk)

Example letter sent home

Dear Parents and Carers,

Identifying and supporting young carers at Roebuck Academy

At Roebuck, we are aware that some of our pupils are young carers. A young carer is someone under 18 who is caring unpaid for a family member or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or addiction problems. They often take on practical and/or emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult. Research suggests there are at least 700,000 young carers in the UK but many do not realise they are a young carer.

We know that young carers may need a little extra support to enjoy and do well at school. At Roebuck, we are committed to ensuring that all pupils who are young carers are identified, and supported effectively. For example, we offer extra help with homework, flexibility around calling home, advice about how to get your child into school where transport may be an issue, a teacher to talk to and lunch time clubs.

At Roebuck, we have a Young Carers' faculty, which is made up of a range of staff who have responsibility for ensuring all young carers are able to enjoy school and make good progress. At present, we offer a lunchtime club to children who are in Years 5-6. This time is spent talking to other Young Carers as well as having allocate 'free' time to relax and have fun. If your child already attends the lunchtime club, please can you still fill in a form for our records.

If you think your child might be a young carer, or could be affected by any of the issues we've highlighted, please let me know by filling in the form below and bringing it into school in a sealed envelope addressed to the office with the title of 'Young Carers'. If you do not feel comfortable doing this, or have any further questions, please contact the office on [admin@roebuck.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@roebuck.herts.sch.uk) who will pass on any questions.

Any information that is given to us will be treated sensitively and no information will be shared without your knowledge.

Yours sincerely,

Young Carers Faculty

Reply Slip

Pupil's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Does the pupil have parents or other family members who have a long-term illness or disability, or who are affected by mental ill-health or substance misuse?

Yes                      No

If you wish, you can give further details here: (not required)

\_\_\_\_\_

Would you like more information about the types of support the school provides to young carers?

Yes      \_                      No

Please provide a name and telephone number or email address so that we can contact you.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone/email address: \_\_\_\_\_