



# **Roebuck Academy**

## **Young Carers Policy 2024**

Reviewed: March 2024

Reviewed every two years

Next review due: March 2026

## 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

The Children and Families Act 2014 definition says a Young Carer is 'A person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person'. Young Carers may have whole or shared responsibility for looking after one or more siblings, parents or other relatives. In some instances, a Young Carer may have a disability themselves. A Young Carer will take on additional responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development such as:

- Nursing care - giving medication, 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.
- Domestic care - doing substantial housework, cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry etc.
- Financial care - running the household, bill paying, benefit collection etc.
- Childcare - taking responsibility for siblings, such as putting to bed, walking to school.

### Impact of Caring responsibilities on young people

The first parliamentary inquiry into life opportunities of Young Carers (2023) found on average they miss 27 school days per year. Roebuck Academy acknowledges that being a Young Carer may have an adverse effect on a young person's education, health and attainment. This may include:

- School attainment – Poor attendance, concentration problems, behaviour issues
- Physical health – Physical tiredness, sleep deprivation, poor diet.
- Emotional wellbeing - Stress, tiredness, anxiety and mental ill health are common.
- Isolation- Limited opportunities for socialisation or extra-curricular activities.
- 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 (INFORMING STAFF)

Through this policy, we want to give the message that Young Carers' education is important and aim to give Young Carers extra support to ensure they have equal access to education.

### Aims

- *Understand* - There are assigned members of staff with responsibility for understanding and addressing Young Carers' needs.
- *Inform* - Awareness is raised by sharing knowledge about disability, illness and Young Carers throughout the school.
- *Identify* - Young Carers are being identified within the school.
- *Listen* - Young Carers are listened to, consulted with and given time and space to talk.
- *Support* - Young Carers are supported within the school and signposted to whole-family resources and services outside the school.

## Young Carers Team

A Young Carers Team will be appointed to be the main contacts for Young Carers and their families 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 2021).

### Senior Leader for Young Carers

It is the responsibility of the Young Carers Senior Leader to develop and maintain up-to-date knowledge about issues relating to Young Carers and their families, as well as relevant national and local developments, including changes in legislation and guidance.

- They must ensure SLT and governing body, understand issues relating to Young Carers and their families. Secure and maintain their commitment to developing a whole school model of identification and support, while providing appropriate updates.
- Ensure there is a member of school staff with operational responsibility for Young Carers, reflecting this aspect of their role when setting and reviewing their performance management objectives and allowing them access to local and national CPD opportunities.
- Support the Young Carers Operational Lead to carry out **an annual baseline review** of the school's provision for Young Carers and their families and agree a resulting action plan to cover mechanisms to identify, assess, support, and refer Young Carers and their families to appropriate agencies.

### Young Carers Operational Lead

It is the responsibility of the Young Carers Operational Leader to develop and maintain up-to-date knowledge about issues relating to Young Carers and their families, as well as relevant national and local developments, including changes in legislation and guidance.

- The Operational Lead will meet with the Young Carers on a regular basis and will liaise with the Pastoral Lead and / or Inclusion lead if a Young Carer is SEND, ensuring Young Carers can access all available support services in school.
- They 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 they will ensure the designated teacher is to be involved in discussion about provision, (KCSIE 2021).
- 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.
- They will display relevant information on the school noticeboards, newsletters and website.
- To provide **annual continuous professional development** for staff relating to issues affecting Young Carers and ensuring all new staff receive Young Carers induction training.
- Support staff in delivering PHSE lessons and assemblies sharing knowledge about disability, illness and Young Carers among all students.
- Provide support and information for Year 6 Young Carers when transitioning to Secondary School, sharing agreed information with their new setting.

- Liaise with the Attendance Lead if they identify changes in attendance for the Young Carer and if necessary, signpost or undertake whole family work that aims to support parents/siblings to prevent or reduce a caring role.

### 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 is a Young Carer or 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 identified on each class provision map and individual support plans.
- 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 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 our school from another and checking and including this information when transferring a pupil.
- Establishing information sharing protocols with the school nurse, Herts Young Carers 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 school.
- Delivering **annual PSHE lessons or assemblies** on Young Carers to help learners understand the role of a Young Carer, giving them the opportunity to self-identify.

### 4. LISTENING TO YOUNG CARERS

Roebuck Academy aims to reduce barriers to education and learning to support the well-being of Young Carers, by acknowledging each child has individual needs and ensuring a tailored approach to their provision. When a Young Carer is identified, a meeting will be held with the Operational Lead to better understand what support needs to be in place, which could involve the following:

- Targeted interventions; for example: homework support; emotional support; health support or peer mentoring. These are to be run during school hours to reduce pressure on families.
- Allowing phone calls home during breaks to reduce anxiety about a family member.
- A weekly Young Carers Support Group is available to all children in school and is run by the Operational Lead. Here Young Carers are given an opportunity to anonymously ask questions and share problems within a peer support group.
- The provision of a Young Carers 'worry box' where they can leave messages for the Operational Lead to follow up.

- They will be given access to information about support from internal and external agencies.
- Young Carers will be given the opportunity to assist with school displays, websites, newsletters and assemblies.
- Allowing Young Carers to review this policy and support offered to them in school, offering opportunities to provide feedback to help improve provision on a **regular basis**.

## **5. SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES**

To better understand the needs of a Young Carers family, after identification a meeting will be offered to families with the Operational Lead. This will give an opportunity to signpost families to support available, allowing the school to provide tailored provision. This could include:

- A referral to Young Carers in Herts, allowing opportunities for home visits, trips, activities and transition support.
- Referral to school agencies such as the school nurse and attendance improvement officer.
- Updating parents about developments through the school newsletters and a dedicated page to Young Carers on the school website.
- 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.)
- Discussing and reviewing with parents an individual pupil support plan and/or provision maps, which recognise the pupil's specific needs as a Young Carer.
- Creating drop-in sessions and questionnaires for parents, to shape and improve provision.

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

<https://youngcarersinschools.com/>

<https://www.carersinherts.org.uk/young-carers>

<https://www.mytimeyoungcarers.org/>

<https://www.barnardos.org.uk/get-support/young-carers>