



Avonbourne Boys' & Girls' Academies

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

YOUNG CARERS POLICY 2025-2026

This policy aims to ensure that when a student, is identified as a young carer they are offered support to participate, make progress and feel happy and safe at school.

The 2021 Census reported approximately 120,000 young carers aged 5-17 in England and 8,200 in Wales, but this is widely considered a significant underestimate. Other estimates, such as those from a 2018 [BBC survey](#), suggest the number could be as high as one in five school children, or 820,000 young people aged 11-15. More recent school census data for England in 2023 recorded fewer young carers, highlighting the continued challenge of identification.

Avonbourne's definition of a young carer is a child, under the age of 18, who is either the main carer, shares a caring responsibility for, or whose day-to-day life is impacted by someone in their home, which extends to a sibling or siblings, parent, both parents or a grandparent, who has a disability, illness, mental health condition, misuses or is addicted to substances, or is unable to fully care for themselves. Our definition also includes young adult carers (18 to 25 years old) who may operate within our sixth form.

- The person they look after will have one or more of:
- Physical disability.
- Learning disability.
- Mental health problem.
- Chronic illness.
- Substance misuse or addictions problems.

Although having a definition of a young carer is important, many will remain hidden from view due to the impacts they feel it may potentially have on their family situation. Caring can be a tiring, thankless and onerous task, and because of the additional responsibilities at home, a young carer might experience other signs which can be used as a potential identifier. Some of the signs, but not limited to, could be:

- Being late or absent due to responsibilities at home.
- Concentration problems, anxiety or worry.
- Tiredness.
- Lack of time for homework.
- Poor attainment.
- Behavioural problems (taking out their anger or frustration).
- Lack of time for extra-curricular activities.
- Isolation, embarrassed to take friends home.
- Limited social skills.

- Bullying - a quarter of young carers stated they experienced bullying because of their caring role (Carers Trust, 2013).
- Feeling that no one understands and that no support is available.
- Low self-esteem.
- To have lower attainment at GCSE level.
- More likely than national averages not to be in education, employment or training (NEET) between the ages 16-19 (The Children's Society, 2013).
- It also might be difficult to engage their parents (due to fears about 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.

Aims of Young Carer Provision

- To raise awareness of young carers among staff and to ensure the identification of all young carers as early as possible on entry to the school and make referrals when necessary.
- To foster respect and understanding towards young carers among all students.
- To address any underlying inequalities between young carers and other students in a graduated and timely manner.
- To improve the progress and raise the standard of achievement for young carers so they can meet their academic potential.
- To support young carers in improving their attendance.
- To ensure that young carers feel included and supported within their school community as possible, and that reasonable adjustments made to promote this.
- To protect young carers from unjust treatment due to their caring role and improve co-ordination with other agencies and support services.
- To give young carers a voice in the school community and that they are involved in decisions affecting young carer provision.
- To ensure that staff recognise that flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of young carers.
- To ensure young carers feel able to ask for help, are listened to and offered support if needed.

Support for Young Carers

At Avonbourne Academy we recognise that young carers may need extra support to ensure they feel supported and have equal access to education. As part of our duty of care and commitment to young carers we will put in place the following:

Systems and Processes

- Application pack to include young carer registration.

- To create a young carer register accessible to all members of the pastoral team and any other necessary staff.
- To monitor the attendance of young carers and respond accordingly with appropriate intervention.
- The school will add the pupil to the vulnerable pupils' list.
- To maintain and regularly review our Young Carer's policy.
- Provide young carers with a club that they can attend on a weekly basis.

ENGAGEMENT WITH THE LEVEL-UP PROGRAMME

To engage in MYTIME Young Carer's Level-Up Programme, where the school pledges:

- To ensure that all school staff receive training on how to identify and support young carers through CPD.
- To appoint a young carer champion, who is held to account by a dedicated member of SLT and an appointed Governor. The young carer champion will be responsible for maintaining a young carer support group and corresponding with external agencies such as Dorset and BCP council to stay up to date on a young carer's circumstances and needs.
- To raise awareness of young carers, to develop a culture of respect for young carers among the student community, and to encourage young carers to come forwards.
- To host MYTIME Young Carer assemblies.
- To engage with MYTIME Young Carers in providing opportunities for young carers (Zoom Youth Group, making memories days, Christmas, and Easter events).
- To sign up to the Level-Up and MYTIME newsletters.
- To create and organise a young carer group and young carer display board visible by students and staff.

IN SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR YOUNG CARERS

- We will support young carers in getting to and from the school, and where necessary, provide advice to parents if there are difficulties in transporting a young carer to school.
- We will offer a programme of careers advice and guidance and, where possible, work experience placements. Furthermore, to build the career aspirations of young carers by taking them to open days and on tours of further education establishments.
- The school will provide young carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private, and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers.
- Ensure young carers can access all available support services in school.


- Ensure that young carers have access to the mental health support available across the school where necessary.
- Ensure that young carers are identified on registers and seating plans.
- To make reasonable adjustments to usual School policies and show flexibility on a case-by-case basis regarding issues such as lateness to school, late homework, and poor attendance. These include, but are not limited to:
 - access to a telephone, during breaks and lunchtime, to phone home, with pastoral support or independently.
 - negotiable deadlines for homework/coursework by speaking to the Young Carer Champion (48 hours).
 - access to homework clubs during the school day (where these are available).
 - identifying support for young carers 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).

REFERRAL AND EXTERNAL AGENCIES

- The young carer champion will consult with relevant colleagues, and other relevant agencies, regarding their caring responsibilities, with the consent of the young carer.
- The school will follow child protection procedures regarding any young carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring.
- The school 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.
- Where appropriate, the school will refer a young carer to the local authority for a referral.

Further Support and Reading

- Barnardo's Still Hidden, Still Ignored; Who Cares for Young Carers?
 - [Click here for file](#)
- Children's Commissioner for England, Voices of England's Missing Children
 - [Click here for file](#)

Date of this review	Autumn 2025	Review period	1 Year
Date of next review	Autumn 2026	Author	M Burley
Type of policy	Statutory	Ratified by Michelle Dyer Principal October 2025	
Oliver Maund Senior Vice Principal October 2025	