

YOUNG CARER POLICY

This policy is applicable to all students, staff and parents of Royal Wootton Bassett Academy.

Updated 09/05/2025. To be reviewed May 2026

Introduction

All students at Royal Wootton Bassett Academy have the right to attend school full time and have full access to their education and extra-curricular activities, regardless of context. This can be difficult for a student to achieve if they have additional responsibilities at home, this policy exists to recognise, identify, and champion those who are identified as being a Young Carer.

Definition of a Young Carer:

A young carer is a student under 18 years of age who helps to look after a family member who is disabled, physically or mentally ill (including PTSD) or has a substance misuse problem.

At Royal Wootton Bassett Academy, we recognise that caring can involve physical or emotional care. The level of responsibility assumed by a young carer is often inappropriate to their age and at a level beyond simply helping with jobs at home, which is a normal part of growing up; as such it may impact on the education of the young person.

Through the work of the Pastoral and Safeguarding teams at Royal Wootton Bassett Academy, students are:

- Appropriately identified as a vulnerable group on the school MIS
- Offered appropriate support and guidance in school
- Monitored closely for their progress
- Signposted to support and access to age-appropriate activities and events
- Recognised and celebrated for their achievements
- Able to retain privacy as a *young carer* if they wish

Identifying a Young Carer

It is important to identify and recognise young carers. Unless the school is advised about a student's home circumstances, young carers risk first being identified by negative aspects of their behaviour or work and are vulnerable to under achievement.

Some indicators that a student has a caring role are:

- Regular lateness or unauthorised absence, possibly increasing periodically
- Tiredness during the school day
- Erratic responses to homework with incomplete, late, or work not being presented
- Lack of concentration, anxiety or worry
- Under-achievement for potential capability
- Behavioural problems, especially inappropriate responses possibly resulting from anger or frustration

- Fewer peer friendships than expected but good relationship with adults and appearing mature for their age
- Being the victim of bullying, perhaps linked to a family member's disability or state of health, e.g., substance misuse problem, lack of hygiene, physical appearance etc.
- Lack of interest in extra-curricular activities, especially after the school day
- Apparent parental disinterest, e.g., non-attendance at progress or information evenings, delays in responding to phone calls/letters, etc.

Some young carers worry about appearing different to their peers, bullying or interference in their family life and may seek to conceal their role from their peers and from teachers.

Working with Primary Schools

During transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3, pupils in Year 6 who are young carers will be identified to ensure continuing support is in place for them. This is completed during term 4 and 5 of Year 6. Our transition admin meet with Year 6 teachers to identify Young Carers, so during our induction days the Operational Lead can meet with them and explain how Young Carers are supported at RWBA.

Working with the Local Authority

Most young carers will meet the definition of a 'child in need' under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 and are entitled to an assessment from Children's Services. In the event of any young carers being at risk of significant harm the school's safeguarding policy will be followed.

Additional support for Young Carers at Royal Wootton Bassett Academy

At RWBA we identify Young Carers by

- Transition forms from parents in Year 6 or from in-year transfers forms.
- An Microsoft form is sent out every September to all parents as we recognise situations can change asking if their child is a Young Carer.

If we believe that a student is likely to be a Young Carer, we will be sensitive when approaching them and their family about this, as we acknowledge that it may not be something they wish to disclose. When a student is identified the following support is available.

- Every Young Carer will be identified on Arbor so that this information can be shared with their teachers.
- A visual display which offers informational leaflets and posters for potential Young Carers. The school will raise the profile of young carers through assemblies, tutor activities and appropriate Values Curriculum lessons.
- Liaison and reasonable adjustment for young carers who are unable to attend out of school activities e.g., detention, concerts, etc. due to their caring role.
- Consideration of communication with home at times of stress – e.g. the opportunity for young carers to telephone home during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Reasonable adjustment to accommodate parental liaison around progress and pastoral issues e.g. telephone consultation for parents' evening events, parking arrangements.
- Liaison with subject teachers to make reasonable adjustment at times of need around deadlines for homework.
- Space in school to complete homework (Library)
- Signposted to support from Wiltshire Young Carers/Swindon Carers and referrals for any trips away.

- School counsellor.
- Attendance intervention, work support during absence.
- Young Carer lunchtime club (every Wednesday lunchtime in little POD)

Additional support for staff at Royal Wootton Bassett Academy

Staff will be directed to complete online awareness training through the Carers Trust website and where appropriate face-to-face CPD.

There is staff training available from Wiltshire Council Young Carer Council.

Leadership and Management

Formal Oversight of Young Carers comes under the Deputy Headteacher for Safeguarding, however the immediate day to day responsibility is managed by DDSL for Young Carers. The DDSL responsible for Young Carers will have oversight of academic progress, along with the assessment team and will monitor the progress of young carer and intervene as necessary at key data analysis points.

The Operational Lead for Young Carers will have day to day management and responsibility for the support and care of Young Carers at RWBA

The tutor for each individual student will monitor and support the student and their family, and ensure their own knowledge is up to date through accessing the CPD found on the Carers Trust website

Outcomes

Students

- For young carers, this Policy will ensure they are supported in school and understood by staff
- Access and equality of opportunity will be upheld
- The publicising of young carers will raise awareness in the school community that other pupils and students in our school are young carers
- Have a flexible approach to deadlines and Independent learning.

Staff

- Staff will be aware of the group of Young Carers in the school and the students will be identified via our MIS system Arbor.
- Staff will be aware of the difficulties faced by young carers, offering them extra intervention as well as reasonable adjustments for homework and detentions
- Staff will be given whole school staff training on identification of Young Carers and the impact of caring along with signposting to available support

Parents

- The parents of Young Carers will receive regular information and will be offered reasonable adjustments to enable effective communication
- They will know who their child's tutor is and will be able to communicate via telephone and email if support is needed. They will also be informed of the members of staff who are SLT strategic lead and the Young Carer Operational lead in school.