





Lumen Learning Trust

Learning together for a brighter future

Young Carers Policy

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SIGNED DEPUTY EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL	Sarah Kober 	DATE	18 th March 2022
SIGNED CHAIR OF DIRECTORS	Ray Vango 	DATE	18 th March 2022

The Lumen Learning Trust puts the children's needs at the heart of its provision. Our whole school community is committed to enabling the children to become successful lifelong learners and happy, fulfilled adults who can make positive choices about their future.

Introduction

The Lumen Learning Trust believes that all children have the right to an education, regardless of what is happening at home. When a child's life is affected by looking after someone at home he or she may need additional support to help ensure their learning is not adversely affected.

Aims and Objectives

This policy explains how we will support a child who looks after someone at home. Lumen Learning Trust and its schools aim to:

- To put young carers' participation and voice at the heart of all we do.
- To use a whole family approach to increase the social inclusion, educational outcomes, emotional and physical wellbeing of young carers.
- To raise awareness and enable others to identify and support young carers; working in partnership to embed long-term change.
- We will learn from, develop and share best practice to continually improve our service and enable others to improve the lives of young carers.

Defining a young carer

A young carer is a child under 18 years of age whose life is affected by looking after someone at home. They carry out tasks and responsibilities which are additional to those appropriate for their age.

The person they care for may be a parent, sibling or grandparent and the care they give may be physical and/or emotional. The person they look after may have one of more of the following:

- Physical disability
- Mental health issues
- Learning difficulties
- Entrenched substance misuse problems
- Long-term or chronic illness

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. Responsibilities may include:

- Personal care (e.g. bathing, dressing, feeding)
- Giving or prompting medication/injections
- Shopping
- Housework
- Emotional support
- Looking after younger siblings
- Budgeting and paying bills

Young carers can feel tired, worried and isolated. Their social life is often restricted with few opportunities for fun and after school activities.

Identifying a young carer

Unless the school is advised about a child's home circumstances, young carers risk first being identified by negative aspects of their behaviour or work. Some young carers worry about bullying or interference in their family life and may seek to conceal their role from their peers and from teachers.

Some of the warning signs that might indicate that a child has unrecognised responsibilities are:

- Regular lateness or unauthorised absence.
- Tiredness in school.
- Erratic response to homework with incomplete, late or non-compliance to set tasks.
- Lack of concentration, anxiety or worry.
- Under-achievement for potential capacity.
- Behavioural problems, especially inappropriate responses possibly resulting from anger or frustration.

- Physical problems such as back pain from lifting.
- Limited social skills. This can include few or no peer friendships but possibly good relationships with adults and presenting as very mature for their age.
- Victim of bullying behaviours, perhaps linked to a family member's disability or state of health, e.g. substance misuse problem or behaviour.
- Apparent lack of interest in extra-curricular activities, especially after school.
- Apparent lack of engagement from parents, for example non-attendance at parent's meetings.

Process once a child has been identified as a possible young carer

The above warning signs may be indicators of a range of problems, some not associated with caring, however in dealing with any child exhibiting any of these signs staff will consider asking the child if they are helping to look after someone at home.

Any concerns about a child who may be considered as yet unidentified Young Carer or new information about an identified young carer should be reported to the school's Home School Link Worker (HSLW) who has responsibility for young carers as the designated Young Carers Lead. The HSLW is responsible for co-ordinating Young Carer support and is the key person in school through which relevant matters need to be passed.

Once identified as a young carer, The HSLW and associated school staff will work with outside professionals to support the child. The HSLW will work with the child and parent/carer to support their caring role and co-ordinate other means of support for the child and family with the aim to reduce the family member's reliance on the child.

Any information gained as a result of this process will be held on the child's personal file and kept securely. We will respect the right to privacy and will only share information about young carers and their families with external agencies who need to know in order to be able to help. Before sharing information with anyone else, the school will seek consent from a parent.

School support for identified young carers

Lumen Learning Trust and its schools offer the following support to young carers:

- Each school Home School Link Worker will have special responsibility for young carers, making themselves available and visible so that all children and families know who they are and what they can do to help. Their name and contact details will be displayed in the school, on the school website and in the main office. The Home School Link Worker will lead support work with young carers and will be the point of contact for young carers and their families.
- All school staff are made aware of who their young carer representative is and the reporting/referral process to this person.
- All schools have an effective internal reporting system between all staff and the young carer's representative in line with the school safeguarding policy.
- When a young carer leaves the school, either to proceed into further education or for any other reasons, details of their caring role and home situation will be passed on to the next school subject to consent from the young carer and his/her family.
- The Trust acknowledges that young carers will not be obliged to discuss their family situation unless they feel comfortable. The young person's caring role will be acknowledged and respected.
- School staff will talk to young carers in private and not in front of their peers unless the young carers asks for a friend to be present.
- The HSLW will refer young carers to the local authority young carers service, as well as referring families to other support services to ensure high quality support for young carers is achieved at all times.

- Will ensure that each school site is accessible to parents who have mobility and communication problems. We will provide alternative communication options for parents who are sensory impaired or house bound and will provide access to site for parents with impaired mobility.
- The Trust respects a young carer's (and their family's) right to privacy and will only share information about them with people who need to know in order to provide assistance. Information will only be shared with the consent of the child's family.
- We will consider alternatives (e.g. Brownies/Scouts) if a young carer is unable to attend out of school activities, sports coaching or concerts due to their caring role.
- We will accommodate communication with home during the day to help alleviate worries and concerns of a young carer in exceptional circumstances where such contact will not have a detrimental effect on a child's learning.
- We will give parents advice about how to get their children into school where transport is a problem.
- Provide a monthly support group as well as 1:1 support for the young carer.
- In the event of a partial school closure we will endeavour to offer a school place for those children identified as a young carer wherever possible.
- Raise awareness of the role of young carers delivered through PSHE lessons, staff training and assemblies.
- We will take an active role in seeking to identify and provide support to hidden young carers.
- Having an agreed data protection policy and child protection policy.

Children Act 2004

Most young carers will meet the definition of a 'child in need' under the Children Act 2004 and may be entitled to an assessment from Children's Services. In the event of any young carers being considered to be at risk of significant harm, the school's child protection procedures will be followed.

Equality Act 2010

Young carers' have protected characteristics as defined by the Act due to their association with a family member who has a disability or illness. A young carer cannot be discriminated against because of these characteristics.

Children and Families Act 2014

The Act has a section on Young Carers' and, in conjunction with the adults focused Care Act, seeks to make sure that Young Carers get the support they need. Local authorities are expected to try and identify Young Carers so they can be offered support.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE): Part One statutory guidance

This statutory guidance states that 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 identified as a young carer.

Key Personnel

- Head Teacher
- Inclusion Leader
- Home School Link Worker (HSLW)
- Nominated Child Protection governor

Contact details for the above personnel can be found on the individual school website or via the school office.