

Poltair School Young Carers Policy

At Poltair School, we believe that all children and young people have the right to an education, regardless of what is happening at home.

When a young person looks after someone in their family who has a serious physical or mental illness, disability or substance misuse problem, he or she may need a little extra support to help him or her get the most out of school. Our Young Carers Policy says how we will help any pupil who helps to look after someone at home.

Our school:

- Has an allocated member of staff with special responsibility for young carers and lets all new pupils know who they are and what they can do to help.
 - This is Mrs Stoneman our Family Support Worker
 - She is supported by Miss Owens, Assistant Head
- Provides a tutor activity in KS3 and KS4 within the academic year to identify the challenges faced by Young Carers,
- Look to identify students who need that additional support through a referral process within school, but also through communication with parents and external agencies
- Is accessible to parents who have mobility and communication difficulties and involves them in parents' evenings- providing support when needed.
- Will consider alternatives if a young carer is unable to attend out of school activities e.g. detention, sports coaching, concerts, due to their caring role

Works alongside Kernow Young Carers Service:

- We can provide students access to the Kernow Young Carers Service.
- Students have regular access to scheduled drop ins with Kernow Young Carers Service as well as an opportunity to access 1:1 support if, and when required
- Works with Headstart Kernow and Kernow Young Carers to provide increased opportunities to access local and regional events where possible

Additional Support:

- We can also put families in touch with other external support services.
- Respects your right to privacy and will only share information about you and your family with people who need to know to help you.
- Allows young carers to telephone home during breaks and lunchtimes through use of our Student Support Centre.
 - This is done by prior arrangement and with parental consent
- Complies with the Disability Discrimination Act by offering disabled parents/carers support to get their children into school.

Legislation and guidance

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Articles 28 and 29. Children and young people have the right to the best available education and to opportunities to develop their personality, mental and physical ability to their fullest potential.

The Children Act 1989.

The Framework for Assessment of Children in Need and their Families, which gives guidance on S. 17 of the Act, has a section on young carers which states that effective support will require “good quality joint work between adult and children’s social services as well as co-operation from schools and health workers . . . Young carers can receive help from both local and health authorities.” See paragraphs 3.61-3.63.

DCSF *Advice and guidance to Schools and Local Authorities on Managing Behaviour and Attendance: groups of pupils at particular risk* (replaced Circular 10/99 Social Inclusion: Pupil Support):

- “Young carers should not be expected to carry inappropriate levels of caring which have an adverse impact on their development and life chances. However, there are children and young people who undertake caring roles. Young carers of a sick or disabled relative at home may be late or absent from school because of their responsibilities. A study in one authority suggested there may be up to 30 young carers in a secondary school.”
- “In a genuine crisis, a school can approve absence for a child to care for a relative until other arrangements can be made....”
- “Schools should consider designating a member of staff to have responsibility for young carers. They can also contribute to schemes that support them, working with local authorities and voluntary agencies.”

Also, ***Effective Attendance Practice in Schools: An Overview*** of attendance guidance states that schools should have “support systems in place for vulnerable groups which provide” among other things, signposting and access to external support for parents and pupils” and “training for staff on specific needs of pupils e.g. young carers”.

The National Carers Strategy (1999)

Chapter 8 of this Government strategy states that “schools need to be sensitive to the individual problems faced by young carers” and that “The Government will draw schools’ attention to effective practice in meeting the needs of pupils who are young carers, for example, through link arrangements with young carers’ services. Schools might find it helpful to have one member of staff to act as a link between young carers, the education welfare service, social services and young carers’ services.” It suggests that there may be 30 young carers in every school.

Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995; Carers and Disabled Children Act 2001; Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004

Between them these Acts give young carers varying rights to an assessment of their needs, which must take into account their right to an education. See the SCIE

practice guide to the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004: www.scie.org.uk, commissioned by the Department of Health.

The Children's Society Young Carer's Initiative is funded by DCSF to develop Key Principles of Practice in supporting young carers and their families. Key Principle 4 states: *Young carers will have the same access to education and career choices as their peers:*

Standard: Schools and colleges take responsibility to identify young carers at an early stage and ensure that they have the same access to a full education and career choices as their peers.