

# Young Carers Policy 2025-2026

## 1. Background

In September 2025 the Department for Education statutory guidance document ([Keeping children safe in education 2025](#)) came into effect replacing the previous year's version. This document continues to focus on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children under the provisions of the Children Act 1989 and 2004 and following publication of Section 175 of The Education Act 2002 and 2011, including supporting vulnerable children or young people, such as Young Carers.

The [Children and Families Act 2014](#) and the [Care Act 2014](#), both significantly strengthened the rights for Young Carers. They aim to assess and support children and young people from taking on excessive or inappropriate care.

Young Carers are also recognised in the Ofsted Inspection Toolkit as being a disadvantaged group.

The Young Carers policy has been co-produced with Young Carers at City of Bristol College in 2024-2025 and with feedback from a Bristol Young Carers event in March 2025.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 A Young Carer is a young person aged 16-25 who is helping to look after someone who could not cope without their support. Most are caring for a parent, but some may be taking responsibility for a sibling, grandparent or other relative. In some instances, a young carer may care for more than one family member.

The person they look after will have one or more of the following:

- Physical disability (including sensory disability).
- Learning disability.
- Mental health problem.
- Chronic illness.
- Substance misuse problem.

2.2. Because of their responsibilities at home, a Young Carer might experience:

- Being late or absent due to responsibilities at home.

- Concentration problems, anxiety or worry in college.
- Emotional distress.
- Tiredness in college.
- Lack of time for homework.
- Poor attainment.
- Physical problems such as back pain from lifting.
- False signs of maturity, as a result of assuming adult roles.
- Behavioural problems (taking out their anger or frustration).
- Lack of time for extra-curricular activities.
- Isolation, embarrassed to take friends home or not have as many opportunities to establish social connection/ friendships.
- Limited social skills.
- Bullying.
- Feeling that no one understands and that no support is available.
- Low self-esteem.

2.3 The caring responsibilities could include but may not be limited to:

- Nursing care.
- Personal intimate care.
- Emotional care.
- Domestic care.
- Financial care.
- Childcare.

### 3. Scope

- 3.1 City of Bristol College is committed to removing barriers to education for Young Carers to access education. The College aims to ensure Young Carers at college are identified at an early stage and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled.
- 3.2 Many Young Carers are not known to be caring by college teams, so being a Young Carer can be a hidden cause of poor attendance, under achievement and bullying, with many Young Carers dropping out of education or achieving no qualification.
- 3.3 This policy aims to outline the support that City Of Bristol College offers to students who have a caring responsibility, and to provide a culture and environment which is inclusive and responsive to their needs; in order to help them balance their study and caring commitments, and, access emotional and practical support, to enable them to make the most of their time at college.

### 4. Intent

The intent of the Young Carers policy is to ensure that we are:

- Promoting the education and welfare of Young Carers.
- Ensuring that Young Carers have a voice in issues relating to their education.
- Challenging negative stereotyping and promoting inclusion.
- Targeting support appropriately.
- Ensuring appropriate level of support for parents/carers.

### 5. Policy Implementation

- 5.1 Every opportunity will be taken to identify young people with a caring role, pre-entry/enrolment/induction and at 1:1 meetings and reviews throughout the year.
- 5.2 The College recognises that students may not be carers upon joining the College but may become carers at some point during their time at college. Student Carers may be directed to the Young Carer Lead at any stage.
- 5.3. On disclosure, colleagues will ensure that the Young Carers lead is made aware in order to enable targeted communications and support throughout their time as a student.
- 5.4 Students known to have caring responsibilities will be highlighted through Pro-resolution alerts and flags. This enables colleagues to provide tailored support during guidance sessions, identify issues that may arise in a timely manner and arrange a referral for extra support, if appropriate.

## 6. Role and responsibilities:

Designated colleagues with responsibility:

The Young carers Lead for City of Bristol College is **Kirsty Cross**.

The role of the Young Carers lead **is to**;

- act as a contact point for all relevant agencies, the Local Authority, Health and other voluntary agencies involved in supporting the young person,
- refer Young Carers to external Young Carers services,
- promote understanding and development of policies and resources to support and include Young Carers,
- promote awareness amongst colleagues of the difficulties and educational disadvantages of young people who are carers,
- ensure the college through the designated lead, puts in place arrangements to promote effective communication between all those involved with Young Carers,
- ensure that all colleagues have access to training and information to enable them to recognise the indications that a child/young person has a caring responsibility, as well as increasing their understanding of such responsibilities,
- invite Young Carers support services to attend events held at the college and promote their services,
- monitor attainment, attendance and withdrawals of Young Carers alongside curriculum teams to provide targeted support,
- support with identification and transition of Young Carers joining via liaison with feeder schools and external Young Carer services,
- to follow child protection procedures regarding any Young Carer (under the age of 18) at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring, and
- to follow adult safeguarding procedures if any Young Carer is identified at risk of neglect due to their caring responsibilities.

## 6.2 All colleagues supporting Young Carers:

It is important that all colleagues who are in contact with a child or young person are aware that they are a Young Carer, should the student inform us.

However, it is important that information around the reasons for the young person being a carer is shared on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with the wishes of the young person and will recognise that flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of the young carer.

Ordinarily available provision includes (but is not limited to):

- Referral to Young Carers lead via MyConcern for consideration of internal and external support.
- Ensure access to appropriate financial support avenues (such as LSF where applicable).
- Ensure the Young Carer's voice and the impact of care responsibilities is listened to with compassion.
- Recognise that the Young Carer's behaviour may be affected by the caring responsibilities they have undertaken that day/week.
- Ensure Young Carers don't have to repeat their story to multiple people within college.
- Access to telephone, to phone home.
- Discretion around punctuality to class (where reasonable and proportionate).
- Support and reasonable adjustments to be considered where attendance is affected, in line with the Positive Attendance, Behaviour and Commitment to Study Policy or the Fitness To Study Policy.
- Negotiable deadlines for coursework or assignments (when needed and permitted within the regulations of the qualification and/or awarding organisation).
- Arrangements for college work to be sent home (when there is a genuine crisis).
- Access for parents/guardians with impaired mobility and/or communication difficulties to college-based events or meetings.
- Alternative communication options for parents who are sensory impaired, housebound, or have a language or other communication barrier wherever possible.
- Considerations to alternatives if a Young Carer is unable to attend college due to their caring commitments where reasonable, practical and proportionate.

## 7. Governance

Support for Young Carers and adherence to this policy will be monitored and scrutinised through the Strategic Safeguarding Action Plan and via SLT reports and Governors reports.

## 8. The Young Carer (information sharing)

- 8.1. It is important that a young person is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. It should be explained that the college, the Social Worker, designated member of staff and the child/young person's parent/carer are working together to promote their education.
- 8.2. It is important to establish the child/young person's view of their circumstances and identify what they want others to know.

## 9. Related Policies, Procedures and Legislation

This policy should not be read in isolation and should be cross-referenced with all relevant College employment and student policies and procedures and external legislation. Linked policies/ legislation are:

### College Policies:

- Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Positive Attendance, Behaviour and Commitment to Study Policy
- Fitness to Study policy

### Legislation:

- The Care Act 2014
- The National Carers Strategy (1999)
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Articles 28 and 29
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- Children's Act 1989 And 2004
- Education Act 2002 and 2011
- KCSIE Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)

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