

# Getting it Right for Young Carers

GUIDANCE ON IMPLEMENTING THE CARERS ACT  
FOR IDENTIFYING AND SUPPORTING YOUNG CARERS



## Background

The Carers Scotland Act 2016 places a statutory duty on Scottish Borders Council to offer to prepare a young carer statement for carers under 18. This applies to any child or young person who is under the age of 18 or is still a pupil at school and who provides care to another individual. The impact of caring can effect a young person's social, emotional and educational development. In keeping with Scottish Borders vision in the Integrated Children's Plan we wish to ensure that these children and young people are enabled to achieve their potential and enjoy a quality of life equal to their peers. The aim of the Act is to make sure young carers get the help they need to enable them to continue to care – if they wish to and it is appropriate for them to do so – and to have a life away from their caring role.

## Meeting the needs of Young Carers

Getting it Right for Every Child is embedded into our local day to day processes and practice to ensure the Wellbeing and safety of our young people. Assessing the needs of young carers should follow the National Practice Model and utilise the Scottish Borders Children & Young People's Single Planning Process (see Scottish Borders Child's Planning Manual).

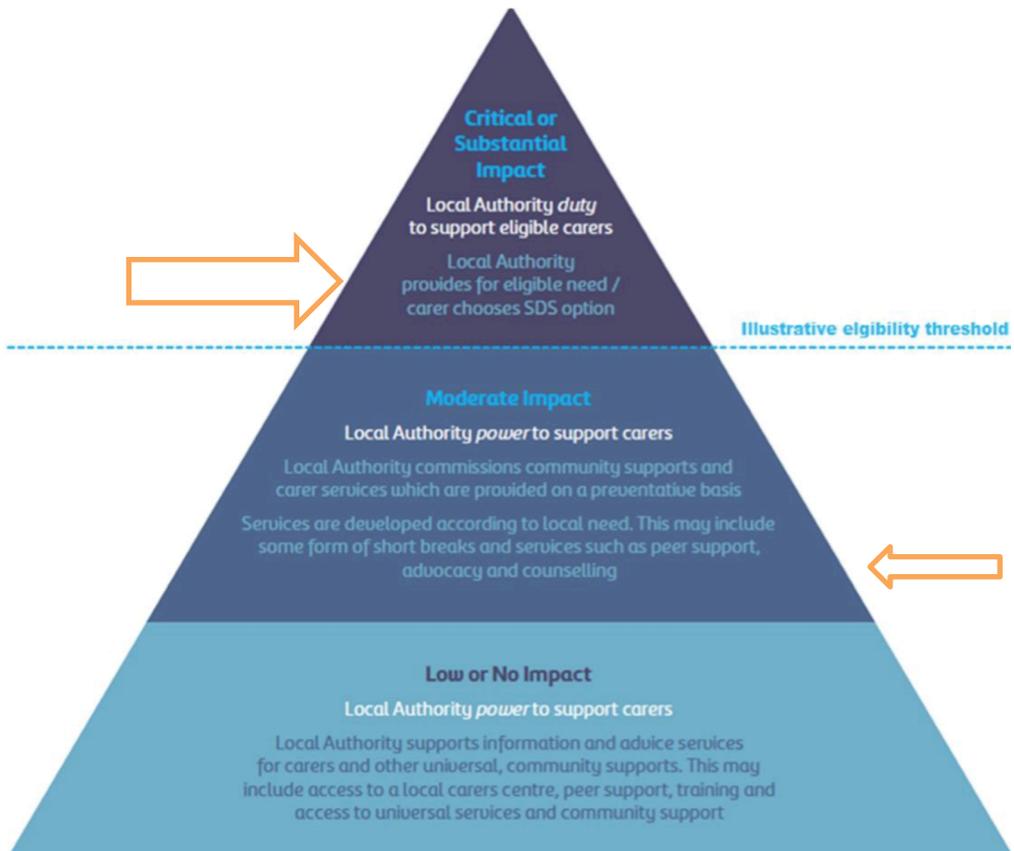
Young carers may be taking on a range of roles and responsibilities. This could include:

- Managing household finances.
- Providing a caring role for siblings.
- Ensuring the cared for person takes appropriate medication.
- Managing appointments for the cared for person.
- Providing direct care - help with washing, going to the toilet, going shopping

The diagram overleaf identifies the Eligibility Criteria to be used for identifying appropriate support for young carers with reference to the 4 stages of the Scottish Borders Children & Young People's Single Planning Process.

Stage 4

High Level Specialisation  
Provision



Stage 3

Multi –  
Agency  
Working



Stage 1 Universal Services  
Stage 2 – Universal Plus Working

**In the Scottish Borders, children and young people meet the threshold for support if they live in the Scottish Borders and satisfy the following:**

1. They meet the definition of carer – “carer” means an individual who provides or intends to provide care for another individual (the “cared-for person”)
2. They meet the definition of young carer - “young carer” means a carer who is under 18 years old, or has attained the age of 18 years while a pupil at a school, and has since attaining that age remained a pupil at that or another school
3. They have caring responsibilities exceeding that which an “average” child or young person of the same age and stage of development might reasonably be expected to undertake
4. Has caring responsibilities which have, or are likely to have, an adverse impact upon their wellbeing, assessed in terms of the Wellbeing Indicators.

## Identifying young carers – Identification

Due to the individual nature of each young carers role and responsibilities the challenges of caring may manifest itself in many ways. There are however some indicators that a young person is fulfilling this role these include:

- Late or missing from school days or weeks.
- Leaving school early.
- Tired, anxious or withdrawn due to home circumstances.
- Defensive or secretive about home.
- Homework / Coursework not being completed
- Little or no involvement in after school activities or social events.

## Self-Identification

It is important that we enable children and young people to feel that they can identify themselves as young carers. Some may feel uncomfortable to do so for a variety of reasons such as:

- They worry that the family will be split up
- They want to keep it a secret and/or are embarrassed about the person who is ill or has disabilities.
- They may not realise that they are carers or that life is different to that of their peers.
- They don't want to be any different from their peers.

We can promote the self-reporting by:

- Providing awareness / training to all relevant school staff.
- Developing a secure and safe environment where children and young people have the confidence to talk to staff
- Providing appropriate opportunities for children and young people to self-identify.
- Creating an environment whereby families have the confidence to inform your school that their child has caring responsibilities.