

Introduction to Supporting Young Carers in Schools: A Step-by-step Guide for Leaders, Teachers and Non-teaching Staff



Welcome to Supporting Young Carers in Schools: A Step-by-step Guide for Leaders, Teachers and Non-teaching Staff.

This resource has been designed with teachers and school staff to help make the identification and support of young carers in schools as easy as possible. It is for use in secondary and primary schools in England but could be easily adapted for use in the rest of the UK.

“ Schools are perfectly placed to offer the support these children and young people need. The ... Step-by-step Guide will act as an invaluable resource for schools in providing the right assistance to pupils as and when they need it. ”

Edward Timpson, Children and Families Minister

Who are young carers?

A young carer is a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person.

As many as one in 12 pupils in the UK could be a young carer.

Often, these children are caring for relatives without their teachers' knowledge, slipping through the net, undetected by support services. The caring role they carry out means they have unique experiences and demands that impact on their capacity to enjoy and achieve at school.

What are the potential impacts of caring on pupil attainment, achievement and wellbeing?

Young carers are a vulnerable and disadvantaged group specifically mentioned in Ofsted's School Inspection Handbook (Ofsted, 2014).

Research shows that:

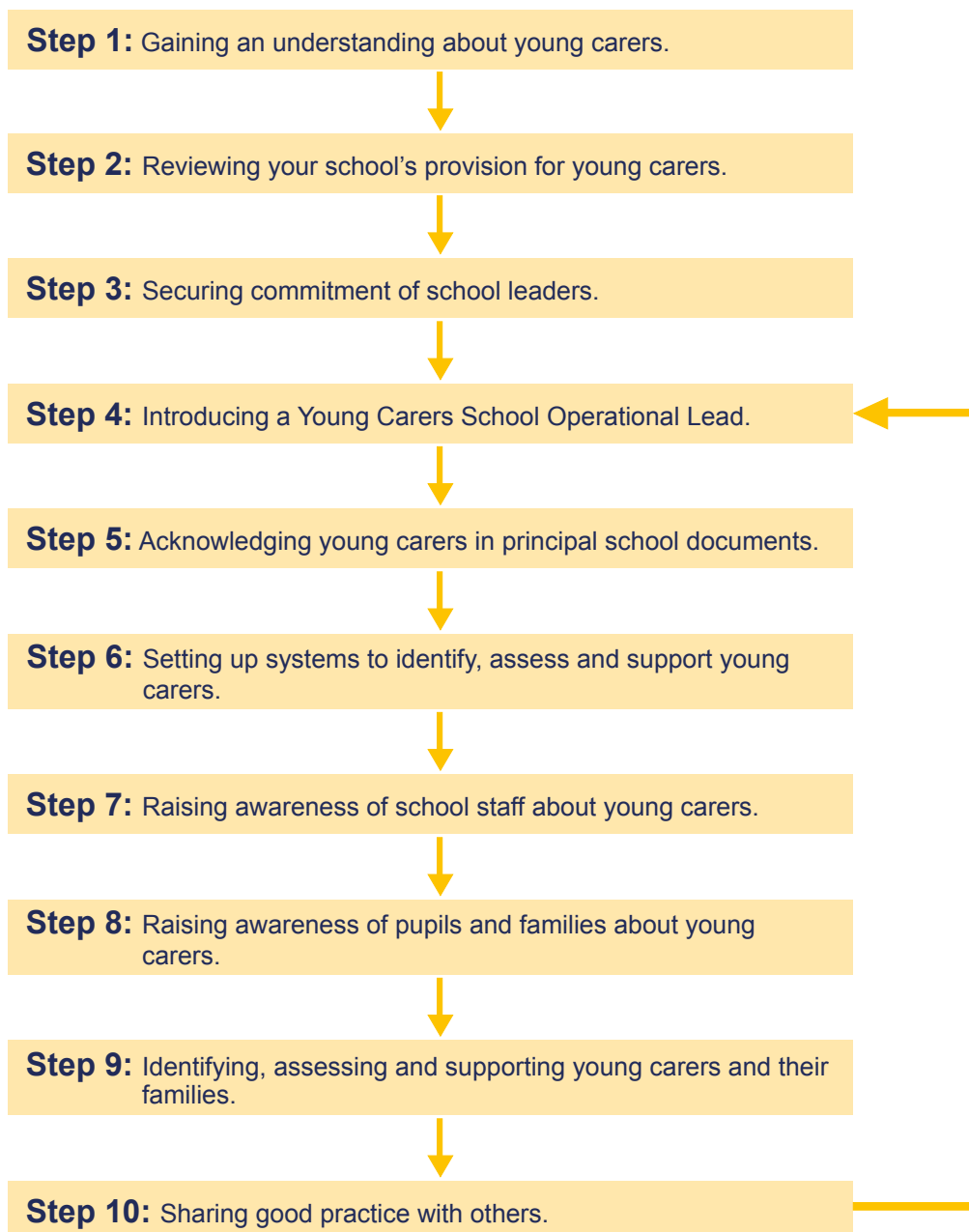
- 27% of young carers (aged 11–15) miss school or experience educational difficulties (40% where children care for a relative with drug or alcohol problems) (Dearden, C, Becker, S, 2004).
- They have significantly lower educational attainment at GCSE level – the difference between nine Cs and nine Ds (The Children's Society, 2013).
- They are more likely than the national average not to be in education, employment or training (NEET) between 16 and 19 (The Children's Society, 2013).
- A quarter of young carers said they were bullied at school because of their caring role (Carers Trust, 2013).
- 81% of young adult carers said their caring role makes them or had made them more stressed (Carers Trust, 2017).

“Identifying early means an improvement in achievement, attainment and wellbeing if the right support is offered.”

Young Carers School
Operational Lead

What does Supporting Young Carers in Schools: A Step-by-step Guide for Leaders, Teachers and Non-teaching Staff offer your school?

Many schools are delivering exceptional practice, making a real and positive difference to the young carers they support. Other schools have told us they want to achieve these excellent outcomes, but don't know where to begin. This Step-by-step Guide sets out ten key steps to make identifying and supporting young carers as easy as possible:



“ My caring role ... sets me back and means I can't reach my potential. ”

Young carer

Like other aspects of school life, the development of effective support for young carers is reliant on regular reviews of current provision and the identification of areas for continual improvement. The steps are therefore set out as a cyclical process, which schools should engage with throughout each school year.

Making it as easy as possible for schools to support young carers

The Step-by-step Guide has been written in association with teachers and school staff who understand the pressures that schools face to deliver the very wide range of demands placed upon them. As a result, it is designed to be as flexible and helpful as possible.

Each step is accompanied by:

- Templates and exemplars.
- Materials to raise staff awareness.
- Teaching resources.
- Pupil noticeboard material.
- How to guides to running effective support.

The tools accompanying the Step-by-step Guide are available for schools to use and adapt to suit their school structure and local circumstances. They are available online at professionals.carers.org.



Not all schools will need to use all the tools included here. Some may find it more helpful to choose those that will help enhance the support they already offer to young carers and their families while others will want to simply start and build their activities over a number of years.

About Carers Trust

Carers Trust is a major charity for, with and about carers. We work to improve support, services and recognition for anyone living with the challenges of caring, **unpaid**, for a family member or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or addiction problems.

We do this with a UK wide network of quality assured independent partners, through our unique online services and through the provision of grants to help carers get the extra help they need to live their own lives. With these locally based Network Partners we are able to support carers in their homes through the provision of replacement care, and in the community with information, advice, emotional support, hands on practical help and access to much needed breaks. We offer specialist services for carers of people of all ages and conditions and a range of individually tailored support and group activities.

Our vision is that **unpaid carers** count and can access the help they need to live their lives.

We reach more than 514,860 carers across the UK, including over 25,300 young carers. Our services for young carers are available in local communities via quality assured Network Partners and online via our award winning online service Babble (babble.carers.org). Designed by young carers for young carers, Babble is a safe space where young carers can come together and share their experiences, receive specific support and take part in online events. Schools can refer young carers to Babble or can help them find their local service on Carers.org. In addition to providing much needed practical and emotional advice, information and support we work with young carers to give them time out from their caring role and a chance to be a child again.

The evidence that we gain from service provision enables us to drive policy change, based on direct knowledge of young carers' needs at UK-wide, nationwide and local level. Our campaigning and advocacy work enables us to raise the issues that young carers face wherever it makes the most impact and will change their lives for the better. We regularly work in partnership with other organisations for the benefit of young carers including professional bodies, national governments and charities such as Barnardo's and The Children's Society. With the changes in legislation there has never been a better time for Carers Trust's young carers programme. We know that there are some 700,000 young carers across the UK, that's two in every classroom, so our most important work is in working alongside organisations who work with children and young people to help them identify young carers and signpost them to support.

About The Children's Society

The Children's Society is a national charity that runs local services to support children and young people who are at risk of exploitation or harm, living in care, or let down by the systems meant to protect them. They come to us when they are at their most vulnerable, when they're in desperate need of help, when they have nowhere left to turn.

At their moment of crisis, we are with them every step of the way, until they're ready to share their experiences, often for the first time. We get to the heart of their problems, start to repair the damage, and help them get the services they need.

Across the country, particularly in the poorest areas, we're helping more than 18,000 children and young people through over 100 services run by almost 900 staff and more than 9,000 volunteers. We work hand in hand with children to make sure their voices are heard, campaigning for changes to the law to stop the mistakes of the past being repeated in the future.

The Children's Society's Include service is home to the national Young Carers Initiative supporting children and young people who care for parents or siblings who suffer from chronic illness or disability. We work with voluntary and statutory services across the country to support young carers. We campaign for change and promote best practice with central and local government. We also help young carers by giving them a platform to share their experiences and raise awareness about the issues they face. For more information and a range of information materials and resources visit youngcarer.com or call 01962 711 511.

The Young Carers in Schools programme

Young Carers in Schools is an exciting initiative in England and Wales that makes it as easy as possible for schools to identify and support young carers, and awards good practice.

Young Carers in Schools in England

Run jointly by Carers Trust and The Children's Society, we are working with schools, young carers services and local authorities to share good practice and develop relevant, accessible tools and training. This initiative has been funded in England by The Queen's Trust and Big Lottery Fund.

The Step-by-step Guide builds on and develops principles and tools from a previous resource (Phelps, D, Leadbitter, H, Manzi, D, 2010). Some of the tools linked to the guide have been taken and/or adapted from this resource.

By taking part, schools can have access to:

- **A baseline review:** enabling you to prioritise what to do next, this tool contains helpful signposts to the programme materials most relevant and useful to you.

- **Supporting Young Carers in Schools: A Step-by-step Guide for Leaders, Teachers and Non-teaching Staff:** helping schools step by step, this resource contains essential tools, templates and guidance. With a tool for each step, no school needs to start from scratch.
- **Webinars, videos and case studies:** unpicking hot topics with unmissable, expert advice from award-winning schools.
- **Termly newsletters:** spotlighting key policy developments and new resources, and the very latest programme news.
- **Young Carers in Schools Award:** enabling your school to showcase its provision for young carers.

Get involved now by visiting www.youngcarersinschools.com.

Young Carers in Schools in Wales

The Young Carers in Schools Wales programme builds on work developed in England. By taking part, schools will have access to:

- **A bilingual Step-by-step Guide:** making it as easy as possible for you to identify and support young carers.
- **Tools:** including templates, proformas and exemplars accompanying each step.
- **Additional Resources:** a growing library of online materials to support learning, training and progress in relation to the schools programme across the UK.

For further information visit professionals.carers.org.



Don't forget to look out for this symbol throughout the Step-by-step Guide to find out how you can use the tools provided to meet the criteria in the Young Carers in Schools Award.

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- Key information
- Tool 1: Sharing good practice – a case study example

Additional resources

References

- Carers Trust (2013), *Supporting Young Carers in School: An Introduction for Primary and Secondary School Staff* (Carers Trust).
- Carers Trust (2017), *When I Grow Up* (Carers Trust).
- Dearden, C and Becker, S (2004), *Young Carers in the UK: The 2004 Report* (Carers UK and The Children's Society).
- Ofsted (2014), *School Inspection Handbook* (Ofsted).
- Phelps, D, Leadbitter H, Manzi D (2010), *Supporting Young Carers: A Resource for Schools* (The Princess Royal Trust for Carers and The Children's Society).
- The Children's Society (2013), *Hidden from View* (The Children's Society).




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