

# Bedford High School

## A Specialist Business and Enterprise College

Work Hard Be Respectful Take Responsibility



## Young Carers Policy

|                              |                                     |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>School Address</b>        | Manchester Road<br>Leigh<br>WN7 2LU |
| <b>School Contact Number</b> | 01942 909009                        |

### Document control

|                                                   |                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Current author                                    | Rebecca Ramsden                                  |
| Governing Committee                               |                                                  |
| Electronic copies of this plan are available from | FROG VLN, Website                                |
| Hard copies of this plan are available from       | School Business and Finance Manager / HR Manager |
| Public sector equality duty guidance considered   | Yes                                              |

Bedford High School remains committed to ensuring that young carers have equal access to education, enrichment opportunities and support regardless of protected characteristics, family circumstances or caring responsibilities.

We recognise that young carers are not a homogeneous group and the caring role will be different dependent on the family member's health, disability or support needs. Regardless of the caring role they take on, we recognise that young carers face additional challenges at home and at school. We understand that young carers may be vulnerable to adverse outcomes including poor attendance, emotional wellbeing difficulties, social isolation, risk of unmet needs, safeguarding concerns and barriers to educational achievement.

The school recognises that some young carers may also have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Support will be coordinated to ensure that both caring responsibilities and SEND needs are appropriately identified and addressed.

Where caring responsibilities appear inappropriate, excessive, or likely to impact a child's welfare, safeguarding procedures will be followed in line with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

We are committed to supporting young carers in accessing their education as reflected in the national inclusion strategies. This policy aims to ensure that young carers are identified as early as possible and offered appropriate support and guidance to access the education to which they are entitled.

The school will endeavour to maintain a young-carer-friendly environment through staff awareness training, awareness-raising activities and partnership working with specialist young carer services.

#### **Relevant Legislation and Guidance:**

This policy should be read alongside:

- Children and Families Act 2014 (including young carers' needs assessments)
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance
- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice

#### **1. Key Staff**

| <b>Role</b>                        | <b>Name</b>     | <b>Telephone</b> | <b>Email</b>                                                                           |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Head teacher                       | Paul McCaffery  | 01942<br>909009  | <a href="mailto:P.McCaffery@bedford.wigan.sch.uk">P.McCaffery@bedford.wigan.sch.uk</a> |
| Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) | Rebecca Ramsden |                  | <a href="mailto:r.ramsden@bedford.wigan.sch.uk">r.ramsden@bedford.wigan.sch.uk</a>     |
| Attendance & Safeguarding          | N.Quinn         |                  | <a href="mailto:n.quinn@bedford.wigan.sch.uk">n.quinn@bedford.wigan.sch.uk</a>         |

|                                  |                |                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|----------------------------------|----------------|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Officer (DDSL)                   |                |                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Pastoral Year Teams              |                |                     | <a href="mailto:year7team@bedford.wigan.sch.uk">year7team@bedford.wigan.sch.uk</a><br><a href="mailto:year8team@bedford.wigan.sch.uk">year8team@bedford.wigan.sch.uk</a><br><a href="mailto:year9team@bedford.wigan.sch.uk">year9team@bedford.wigan.sch.uk</a><br><a href="mailto:year10team@bedford.wigan.sch.uk">year10team@bedford.wigan.sch.uk</a><br><a href="mailto:year11team@bedford.wigan.sch.uk">year11team@bedford.wigan.sch.uk</a> |
| Nominated Governor               | Mrs Hayes      | N/A                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Agency Contact Details</b>    |                |                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Children's Social Care referrals | Duty Team      | 01942 828300        | <a href="https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Health-Social-Care/Children-and-young-people/ProfessionalReferralForm.aspx">https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Health-Social-Care/Children-and-young-people/ProfessionalReferralForm.aspx</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| School Nursing                   | Gillian Hamlet | 01942 483558        | <a href="mailto:gillian.hamlet2@nhs.net">gillian.hamlet2@nhs.net</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Wigan and Leigh Young Carers     |                | <u>01942 697885</u> | <a href="http://www.wlcccarers.com">www.wlcccarers.com</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

## 2. Definition

We have adopted the most recent definition from the Children and Families Act 2014, which also includes sibling carers.

A Young Carer is defined as:

“...a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person... this relates to care for any family member who is physically or mentally ill, frail elderly, disabled or misuses alcohol or substances.”

The person(s) that a young carer looks after, may have one or more of the following:

- A physical disability including sensory disability
- Learning disability
- Mental health difficulties
- Chronic or terminal illness
- Substance misuse issue

NB: It must be noted; the above list is not exhaustive.

A young carer may take on additional responsibilities that are extra to those appropriate for their age and ability. They may include:

- Personal care such as washing, toileting, dressing, feeding, help with mobility, administering medication and ensuring safety
- Domestic help such as cooking, cleaning, laundry, paying bills and child care
- Emotional support

### **3. Aim**

We acknowledge there will be a number of young carers who attend Bedford High School, and their care and welfare are of paramount importance to us. We aim to:

- Educate students and families as to what is meant by the term 'young carer' and what support is available
- Encourage young carers and their families to accept the support available to them
- Reduce stigma and ensure that everyone promotes a culture of openness around those who care for others
- Ensure that staff are aware that every child is a potential young carer and have this in mind when supporting students
- Reduce the number of times that a student has to tell their story

### **4. Educational Impact**

Due to the above responsibilities at home, a young carer may experience:

- Absenteeism / Punctuality issues
- Concentration difficulties and/or tiredness
- Mental health and wellbeing concerns or anxieties
- Lack of time / space for homework completion
- Poor attainment and progress
- Friendship difficulties
- Behavioural difficulties
- Lack of time for extracurricular activities
- Financial difficulties, impacting on educational visits / enrichment

It may be also difficult to engage parents due to their own difficulties or due to a fear of involvement with external agencies.

### **5. Support Offered**

#### **Identification and Assessment**

The school maintains a confidential Young Carers Register. Inclusion on the register is based on identification, consent where appropriate, and professional judgement. Information is stored securely and reviewed regularly.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will also hold the role of Young Carers Lead. By doing so, the DSL will maintain the young carers register, ensuring the school takes a proactive approach to the identification of young carers. We recognise that many young carers remain hidden and may not identify themselves as having caring responsibilities. Identification begins during the transition process from primary school, through liaison with feeder schools, information shared by families, and transition meetings where appropriate. Throughout a student's time at Bedford High School, staff remain vigilant to indicators that a young person may have caring responsibilities, including attendance concerns, punctuality issues, tiredness, emotional wellbeing needs, difficulties completing homework, or disclosures made by the student or family. Opportunities to identify young carers are embedded within pastoral support, safeguarding processes, admissions information, parental communications and student voice activities. Where a young carer is identified, the school will work sensitively with the student and their family to understand their circumstances, assess any support needs and ensure appropriate support is put in place at the earliest opportunity. Young carers will have opportunities to express their views and influence decisions about support. Staff will avoid assumptions about caring responsibilities and will consider the young person's wishes regarding information sharing.

Under the Children and Families Act 2014, an actual or potential young carer has the right to an assessment of need. A young carer's assessment takes a holistic approach and will consider strengths as well as need. An assessment may result in signposting or referral to other support services that we think could benefit the whole family. If a student is identified as a potential young carer, the school will offer additional support, and will encourage the family to consent to the completion of a referral to Wigan and Leigh Young Carers Centre.

Following consent being gained, the student's PGO will complete the referral form (Appendix 1) and submit it in a timely manner to [info@wlcccarers.com](mailto:info@wlcccarers.com) or via post to: Young Carers Project Manager, Wigan and Leigh Carers Centre, 3-5 Frederick Street, Hindley, Wigan, WN2 3BD.

Upon receipt of the referral, Wigan and Leigh Young Carers will send an acknowledgement letter to the family, with additional information and will arrange a home visit and a young carer's assessment as appropriate.

### **Support**

The designated point-of-contact for each student who is a young carer is their Pastoral Guidance Officer (PGO), who acts as a link between home, staff and other external agencies. We appreciate that young carers may not wish to discuss their caring role or family circumstances, but we aim to foster openness and a willingness when appraised of any information given. We treat young carers in a caring and compassionate manner at all times, and in a child-centred way, and fully acknowledge the important role they fulfil at home. Young carers will be involved in decisions affecting them and their views will be sought when planning support.

We offer the following as a means of support:

- Wellbeing and learning support from the pastoral year team and/or wellbeing officer
- Access to an Early Help if required
- Support with crisis management / emergency planning (for example who will care for them if their single parent goes into hospital)
- Extracurricular activities, including homework support
- Regular home contact
- Reasonable adjustments to start/end times to the school day (if appropriate)
- Lunchtime provision for sanctions if required
- Access to a telephone if contact with home is needed
- Regular meetings to check on progress and home situations

The school will monitor attendance patterns for young carers to identify whether caring responsibilities are creating barriers to attendance. Support will be personalised and proportionate, with consideration given to the circumstances behind absence or lateness.

At all times the needs of the student are taken into consideration and, in consultation with all appropriate professionals, action planning will be regular and effective. The linked outside agency is Wigan and Leigh Young Carers and they can be contacted via the PGO.

### **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

Information about a student's caring role will be shared only with relevant staff on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with safeguarding, GDPR and information-sharing requirements.

Records relating to young carers will be retained and disposed of in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy and retention schedule.

## **6. Related Policies**

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Attendance Policy
- SEND Information Report & SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Equality Policy
- Early Help Procedures

## **7. Policy Monitoring and Review**

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through:

- The identification process
- Attendance and engagement patterns
- Voice of the Child
- Referrals and partnership working
- Review of support plans

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis

## **Appendix 1: Wigan and Leigh Young Carers Referral Form**

**NB: WLYC accept online referrals**

**YOUNG CARERS TEAM  
WIGAN AND LEIGH CARERS CENTRE**



## REFERRAL FORM

| 1) The Young Person                                                                         |                     |                              |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| Name                                                                                        | Age                 | D.O.B                        | School Yr          | Gender                 | Ethnicity                |              |                            |
|                                                                                             |                     |                              |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
| Parent / Guardian Contact Name                                                              |                     |                              |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
| Address:                                                                                    |                     | Parent / Guardian's Contacts |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
|                                                                                             |                     | Home Tel                     |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
|                                                                                             |                     | Mobile                       |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
|                                                                                             |                     | Email                        |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
| Best way contact?                                                                           |                     |                              |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
| Cared for person (please circle or state)                                                   |                     | Mum                          | Dad                | Sibling                | Other (please specify):  |              |                            |
| School / College / Employer (if applicable)                                                 |                     |                              |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
| Are school / college aware of caring situation at home?                                     |                     |                              |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
| School contact person                                                                       |                     |                              |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
| Consent to contact school                                                                   |                     | Yes                          |                    |                        | No                       |              |                            |
| Has the young person missed school or been late because of their caring role?               |                     |                              |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
| Has an Early Help, or CiN, or similar been completed (or in progress) for the Young Person? |                     |                              |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
| Are any other agencies involved?                                                            |                     |                              |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
| 2) Other Household Members                                                                  |                     |                              |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
| Name                                                                                        | D.O.B.              | Relationship                 | Medical Conditions |                        |                          |              |                            |
|                                                                                             |                     |                              |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
|                                                                                             |                     |                              |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
|                                                                                             |                     |                              |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
|                                                                                             |                     |                              |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
| 3) Reason(s) for caring (please tick)                                                       |                     |                              |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
| Sensory Disability                                                                          | Learning Disability | Physical Disability          | Long-term Illness  | Drugs / Alcohol Misuse | Mental Health Conditions | Older person | Other (give details below) |
|                                                                                             |                     |                              |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
| Additional and/or significant information about the condition of the cared for:             |                     |                              |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |
|                                                                                             |                     |                              |                    |                        |                          |              |                            |

|                                                                                                             |     |                              |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------------------------------|------|
|                                                                                                             |     |                              |      |
| <b>4) Caring Role</b>                                                                                       |     |                              |      |
| What does the young person do to help the person they care for? (continue on additional sheet if necessary) |     |                              |      |
|                                                                                                             |     |                              |      |
| How does the caring role affect the young person? (continue on additional sheet if necessary)               |     |                              |      |
|                                                                                                             |     |                              |      |
| <b>5) Referrer details</b>                                                                                  |     |                              |      |
| Name                                                                                                        |     | Job Title/Role               |      |
| Agency                                                                                                      |     | Telephone Number             |      |
| Email                                                                                                       |     |                              |      |
| Address                                                                                                     |     |                              |      |
| Date of Referral                                                                                            |     | Date of referrers assessment |      |
| Feedback on Assessment required                                                                             | Yes |                              |      |
| <b>Consent:</b> Please note that your data will be held securely by Wigan & Leigh Carers Centre.            |     |                              |      |
| Signature of Child/Young Person (if appropriate)                                                            |     |                              | Date |
| Signature of Parent/Guardian                                                                                |     |                              | Date |
| Signature of Referrer                                                                                       |     |                              | Date |