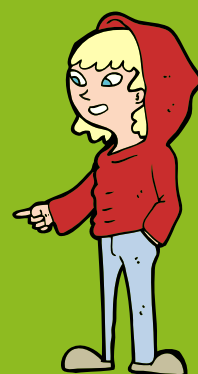
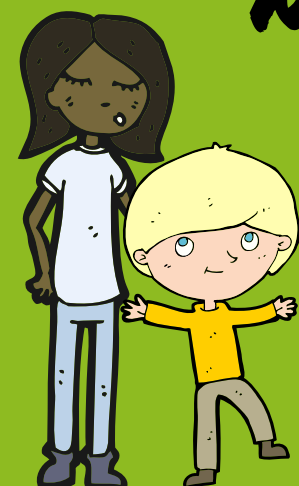


2023-2024

**NORTHUMBERLAND YOUNG  
CARERS TOOLKIT**



**A TOOLKIT  
FOR  
EDUCATION  
SETTINGS**





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# AIM OF THIS TOOLKIT

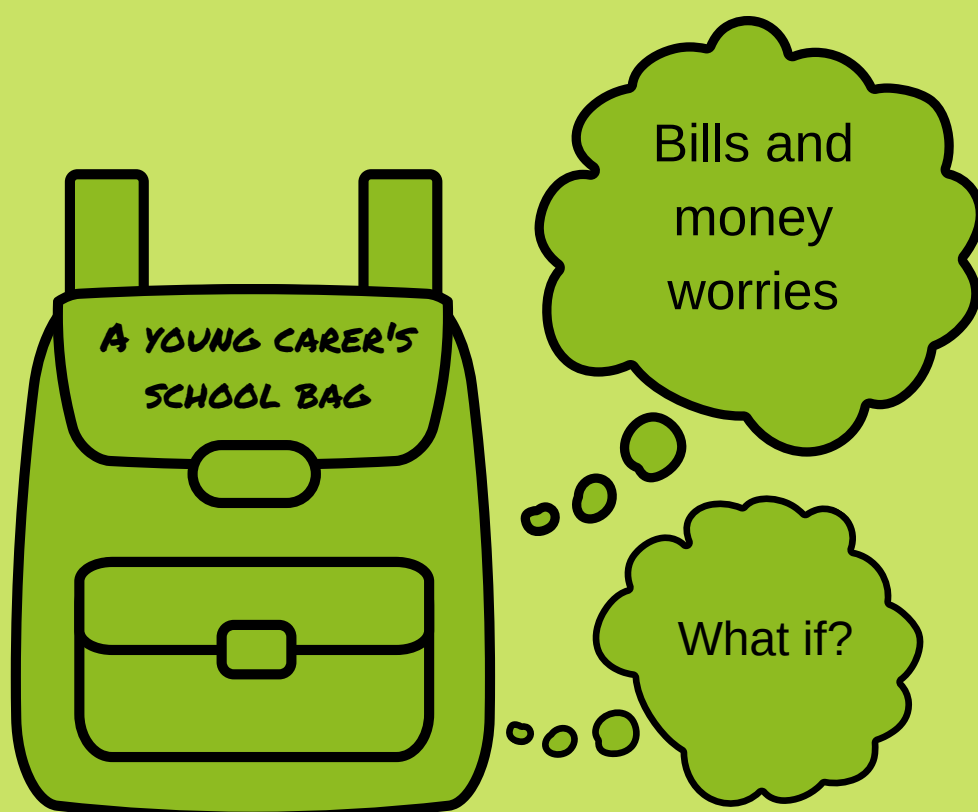
This toolkit aims to support schools and services to increase awareness of the needs of Young Carers and to put in place the reasonable adjustments necessary to ensure that Young Carers reach their full potential. It also offers guidance on how to develop a Young Carers Policy, as well as key actions to help schools and services become Carer Friendly.

## WHAT IS A YOUNG CARER?

A Young Carer is someone under 18 who helps look after a family member or friend who is ill, disabled, has a mental health condition or misuses drugs or alcohol.

What might a Young Carer do?

- Practical tasks, such as cooking, housework and shopping
- Physical care, such as helping someone out of bed
- Emotional support, such as talking to someone who is distressed
- Personal care, such as helping someone dress
- Managing the family budget and collecting prescriptions
- Helping to give medicine
- Helping someone communicate





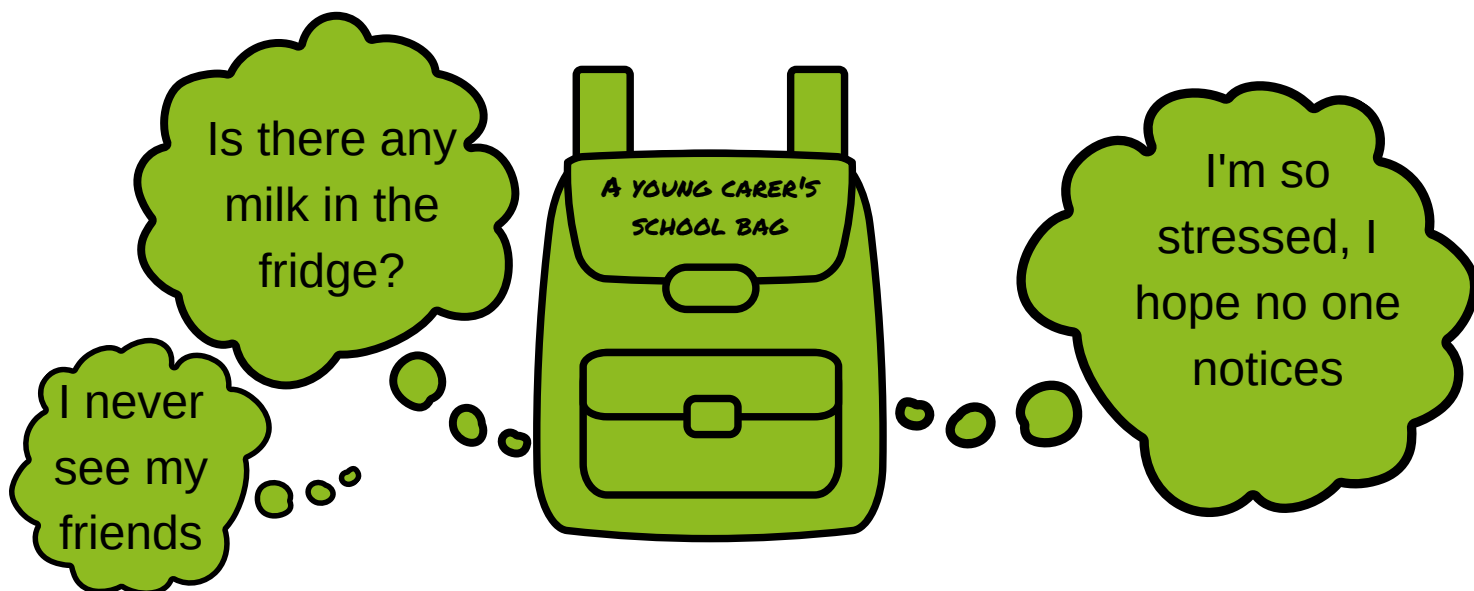
# HOW TO IDENTIFY A YOUNG CARER



## SPOTTING THE SIGNS

Children may not feel able to talk about difficulties linked to their role and may feel guilty about being unable to cope. Some signs that they might be struggling include:

- A child withdrawing into themselves and becoming anxious or frustrated – often characterised by lack of eye contact and unwillingness to engage in conversation/discussion
- Sudden changes in concentration or educational performance, or a steady decline which is unexplained and can result in under-performance of academic achievement predicted
- Changes in attendance patterns (could be linked to fear of leaving an unwell parent), school refusal, frequent late arrival at school with reluctance to talk about why (often mundane excuses given)
- Rushing off at end of day or at lunchtime; shows anxiety if delayed; keeps checking mobile
- Other behaviour changes – particularly longer-term challenging behaviour; often becomes defensive ('You're picking on me' etc) or evasive ('Why is it just me?', 'I've done nothing wrong', 'None of your business' etc) when challenged
- A change in how organised and ready for school they are; no PE kit, books gone missing or clothing/uniform standards slipped. Homework regularly not completed or looks hastily done
- Physical health problems
- Frequent unexplained angry outbursts often linked to poor social interactive skills with peers
- Tiredness (could be linked to nightmares, anxiety or being woken by unwell parents); could show as general lethargy, disengagement in class activities, hollow eyed etc or even falling asleep at desk
- Lack of contact with parent/s (school review evenings not attended perhaps) or no evidence of parental interaction in supporting child's learning. Communications with parent/s not replied to



In Northumberland, Carers Northumberland are commissioned to support Young Carers across the county.



# SUPPORT AVAILABLE

## ABOUT CARERS NORTHUMBERLAND

Carers Northumberland is a charity dedicated to improving the lives of unpaid carers across Northumberland who care for family members or friends who are ill, disabled or elderly. Carers Northumberland aims to respond to the carers needs, informing them of their rights and entitlements, supporting carers to access help for the person they care for, reducing the social isolation that so many feel and empowering carers to have a voice.

## ABOUT THE YOUNG CARERS SUPPORT PROJECT

The project supports Young Carers across Northumberland. The service ensures that children and young people have the support they need to learn, develop and thrive, to enjoy positive childhoods and to achieve their full potential.

The service uses a whole family approach, which ensures that both children and parents are able to get the support they need at the right time, ensuring families receive integrated, coordinated, multi-agency, solution focused support. By identifying problems early, all services can work more closely together to help prevent a family's needs escalating and requiring intervention that is more intensive. All Young Carers will have an assessment of their needs, which identifies the level of caring and how this is impacting on the young person's life. A plan is then put in place with the Young Carer and their family, to support them, to reduce the impact of caring and ensure that the young person is allowed the same life opportunities as their peers.

Support for Young Carers is offered through a range of methods including:

- Initial Young Carers Assessment/ Wellbeing check
- Whole family support
- One to one sessions
- Access to Carers Breaks grant
- Support to access activities



## HOW TO REFER YOUNG CARERS TO THE SERVICE

Young Carers can be referred to the service by completing the Young Carers Health and Wellbeing check here: <https://tinyurl.com/xnf9yrz3>

# RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

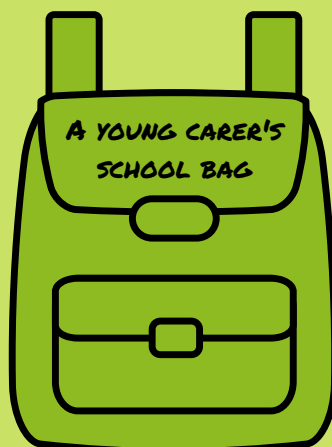


Informed by Barnardos - Policy and practice recommendations for schools  
(Source Barnardos: Improving Young Carers Outcomes)



Creating Young Carers policy. A sample policy can be found on page	Assigning a lead staff member for Young Carers	Ongoing and regular training should include information on Young Carers.
Young Carers identification box in school application forms	Young Carers ID card – Carers Northumberland can provide these	Young Carer themed assemblies
In school Young Carer support groups	Ensure careers advice takes into account Young Carer's needs	Access to discretionary bursaries
Partnerships between schools and Young Carer services should be established in order to ensure that communication and support is improved for Young Carers		

The above actions should inform processes to identify Young Carers and then be able to access support if there are any identified needs.



# EXAMPLE: YOUNG CARERS POLICY

School logo



## Young Carers Policy March 2022-2023

### Introduction

BLANK School is committed to supporting Young Carers to access education. This policy aims to ensure Young Carers at BLANK School are identified and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled.

### Definition

A Young Carer is someone under 18 who helps look after someone in their family, or a friend, who is ill, disabled, has a mental health condition or misuses drugs or alcohol. They might help with practical tasks at home, physical care, emotional support, look after siblings, run errands, go shopping or remind the person they look after to take their medication.

### Caring Tasks

Young Carers may have whole or shared responsibility for looking after a sibling, parent, grandparent or other relative. In some instances, a Young Carer may care for more than one family member and/or may have a disability themselves.

A Young Carer will take on additional responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development. The caring tasks that a Young Carer has to deal with can range from:

- Care such as - giving medication, injections, changing dressings, assisting with mobility etc.
- Personal intimate care - washing, dressing, feeding and helping with toilet requirements
- Emotional care - monitoring the emotional state of the person cared for, listening, supporting a parent through depression
- Domestic care - doing a substantial amount of housework, cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry etc.
- Financial care - running the household, bill paying, benefit collection etc.
- Childcare - taking responsibility for younger siblings in addition to their other caring responsibilities

### Possible Effect on Education

BLANK School acknowledges that there are Young Carers among its pupils, and that being a Young Carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education. 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 school
- Emotional distress
- Tiredness in school
- Lack of time for homework

- Poor attainment
- Physical problems, such as back pain from lifting
- False signs of maturity, due to assuming adult roles
- Behavioural problems (taking out their anger or frustration)
- Lack of time for extra-curricular activities
- Isolation, embarrassed to take friends home
- Limited social skills/difficulty with some social situations
- Bullying
- Feeling that no one understands and that no support is available
- Low self esteem
- It also might be difficult to engage their parents (due to fears about child being taken into care, fears about their condition being misunderstood or their parenting skills being called into question)
- They may be unable to attend parents' evenings

### **Support Offered**

BLANK School acknowledges that Young Carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education. Through this policy, we want to give the message that Young Carers' education is important.

A Young Carer Lead will be appointed and they will be the main contact for the Young Carers in the school. The Young Carers Lead will meet with the Young Carers on a regular basis and will liaise with the teacher responsible for Vulnerable Groups. The Young Carer Lead will liaise with relevant colleagues and agencies with the consent of the Young Carer and parent and in conjunction with the Vulnerable Groups Lead.

BLANK School will

- Provide Young Carers with opportunities to speak to someone in private
- Appreciate that Young Carers will not discuss their family situation unless they feel comfortable
- The young person's caring role will be acknowledged and respected
- Treat Young Carers in a sensitive and child-centred way, upholding confidentiality
- Ensure Young Carers can access all available support services in school
- Follow child protection procedures regarding any Young Carer at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring
- Promote discussion and learning in all areas of the curriculum to facilitate fuller understanding, acceptance of and respect for, the issues surrounding illness, disability and caring
- Provide staff access to information and training to enable them to recognise indications that a child has a caring responsibility

In addition, BLANK School will recognise that flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of Young Carers

Available provision includes (but is not limited to):

- Access to a telephone during breaks and lunchtime, to telephone home
- Negotiable deadlines for homework/coursework (when needed)
- Access to homework clubs (where these are available)
- Arrangements for schoolwork to be sent home (when there is a genuine crisis)
- Any approved absence for a Young Carer will be time limited. (DfES 2006)



- Access for parents with impaired mobility in line with Equality Act 2010
- Alternative communication options for parents who are sensory impaired or housebound
- Advice to parents if there are difficulties in transporting a Young Carer to school

### **Succession Planning**

If the Young Carer Lead leaves post a new lead will be appointed within one term.

### **Further Information and support for Young Carers in Northumberland**

Further information and support for Young Carers can be found at:

Carers Northumberland

107-109 Station Road

Ashington

NE63 8RS

Tel: 01670 320025

Email: [info@carersnorthumberland.org.uk](mailto:info@carersnorthumberland.org.uk)

Website: [www.carersnorthumberland.org.uk](http://www.carersnorthumberland.org.uk)

Approved: March 2022

Next Review: March 2023

# EXAMPLE: SCHOOL CHARTER

School logo



BLANK School's Charter of Action for Young Carer's

BLANK School is committed to supporting all Young Carers to reach their full potential across the curriculum.

This charter will ensure that Young Carers are identified and offered the right support, at the right time and from the right people.

To achieve this BLANK School will:

- Raise the profile of Young Carers
- Informed staff within BLANK School will possess knowledge and understanding of the challenges Young Carers may face and deliver practice accordingly
- Embed a culture of understanding, acceptance and equality throughout the whole school which is sensitive to the needs of Young Carers, to ensure the Young Carers participate fully and enjoy all aspects of school life
- Relevant staff within BLANK School will confidently undertake child-centred Single and Multi-Agency Assessments to support effective delivery of Young Carer's Statements
- BLANK School will work in effective Multi-Agency Partnership to identify and best support Young Carers' needs
- Appoint a "Young Carers Champion" within BLANK School who will support delivery of this charter and be a point of contact for children
- BLANK School will deliver regular information sessions on Young Carers for pupils throughout the academic year through quality lessons and assemblies.
- BLANK School will deliver regular CPD Sessions on Young Carers to ensure informed staff

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Head Teacher)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Young Carers Champion)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Pupil Council)

# USEFUL RESOURCES / CONTACTS

## Northumberland Youth Service

Activities and youth provision for young people across Northumberland.

Telephone: 01670 536400

Email: [Youthservice@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Youthservice@northumberland.gov.uk)

Website: <https://tinyurl.com/43pxx6ah>

## Early Help First Contact

If a young person, parent, carer or professional feel they need some extra support but are unsure of who to ask or refer to they can make a an Early Help Support Request

Telephone: 01670 536 400

Email: [Earlyhelp@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Earlyhelp@northumberland.gov.uk)

Website: [www.northumberland.gov.uk/Children/Family/Support.aspx](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Children/Family/Support.aspx)



## Toby Henderson Trust – Sibling Superstars

Centre for Autism Development, run a group called Sibling Superstars for children with a brother or sister who has a diagnosis of ASD

Telephone: 0300 3653055

Email: [support@ttht.co.uk](mailto:support@ttht.co.uk)

Website: [www.ttht.co.uk](http://www.ttht.co.uk)

## Youngsibs

YoungSibs is for children and young people who have a brother or sister who is disabled, has special educational needs or a serious long-term condition. It is for siblings in the UK who are under 18 years of age.

Website: [www.youngsibs.org.uk](http://www.youngsibs.org.uk)

## Escape – Young Carers

Support for children, young people and adults caring for drug and alcohol users in Northumberland

Head Office: 01670 544055

Helpline: 07702833944

Email: [hello@escapefamilysupport.org.uk](mailto:hello@escapefamilysupport.org.uk)

Website: [www.escapefamilysupport.org.uk](http://www.escapefamilysupport.org.uk)

## Hexham Youth Initiative – Young Carers Group

Provides activities and sessions to local young people who need support or just a cuppa!

Telephone: 01434 607350

Email: [keda@hexhamyi.org.uk](mailto:keda@hexhamyi.org.uk)

Website: [www.hexhamyi.org.uk](http://www.hexhamyi.org.uk)



# USEFUL RESOURCES / CONTACTS

## Carers Trust

Carers Trust is a major charity for, with and about carers. They 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. Their vision is that unpaid carers count and can access the help they need to live their lives.

Website: <https://carers.org/about-caring/about-young-carers>

### young carers rights document link

Young Carers and Young Adult Carers in England have the right to information and to an assessment of the support they need from the council. This free guide explains what those rights are. It also tells you what should happen when you talk to the council about being a Young Carer or Young Adult Carer.

<https://carers.org/legal-and-rights/know-your-rights-support-for-young-carers-and-young-adult-carers-in-england>

## VIDEOS ABOUT YOUNG CARERS



- <https://youtu.be/XV3ef72BdjU> (3m12) - Lottie's Story
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCfWFC7Xqik&t=29s> (2m55) - What needs to be said
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xSSzd7-HqpE> (3m28) - Invisible
- <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=W5wTTfK3DEo> (2m44) - Do You Care
- <https://youtu.be/DmUYRRoXwNY> (3m10) - The Positives of Being a Young Carer
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HZz0uU72eOo> (4m23) - Out of the Woods
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LYv2xtRHy\\_I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LYv2xtRHy_I) (3m01). - Lili's story

# KEY RESOURCES AND RESEARCH

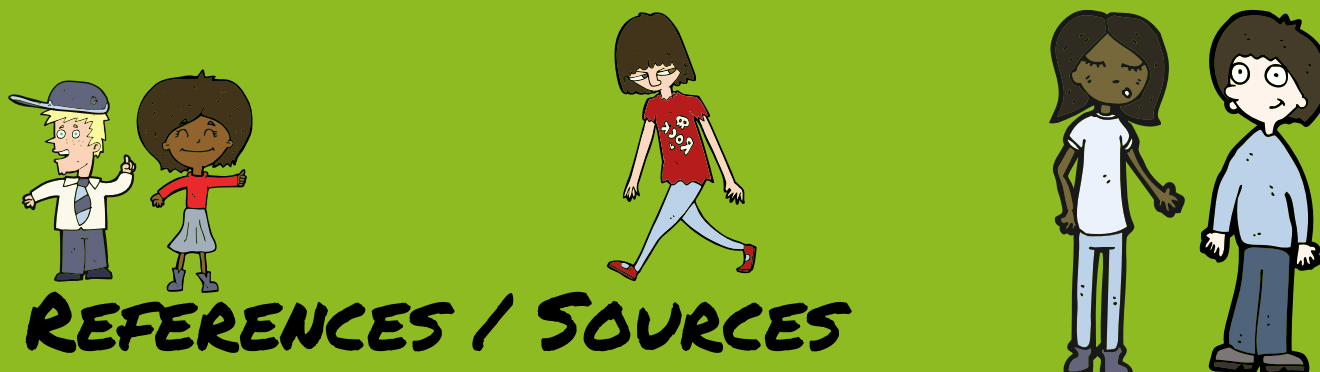
Key resources setting out best practice and supporting information for implementation of the rights and duties for young carers and their families.

- **The Care Act and Whole-Family Approaches** - sets out best practice approaches to thinking 'whole family' in assessment, planning and review processes
- **No Wrong Doors** - working together to support Young Carers and their families - a resource to promote joint working between Adult's and Children's social care services and enhanced partnership working with health and third sector partnerships
- **Young Carers' Needs Assessment** - provides supporting information for use in conjunction with the 'No Wrong Doors' template for a local memorandum of understanding on work with young carers.



Below is some key research to help you understand the needs of young carers:

- **Hidden from View** -the experiences of young carers in England - provides a valuable insight into the daily lives and outcomes for Young Carers, by using data from the Longitudinal Survey of Young People in England (LSYPE) publicly for the first time.
- **There's nobody is there – no one who can actually help?** - the challenges of estimating the number of Young Carers and knowing how to meet their needs - looks at two key issues in relation to the caregiving responsibilities of children and young people. It asks whether, despite a series of research studies and two censuses, we have an accurate picture of the scale of the phenomenon.
- **Young Carers Report 2016** - New study from the Children's Commissioner for England reveals that just a small fraction of young carers are receiving the support that they need.



## REFERENCES / SOURCES

Recommended Actions – (Source Barnardos: Improving Young Carers Outcomes)

Example: Young Carers policy – (Source: Young Carers policy.pdf (wanboroughprimary.org))

Example: School charter (Source: Aberdeen Council, Think Young Carers Multi-Agency Toolkit to Support Young Carers Page 57)

# 2022-2023

## NORTHUMBERLAND YOUNG CARERS IN SCHOOLS



Developed by Carers Northumberland

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Northumberland  
County Council