



Young Carers policy July 2024

Date adopted: 10th July, 2024

Date to be reviewed: July 2026

Policy created and reviewed by: Assistant Headteacher

Vision
'You care, We care'

Aim of Policy

Milford Haven School is committed to supporting Young Carers to access and maintain their education. This Young Carers' Policy outlines how we will support any young person who helps look after someone at home.

The policy aims to ensure Young Carers at our School are identified, respected, listened to and supported to access the education to which they are entitled and achieve their potential.

Who are Young Carers?

Definition of a Young Carer;

“A Young Carer is a young person under the age of 18 who carries out significant caring tasks and assumes a level of responsibility for another person which would normally be taken by an adult.”

The Welsh Government defines a Young Carer as “children and young people who help look after a member of the family, who is sick, disabled, has mental health problems or is affected by substance misuse”.

We believe that all young people should have equal access to education, regardless of their circumstances at home and that whilst some children have to take on inappropriate or excessive levels of caring responsibilities we need to make sure that their educational needs are addressed.

When a young person does look after someone in their family who has a serious illness, disability, mental health issue or suffers a substance misuse problem, they may need a little extra support to help them get the most out of school.

We aim to understand the issues faced by Young Carers and support any pupil who helps to look after someone at home.

We aim to support Young Carers through a whole-school approach and through working with other agencies and professionals, with the understanding that support for the whole family is in the best interests of the Young Carer.

Most Young Carers look after one of their parents but some young carers help a brother or sister who is disabled or ill. A Young Carer may also care for a grandparent or another family member.

We acknowledge that helping around the house is a normal part of growing up, but we are aware young carers may be required to regularly carry out significant caring tasks and assume a level of responsibility which is often inappropriate for their age.

A young person becomes a young carer when the level of care-giving and responsibility to the person in need of care becomes inappropriate for that child and may impact on his or her emotional or physical well-being or educational achievement and life chances.

A Young Carer may undertake some or all of the following:

- Practical tasks - such as cooking, cleaning and shopping
- Physical care – such as lifting, helping to mobilise, physiotherapy
- Personal care – such as dressing, washing, toileting needs
- Emotional support – such as listening, calming, being present
- Look after siblings – such as walking to school, putting to bed, parenting
- Household management – such as paying bills, manage the family budget, collecting benefits
- Administration of medication – such as insulin, preparing daily tablets, picking up prescriptions from the pharmacy.

The amount and type of care they provide can vary enormously from one carer to another.

Indicators and possible effect on education

Young Carers are not easy to identify and may actively try to conceal their caring role for fear of bullying or outside interference in their family life. The 'warning signs' below could be indicators of another problem, but staff noticing these signs should sensitively ask the child or young person if they are helping to look after someone at home:

- Regular or increased lateness
- Regular or increased absence
- Concentration problems, anxiety or worry in school
- They are tired in class
- Lack of time for homework
- Under-achievement – there may be a sudden drop in attainment
- Late or incomplete homework

- Few or no peer friendships (the young person may get on well with adults and present mature for their age)
- Emotional distress
- Victim of bullying
- Behaviour problems (taking out anger or frustration)
- Lack of time for extracurricular activities
- Secrecy about home life/isolation or are embarrassed to take friends home
- Difficulties in engaging parents in their child's education

Current Situation at Our School

We currently have 32 young carers in our school. We monitor their attendance and achievement.

Reducing barriers to education and learning

- Milford Haven School will ensure interventions are targeted and Young Carers are supported, are able to grow and enjoy life to the full.
- Milford Haven School offers lunchtime detentions instead of after school
- Milford Haven School allows Young Carers to use a telephone to call home during breaks and lunch times so as to reduce any worry they may have about a family member.
- Where appropriate, the school negotiates deadlines, for example, for homework and coursework.
- Milford Haven School actively seeks feedback and ideas from Young Carers and their families in order to improve provision for Young Carers.
- Milford Haven School uses and evaluates data effectively to identify and monitor the progress made by young carers and reviews young carers accordingly.

Support Offered

The designated link member of staff for young carers, will liaise with relevant colleagues and other relevant agencies with the consent of the Young Carer. The name and contact details of the designated link member of staff will be made available across the school.

The designated link member will lead on support work for Young Carers and their families and will liaise with the Young Carer services in the area.

Milford Haven School will ensure that Young Carers have access to the school nurse

Milford Haven School has access to training material and awareness raising tools

Milford Haven School acknowledges that Young Carers may need extra support to ensure they have equal access to education.

Milford Haven School will treat Young Carers in a sensitive, person-centred way, upholding confidentiality. If we believe that someone is a Young Carer we will be sensitive when we approach them about this, as we appreciate they may not want their peers to know.

Milford Haven School will provide Young Carers with opportunities to speak to someone they trust or feel comfortable with in private, and will not discuss their situation in front of their peers.

Young carers may not wish to discuss their family situation unless they feel comfortable and this will be acknowledged and respected.

Milford Haven School will work with Young Carers to ensure they can access a package of support that will meet their needs without reducing their self-esteem and confidence.

Milford Haven School will promote discussion and learning in all appropriate areas of the curriculum to facilitate a fuller acceptance and respect for the issues around illness, disability and caring.

Milford Haven School will aim to ensure that Young Carers are informed of available support services in and outside of school. The school will refer a prospective young carer to the local Young Carer Service with the consent of the young carer and their parent/s.

Milford Haven School will gather and maintain relevant statistics on the number of Young Carers identified and supported using various mechanisms such as pupil enrolment processes and self identification

Milford Haven School will follow Safeguarding procedures regarding any Young Carer at risk of significant harm due to an inappropriate caring role.

Milford Haven School recognises that flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of young carers.

- o Access to a telephone during break and lunchtimes to phone home
- o Negotiable deadlines for homework/course work (when needed)
- o Access to homework clubs (where available)
- o Detentions during school hours (where possible)

- o Any approved absence will be time limited
- o Access for parents with impaired mobility (Equality Act 2010)
- o Alternative communication options for parents who are sensory impaired or housebound
- o Advice to parents if there are difficulties in transporting young carers to school

Staff

Milford Haven School recognises that our staff is the organisation's most valuable asset and understands that staff have a life outside of work including responsibility for looking after children and/or other caring responsibilities and that they may need support to combine work with care.

Milford Haven School recognises its duty not to treat those with caring responsibilities less favourably than other staff. The Disability Discrimination Act protects a person who experiences discrimination on the grounds of their association with someone who has a disability. For example, it would be unlawful to refuse someone a career development opportunity due to concerns that they would give insufficient attention to work because of their caring responsibilities. The Act, other pieces of legislation and best practice also allow for reasonable adjustments for carers and reasonable paid and unpaid time off work for unplanned caring duties. Employees are not required to disclose to their line manager that they are caring for someone, but are encouraged to do so. This will help the school to provide appropriate support to the employee. Line managers should encourage employees to discuss their caring responsibilities with them and should assure employees that their need for support and confidentiality will be respected. Employees who do not wish to disclose their caring responsibilities to their line manager are encouraged to approach the Human Resources Section//Local Trade Union Representative.

Where a line manager knows that an employee in their team has caring responsibilities, the line manager should inform the employee about the support that the school offers carers and encourage them to access the support offered.

Useful websites and reading

- www.carersuk.org National carers site
- youngminds.org.uk - UK's leading charity fighting for children and young people's mental health
- mentalhealthwales.net – key information on carer's assessments and the Social Services and Wellbeing Act
- carersuk.org/wales – advice and information for carers in Wales

- [nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/support-and-benefits-for-carers/benefits-for-carers/](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/support-and-benefits-for-carers/benefits-for-carers/) - information on benefits for carers
- phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/ - the latest updates on the coronavirus outbreak and information on how to stay safe from Public Health Wales
- [actionforchildren.org.uk](https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk) – advice for parents and activities for young people