



# Bath and North East Somerset Young Carers Strategy 2016 - 2020



## CONTENTS PAGE

1. [Introduction](#)
2. [The Vision](#)
3. [Who are young carers?](#)
  - 3.1 [Profile](#)
  - 3.2 [Definition](#)
  - 3.3 [Similar but Different](#)
4. [Impact of being a young carer](#)
5. [Why do we need a strategy?](#)
6. [Legislation](#)
  - 6.1 [Rights for young carers and young adult carers in the Children and Families Act](#)
  - 6.2 [Who does it affect?](#)
  - 6.3 [What are the rights for young carers in the Children and Families Act 2014?](#)
    - 6.3.1 [Identification](#)
    - 6.3.2 [Rights to have an assessment](#)
    - 6.3.3 [Assessment principles](#)
    - 6.3.4 [Information about the assessment](#)
    - 6.3.5 [The way the assessment should be carried out](#)
    - 6.3.6 [The person doing the assessment](#)
    - 6.3.7 [Who to involve in the assessment](#)
    - 6.3.8 [Issues to be decided by the assessment process](#)
    - 6.3.9 [Taking action after the assessment](#)
  - 6.4 [The Care Act 2014](#)
  - 6.5 [The Local Response](#)
7. [How will the vision be met?](#)
  - 7.1 [Identify](#)
  - 7.2 [Assess](#)
  - 7.3 [Support](#)
8. [How will progress be monitored?](#)
9. [Services and provisions currently available to young carers in B&NES](#)
10. [Fair Treatment for all](#)
11. [Action Plan](#)
12. [Appendices](#)
  - 12.1 [Appendix 1](#)

## 1. Introduction

Young carers all come from unique situations in their families each one needing an individual approach to support. However, the first step for every young carer is recognition and everyone has a role in helping to identify young carers in Bath and North East Somerset. Only by understanding the role young carers play and the impact caring can have on children and young people will we be able to work collaboratively to ensure every young carer in Bath and North East Somerset has access to support.

The damage caring can do is caused by young carers not being recognised and supported. Caring can be emotionally draining. Young carers may be scared about the person they care for getting more ill and their biggest fears are that they may die. Young carers need support to process these emotions and continued support when their worst fears come true. Young carers also often worry about their own health and whether they will get the illness or disability of the person they care for or may feel guilty that they are well when their relative is so unwell. Young carers can struggle to make and keep friends often worrying about bringing friends home or being unable to do so due to the nature of the illness or disability. Young carers can fall behind at school due to the nature of their caring role taking up time, making it hard to sleep and struggling to keep up with homework.

The impacts of caring can be reduced or turned around by appropriate support. A needs assessment can help to put together a personalised support plan based on the unique situation the young carer is in. A collaborative response between children and adult services both statutory and voluntary sector is needed. By working together the difficult parts of caring can be minimised and the benefits of caring can be brought forward. Young carers receiving appropriate support are inspiring, resilient and caring children and young people. The emotional intelligence and the practical skills gained by young carers can make young carers some of the most impressive children and young people I have ever worked with. This is only possible with commitment from all agencies to provide support to young carers.

Bath and North East Somerset has an established and committed multi-agency strategy group that has developed and monitored an action plan which has led to improvements for young carers across the locality. This group meets twice a year to ensure the momentum and commitment to improving support for young carers is maintained.

This strategy builds on the excellent work across Bath and North East Somerset and sets out how services for carers will be designed, delivered and monitored, by informs how we plan to utilise the resources available, and our priorities over the next three years. This ensures there is a continued commitment and joined up approach to provide the support young carers need and deserve.

Sonia Hutchison  
Chief Executive  
Bath and North East Somerset Carers' Centre

## 2. The Vision

Bath and North East Somerset has a vision where:

- all agencies know how to identify and refer a young carer for support.
- young carers receive a needs assessment which leads to a support plan to protect them from inappropriate caring roles and enables them to flourish.
- support is available for the whole family to make sure young carers meet the outcomes of the Bath and North East Somerset Children and young people's strategy to be safe, healthy and have equal life chances.

These priorities are met through the five areas of the action plan:

- [Identification of Young Carers](#)
- [Holistic assessment of young carers](#)
- [Provision of support to young carers and their families](#)
- [Raising awareness about young carers and their issues](#)
- [Consultation and participation with young carers and their families](#)

### 3. Who are Young Carers?

#### Profile

There are 166,363 young carers in England, according to latest census data released on 16 May 2013. However a study in 2010 of young carers produced by Nottingham University in 2010 thought that there were likely to be as many as 700,000 young carers in the UK. This is 533,000 more young carers than were highlighted by the 2011 census. 1 in 12 respondents who participated in the research were identified as being young carers. If these ratios were applied to Bath & North East Somerset, that would amount to 3,267 young carers living in the area. The research from Nottingham University also highlighted:

- The vast majority of children and young people with care responsibilities provide care for up to 19 hours per week.
- Some children and young people with care responsibilities provide care for between 20 and 50 hours per week.
- Many young carers are caring for more than one person, whether this is a parent, sibling or other family members.
- The average age of a young carer is 12 years.
- Over 50% of young carers are caring for their Mother, which is significant when you considered that many young carers live in households where there is only one parent.
- Children whose caring role is necessitated by parental substance misuse largely remain undetected, either due to lack of research or from parents being represented under a separate category i.e. mental health statistics.

#### Definition of Young Carer

Young carers under the new Children and Families Act is defined as a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person. The concept of care includes practical or emotional support.

This definition allows more children than under previous legislation to qualify as young carers and be entitled to a needs assessment.

It is still the case that this definition excludes children providing care as part of contracted work or as voluntary work. However, the local authority can ignore this and carry out a young carer's need assessment if they think it would be appropriate.

#### Similar but Different



Young Carers are individuals who need to be regarded as such. There may be elements of their lives which provide common themes with other young carers, but we must also respect the unique characteristics which shape their lives and lived experiences, these may include:


- Young lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender carers. In addition to managing the responsibilities entwined with a caring role, these young carers may have to deal with making sense of their identity and sexuality at the same time. These factors can often create barriers to building friendships, accessing services and support and can lead to a person feeling isolated, fearful and stigmatised.

- Young carers in rural and remote areas may face particular challenges due to their location. There may be a lack of services, or where they do exist access may be limited. Restricted public transport can result in geographic and social isolations, but can also mean increased expenditure, which can impact significantly on low income families. Rural communities are often associated with the term “close knit”, with community members playing a more active role in supporting families with disabilities. Where this is the case, it may be pertinent to include these individuals in care plans and assessments. This can also impact upon confidentiality. Families may be more resistant to seeking support when they live close to and know the professionals on a personal level. There may also be occasions when the family are concerned that information shared may not stay private.
- Young Adult Carers. For any young person thinking about leaving school, seeking employment or continuing in education, this can be a difficult period of transition. For those with caring responsibilities this can be even more challenging. We know that young carers are unlikely to reach their full potential in school and may as a result of the responsibilities of caring, experience low self-worth and lack of positive aspirations.
- Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) young carers. At present there has been no substantive research regarding BAME young carers, but since BAME populations have remained under-represented in terms of engaging with professionals and services there is little evidence to suggest young carers are likely to be different. We do know that in comparison with the majority population BAME young people are likely to experience greater levels of poverty, ill health and general disadvantage. Racial stereotyping about the prevalence and role of the extended family can result in little or no services being provided. Practitioners are also fearful of not being seen to be culturally sensitive and this can also be a barrier to intervention.
- Refugees, asylum seekers, gypsy travellers, and young carers who themselves may have disabilities are also under-represented by statistical data. We need to consider research in this area.

## 4. Impact of being a Young Carer

Caring responsibilities can be difficult and stressful at any age. Taking on the physical and emotional demands of supporting a family member or friend with a long term sickness, disability, mental ill health or addiction is a lot for young minds to deal with.

For many young people, particularly those who go unidentified, caring can lead to a significant and long term negative impact on their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Young carers often talk about feeling tired and under pressure. Many experience traumatic life changes such as bereavement, family break-up, losing income or housing, and seeing the effects of an illness or addiction on the person they care for. All these things alongside the pressures of school or college and the social isolation experienced by many, can lead to stress, anxiety and depression.  Research by Carers Trust and the University of Nottingham found that almost a third of young carers surveyed (29%), reported that their own physical health was 'just OK', and 38% reported having a mental health problem.

Young carers physical health may also suffer. Financial pressures, time pressures, exhaustion as a result of interrupted sleep, physical injuries from repeatedly having to support or move someone with poor mobility.

The health of young carers may be affected for a variety of reasons and might not be addressed if their health appointments are missed, not prioritised or there is a distrust of health services. The 2011 census found that young carers providing between 20 and 49 hours are over 3 times more likely to report their health as not good compared to other children without caring responsibilities.

Young adult carers (YAC) aged 17-25 making the transition to adulthood face different challenges to both young carers and adult carers which include:

- not making linear transitions as a result of their caring responsibilities, are not afforded the opportunities taken for granted by their peers, and therefore become isolated, disaffected, and marginalised.
- living in poverty and experiencing significant problems and high levels of disadvantage as a consequence of their caring responsibilities which have a direct impact upon their motivation, opportunity and ability to engage in effective learning.
- not being engaged in learning and training, have few or no means of meaningful interaction or engagement outside of the family home.
- negative experiences of learning, such as bullying and lack of understanding by peers and professionals, meaning they become deeply marginalised and 'turned off' learning at a young age.
- having low aspirations, failing to achieve their potential and leaving education early.

## 5. Why do we need a strategy?

The purpose of this document is to be a living strategy, one that is lived by those working across Bath and North East Somerset. The vision is one that needs to be understood and then developed, refined, and renewed to achieve the aims that:

- all agencies know how to identify and refer a young carer for support.
- young carers receive a needs assessment which leads to a support plan to protect them from inappropriate caring roles and enables them to flourish.
- support is available for the whole family to make sure young carers meet the outcomes of the Bath and North East Somerset Children and young people's strategy to be safe, healthy and have equal life chances.

Each professional has a different role to play whether it is having a conversation with a child or young person to see if they have a caring role, to refer a young carer, to assess a young carers needs or to provide them young carers with support.

By writing down the intentions we have for young carers in Bath and North East Somerset we are able to make a commitment to young carers that live here what they can expect. The strategy holds us all to account to meet the standards we set down. By creating a specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely plan we can all identify our part in making the vision a reality.



## 6. Legislation

### Rights for young carers and young adult carers in the Children and Families Act

This information has been adapted from the Carers Trust 2014 briefing sheet. The Children and Families Act 2014 is an important new piece of legislation for young carers, young adult carers and their families. It amends Section 17 of the Children Act 1989, introducing sections 17ZA, 17ZB and 17ZC.

They work alongside another piece of legislation, the Care Act 2014, which creates rights for young carers who provide care or support to an adult. The Care Act 2014, also creates the right to a young carer's transition assessment during a young carer's transition to adulthood. Together the two pieces of legislation require local authorities to use a whole-family approach.

#### Who does it affect?

**Young carers, young adult carers and their families** now have stronger rights to be identified, offered information, receive an assessment and supported using a whole-family approach.

**Local authorities** must meet their duties to identify, assess and support young carers, young adult carers and their families. This strategy will set out how Bath and North East Somerset local authority will work with local organisations to:

- make sure young carers are proactively identified.
- make sure the assessment process meets the criteria set out in the legislation.
- make sure the work of children's services and adult services is joined up so that young carers and young adult carers benefit from professionals working together.

#### What are the rights for young carers in the Children and Families Act 2014?

##### Identification

Local authorities must find out if there are young carer in their area and if they have needs for support. This means the local authority must proactively identify young carers rather than wait for young people and their families to come forward and request an assessment. Local authorities are required to take "reasonable steps" to identify young carers in their area.

##### Rights to have an assessment

Where it appears to a local authority that a young carer may have needs then they must carry out an assessment. Young carers or their parents can also request an assessment. The legislation refers to this as a 'young carer's needs assessment'.

Some circumstances affect whether a local authority has to provide an assessment or can refuse.

The local authority must carry out an assessment if:

- the young carer may have needs for support.
- a young carer or their parent requests an assessment.
- the young carer has already been assessed but the needs or circumstances of the young carer or person receiving care has changed.
- a previous assessment did not cover the young carers needs in relation to another person they care for.

The local authority can refuse to carry out an assessment if:

- the young carer does not appear to have needs for support.
- the local authority has already carried out an assessment of the young carer's need for support connected with their care for a particular person and circumstances have not changed.

## **Assessment principles**

The local authority must consider the care that a young carer provides but also care they plan to or may carry out in the future. This means a local authority can take action to prevent caring roles that may begin in the future.

The assessment must consider the young carer's view of their situation and what they want to happen. This means that what the young carer thinks about their situation and what they want to happen should not be contradicted unless there is a good reason.

Local authority must look at the option of providing services to the person who receives care from the young carer. The local authority can then see what support a young carer will still need once that is in place. This is part of a whole-family approach.

## **Information about the assessment**

The local authority must provide information in a way that means people can understand and take part in the process. It should be in a suitable format for the young carer, for their parents and/or the person that receives care.

The information must be provided before the assessment begins and in an accessible format.

## **The way the assessment should be carried out**

The assessment must be carried out in a way that is appropriate for the young carer's age, level of understanding and their family circumstances.

The assessment should find out about and take into account any difference of opinion between the young carer, the young carer's parents and the person who receives care or will receive care in the future.

The young carer's needs assessment can be combined with another type of assessment that the young carer will have. It can also be combined with the assessment of the person that needs care and support. However, combining the assessments of a young carer and the person receiving care from them should only happen if both people agree. It may not always be appropriate.

The young carer and their parents must be given a written record of the assessment. A written record should also be sent to anyone else at the request of the young carer or their parent, for example a young carers' service.

## **The person doing the assessment**

The person carrying out the assessment must be appropriately trained and have sufficient knowledge and skill. They must be the right person to do it taking into account the young carer's particular circumstances and their age, sex and level of understanding.

## **Who to involve in the assessment**

The local authority should involve the young carer and the young carer's parents. They should also involve any other person that the young carer or their parent requests.

The local authority must consult people who have knowledge or expertise about the young carer, where it is appropriate.

### **Issues to be decided by the assessment process**

The assessment must decide to what extent the young carer provides or intends to provide inappropriate or excessive care. This is defined in the Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance as anything which is likely to have an impact on the child's health, wellbeing or education, or which is unsuitable for that particular child. The Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance gives examples of what might be considered inappropriate or excessive for a young carer.

The assessment must consider what the needs of the young carer are, including to participate fully in education (school, college, and university), training, recreation and employment.

The assessment should consider whether the caring role has an impact on the young carer's wellbeing, personal development, physical health, mental health and emotional health.

It must determine if the young carer is in a position where other people in the family rely on them to keep other people well and safe. If this is the case then it may be a sign that the local authority should provide services to the family.

It must look at whether the young carer's needs for support can be prevented by providing services to the person they care for or another member of their family.

Another issue to consider is whether the local authority can provide services that meet those needs.

### **Taking action after the assessment**

The local authority must decide what actions to take based on the assessment. This should include whether to provide services.

The local authority should identify the young carer's friends and family and consider how they can help the young carer to achieve their goals identified in the assessment.

The local authority should arrange a review of the assessment.

### **The Care Act 2014**

The Care Act also works alongside the Children and Families Act and identifies that all children have the right to an independent advocate when they are having a needs assessment, The Care Act guidance also says the transition from children's social care to adult care and support will require local authority officers in the respective departments to cooperate to share information, prepare for transition, and ensure the young person's needs are met on reaching the age of eighteen. Cooperation is also needed where there are children at risk of taking on inappropriate caring roles. In these cases local authorities should be referring children for a young carer's assessment under the Children Act and under the Care Act where a young person is transitioning to adulthood.

Local authorities must promote wellbeing when carrying out care and support functions, or making a decision in relation to a person. This applies to young carers when they are subject to the transition assessments. The definition of wellbeing includes participation in work education and training. As such local authorities must consider whether participation in work, education or training is a relevant consideration when they are promoting wellbeing.

Transition assessments should take place at the right time for the young carer and at a point when the local authority can be reasonably confident about what the young carer's needs for support will look like after the young person in question turns 18. There is no set age when young people reach this point; every young person and their family are different, and as such, transition assessments should take place when it is most appropriate for them. Factors which may contribute to establishing the right time to assess (including but not limited to the following):

- The stage they have reached at school and any upcoming exams.
- Whether the young carer wishes to enter further/higher education or training.
- Whether the young carer wishes to get a job when they become a young adult.
- Whether the young carer is planning to move out of their parental home into their own accommodation.
- The time it may take to carry out an assessment.
- The time it may take to plan and put in place the adult support.
- Any relevant family circumstances.
- Any planned medical treatment.

Any young carer is eligible for a transition's assessment regardless of whether the parents have needs below the local authority's eligibility threshold as they may nevertheless require advice or support to fulfil their potential.

### **Local Response**

Bath and North East Somerset Young Carers Strategy will meet the three areas of the Children and Families Act:

- Identify
- Assess
- Support

The rest of the strategy will set out the multi-agency response to meeting these areas and will set out what young carers have said they would like to happen in each of these areas.

## **7. How will the vision be met?**

### **7.1 Identify**

This strategy will build on the good work that was implemented in the 2012-15. Since 2012 over 3,000 professionals have been provided with information and training. A key place to identify young carers is in school. This strategy will focus on raising awareness within schools across Bath and North East Somerset. Recognising that each school has their own unique culture Information and training will be provided in a way that best meets the school's needs. The options will range from leading assemblies, attending staff meetings, meeting young carer leads and sending electronic information for dissemination.

Whilst schools are a key way to identify young carers it is equally important to work with a range of organisations as young carers may decide not to disclose their caring role within the school environment. This strategy will work to reach a wide range of organisations through 'Community Educational Roadshows' a programme will be run to raise awareness of young carers.

No Wrong Doors: working together to support young carers and their families. A template for a local memorandum of understanding between statutory Directors of Children's and Adult Social Services – March 2015 sets out the principles for good referral pathways. The report sets out that there should be "no wrong doors" for young carers and their families. Young carers should be identified, assessed and their families supported regardless of which service is contacted in the first place. In Appendix 1 there is a memorandum of understanding which this strategy sets out to put in place and bring to reality.

The Action Plan has set out how to achieve these goals in the first section of the plan called [identification of young carers](#).

### **7.2 Assess**

Building on the good work from the 2012-15 strategy where over 500 young carers have had a needs assessment when they join Young Carers' Service. This strategy will ensure the assessments young carers receive are in line with the new duties on local authorities from the Children and Families Act and The Care Act.

The Action Plan has set out how to achieve these goals in the second section of the plan called [holistic assessment of young carers](#).

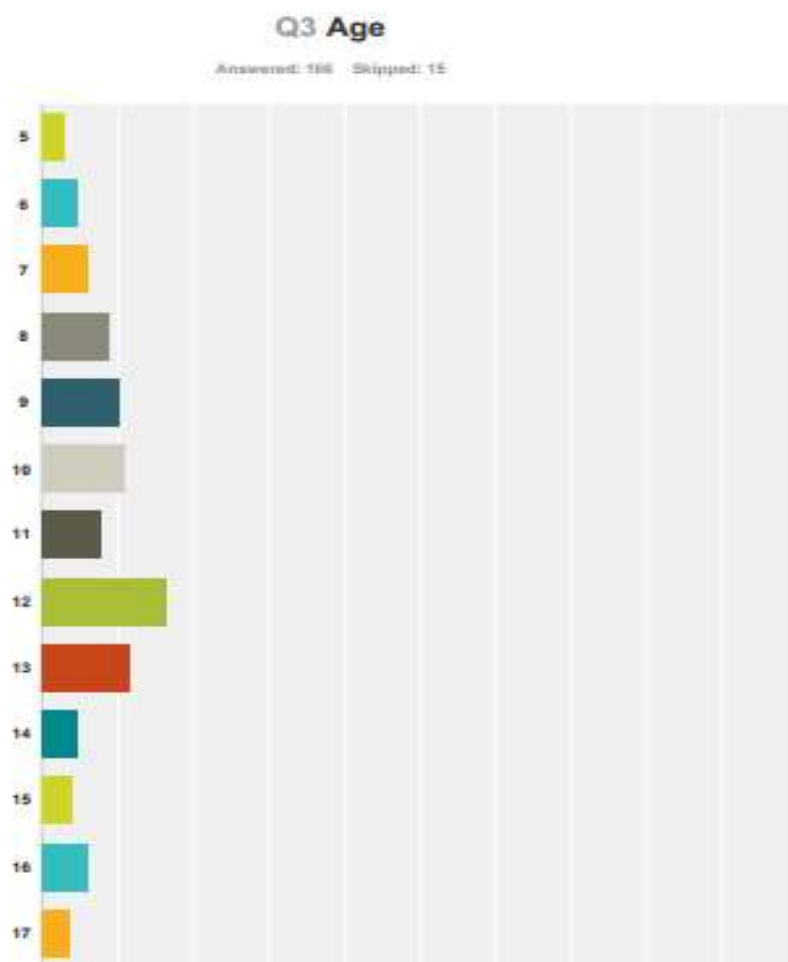
### 7.3 Support

The support for carers in this strategy will build on the support that has been developed throughout the 2012-15 strategy. The Action Plan has set out how to achieve these goals in the third, fourth and fifth sections of the plan called [provision of support to young carers and their families](#); [raising awareness about young carers and their issues](#) and [consultation and participation with young carers and their families](#).

Young carers voices are integral to the development of young carers services locally. Quarterly Have Your Say Days are incorporated into the provision of the service to ensure young carers are leading on how the Young Carers Service and local services are developed for and with young carers. A Young Carers Voice Group is being developed to ensure there is a co-ordinated approach to participation locally. This group will ensure young carers have a voice in the Carers' Centre governance and have an opportunity to gain views of young carers about local services and will act as an E-Team at the Carers' Centre. An E-Team is a group of young people supported by adults that works to promote equality within their setting. This group will be developed to provide representation on local strategic groups and the youth parliament. A Comic Relief three year funded participation worker will support this work.

Feedback is gained after every activity and through regular consultations. Feedback from young carers from 2014-15 show young carers are enjoying the break activities they are receiving and that it is making a difference. Here are some of the findings from the 176 feedback postcards feedback forms that have been collected from over 800 places on breaks:

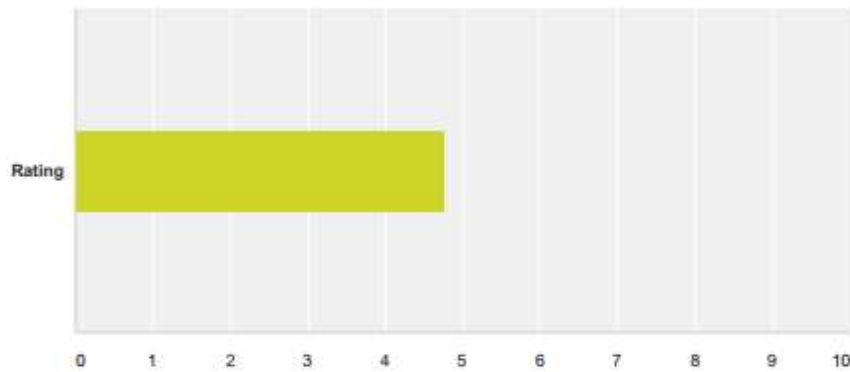
The feedback shows carers of all ages are engaging and giving feedback, the largest number to feedback were age 12 which is the average age of young carers in the UK:



Young carers report they are finding the break activities fun which is really important indicator that the support in Bath and North East Somerset is being successful at giving young carers their childhood back. On a scale of 5 being the highest the average rating is 4.77 80% of young carers gave the break activities a big smile rating! The results are below:

### Q4 Have you had fun today

Answered: 174 Skipped: 7

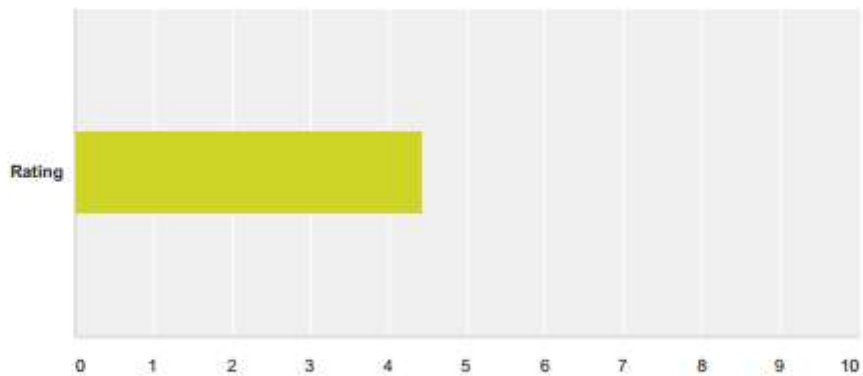


|        | Big Frown  | Medium Frown | Neural Face | Medium Smile | Big Smile     | Total | Weighted Average |
|--------|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|-------|------------------|
| Rating | 0.00%<br>0 | 0.00%<br>0   | 3.45%<br>6  | 16.09%<br>28 | 80.46%<br>140 | 174   | 4.77             |

Young carers are finding the break activities are giving them a break from caring. On a scale of 5 being the highest the average rating is 4.43 64% of young carers rating the activities with a big smile rating. This rating is lower than having fun which may be because whilst young carers are having fun it is more complex to help young carers to stop worrying about their caring role when they are out and about. The results are below:

### Q7 Do you feel you had a break from caring?

Answered: 173 Skipped: 8



|        | Big Frown  | Medium Frown | Neural Face | Medium Smile | Big Smile     | Total | Weighted Average |
|--------|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|-------|------------------|
| Rating | 2.31%<br>4 | 2.31%<br>4   | 9.83%<br>17 | 21.39%<br>37 | 64.16%<br>111 | 173   | 4.43             |

72% of young carers said they learnt something new at break activities.

Some of the comments from young carers give an idea of the importance of breaks for young carers:

'My day was so fun and I also made some new friends'

'I thought the experience was great, got to meet friends and socialise with others, the drama was good! I would like to do more of it!'

'I really had a good break. I think it was an experience'

'I liked working as a team'

'I have had a very fun first activity and I have made new friends and learned trying something new isn't too bad'

'Really fun and relaxing'

'The lifecycle people were patient and friendly. The ride was fun and simple – no one felt left out or complained'

'I liked this activity because the skills I learnt are skills I can use in the future'

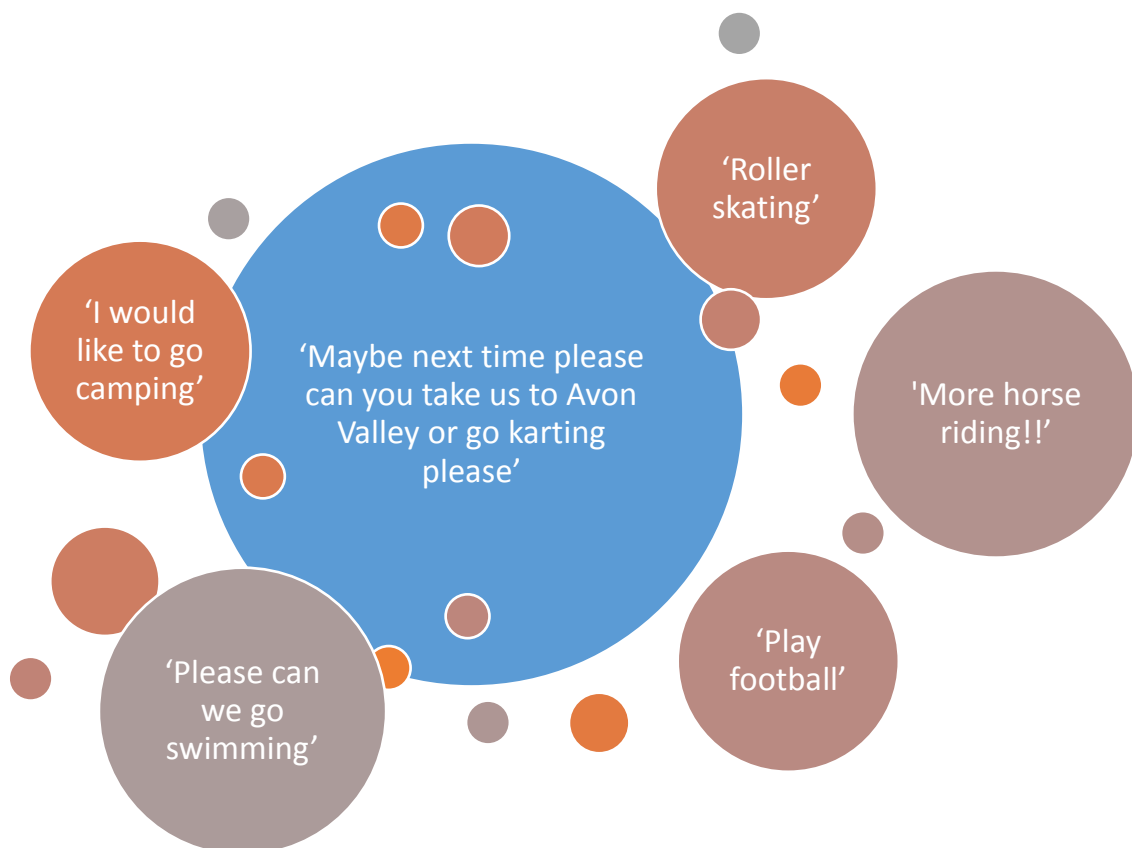
'Amazing, Loved it, Beat some of my fears'

'Original ideas/activities, so many things to do, New friends, dancing, tent-camping, love to go again, YCF Fun picture of a bus driving away from reality'





Young Carers are asked what kinds of break activity they would like to attend the types of feedback they give are:



The programme of breaks activities uses the feedback from carers to plan the future breaks activities to ensure they are what young carers need.

Young carers and their families were consulted about the additional support they would like as a young carer living in Bath and North East Somerset. The feedback found that young carers

are generally receiving good support from a variety of services but there are things that could make it better for young carers and their families.

'more services more locally especially in rural areas or small towns.'

'teachers to be more helpful and have more awareness of support for young carers and run young carers support groups at school and after school'

'someone I can spend time with other than the person I care for'

'support services to help outside of school time'

'advocacy from the Young Carers Service at TAC meetings is helpful'

'Affordable housing'

'more help for mummy so I can have special time with mummy'

'health professionals to have more awareness of young carers and educate me about the illness of and how I can best understand and support the person I care for'

'Original ideas/activities, so many things to do, New friends, dancing, tent-camping, love to go again, YCF Fun picture of a bus driving away from reality'

'Amazing, Loved it, Beat some of my fears'

Good practice in schools is being developed with many schools providing support groups, posters and leaflets, PSHE lessons explaining the role of a young carer, discussing being a young carer with tutor group and having delegated leads.

## **8. How will progress be monitored?**

As part of a multi-agency group, the strategy will be reviewed on a six monthly basis. The purpose of the review meeting will be to hold the agencies to account that attend the meeting and that they are all working together to achieve the Work plan. At each meeting progress will be reported against each of the area in the plan. Each of the areas of the plan will seek to make The Children and Families Act 2014 a reality in Bath and North East Somerset and meet young carer's feedback about the support they would like to receive.

The members of the multi-agency group are representatives from:

Bath and North East Somerset Children's Services.  
Bath and North East Somerset Adult Health and Social Care.  
Bath and North East Somerset Carers' Centre.  
Bath and North East Somerset Youth Services.  
Schools.

In addition to the multi-agency workplan the local authority has commissioned a young carers service. This contract is monitored quarterly through site visits from the commissioner. Monthly data sets are provided and quarterly output, outcome and financial monitoring information is provided. The Carers' Centre holds the contract for the Young Carers Service locally and has a team workplan which is monitored through quarterly sub-committee meetings with trustees and staff and quarterly at staff meetings. Staff working with young carers receive monthly supervision to ensure they are working safely and effectively with young carers.

## 9. Services and provisions currently available to young carers in B&NES

The Young Carers Service is provided by Bath and North East Somerset Carers' Centre.

The service raises awareness across Bath and North East Somerset about young carers and encourages professionals to refer young carers for support. Professionals can do this through an online [form](#). Young carers can also refer themselves by taking a quick quiz and using the online [form](#). There are currently over 500 young carers aged 5-17 with a further 150 registered aged 18-25.

The [website](#) provides lots of information and advice and signposting to support online and through the Young Carers' Service.

Young carers receive a whole family approach needs assessment when they join the service which puts in place a support plan to support the young carer and their family.

Where young carers are struggling with their caring role they can access one to one support from a Young Carers' Officer. They can also be referred for counselling if they are struggling emotionally.

The Young Carers' Service offers a packed programme of fun, friendly events for four age groups:

5-9 years

10-13 years

14-17 years

18-25 years

The service provides:

- ✓ At least 12 events for each age group
- ✓ Four activities involving the whole family, providing time and space for all ages to have fun together
- ✓ At least one overnight stay, such as the Young Carers' Festival



- ✓ An accredited Arts Award group



- ✓ A regular youth club
- ✓ Transition support for 18-25 year olds, expert help with getting into training, university or employment

Support with transport is provided where this is a barrier to attending breaks. A young carer's minibus has hugely improved the provision of this support. Young carers both helped to gain the funding to buy the bus and to get the bus ready for its MOT through the Wheels Project.



Each year young carers are recognised for their amazing contribution through an annual award ceremony.



The Carers' Centre has recently purchased Woodlands a property in Bath which has created a permanent place for carers. Young carers have been encouraged to create ownership over the space by having their art work on display both temporarily as part of Fringe Art Bath and where they have been happy to leave it on permanent display. The space provides indoor and outdoor space for young carers to have fun activities. Regular groups such as the art award and youth club take place as well as ad hoc activities and family days. Weekly counselling for young carers takes place which was launched through a Children in Need grant and is now funded by Friends of Young Carers.

## 10. Fair Treatment for all

Support for young carers should be universal, regardless of where they live, their ethnic background or the needs of the person they are caring for. This strategy supports the needs of all young carers regardless of their circumstances.

This includes ensuring that young carers are not put in a position where they are required to provide an inappropriate level of care.

Some young carers may themselves be disabled; we must ensure that these young people are receiving the support they are entitled to. All staff working in the Young Carers' Service must have sufficient knowledge and training in relation to diversity and disability awareness. (Please refer to the chapter on similar but different).

The Young Carers' Service provides transport where this is a barrier to young carers attending. A minibus which was donated by the Wheels project and part funded by Friend of Young Carers' has recently enabled local pick-ups in localities to be organised more efficiently and effectively.

Activities have been developed in local communities to more effectively support young carers to develop friendships and peer support. This locality working has reduced the time young carers spend travelling to activities, due to all the pickups being in the same place which has fostered families to develop relationships where neighbours had not realised they were in similar situations.

Replacement care is offered to the cared for person if it is a barrier. This is very rarely taken up as all young carers receive a needs assessment when they are referred to the service. Where caring is preventing young carers from undertaking activities they would like to pursue a referral is made to the appropriate social care team to provide replacement care and other support as needed. This provides a further reaching, more appropriate offer to young carers and their families that is sustainable beyond the Young Carers' Service.





## 11. Bath & North East Somerset Multi-Agency Young Carers Action Plan

### Bath & North East Somerset Council

### Young Carers Integrated Action Plan

| <b>1. Identification of Young Carers</b>   |   |  |                  |                                   |                                       |
|--|---|--|------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Objective</b>   | <b>Action</b>   | <b>Outcomes</b>  | <b>Timescale</b> | <b>Lead Officer</b>               | <b>Update provided every 6 months</b> |
| <b>1. Create a culture of openness so that young carers and their families feel confident to identify themselves and request support</b> | Raise awareness amongst staff in Social Care Teams  | Develop awareness – improved interventions   | On-going         | Social Care rep TBC               |                                       |
|  | Contribute to Social Work Students Training   | Develop 'whole-family' approach  | On-going         | Young Carers Service              |                                       |
|  | Ensure local information, case studies & data re: young carers shared with relevant professionals and young people. | Improved awareness amongst professionals & young people about the effects of being a young carer | On-going         | Young Carers Service              |                                       |
|  | Ensure Schools have access to Guide for Professional working  | Schools develop this work as part of their Healthy Outcomes                                      | On-going         | Children's Services Commissioner, |                                       |

|  |  |   |   |   |  |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|
|  | <p>with Young Carer's. Link in with PSHE &amp; Director of Public Health Award for schools</p> <p>Advice schools re: Guidance for 'Delegated Lead'</p> <p>Awareness raising in schools/health provisions/youth centres etc. using variety of materials</p> | <p>Certificate/ Healthy Schools Certificate work. Schools identify Young Carers as their 'Children in Challenging Circumstances' group where appropriate.</p> <p>Schools to identify Delegated Lead to support YC's</p> <p>YC's (OTR) Website to be refreshed/ resources/DVD available/events</p> | <p>Two times a year</p> <p>On-going</p>                   | <p>Young Carers Service, PSHE Lead, School nurses &amp; Director of Public Health Award</p> <p>Children's Services Commissioner</p> <p>Young Carers Service</p> |  |
| <p><b>2. Ensure young carers know who the 'trusted adults' are that they can talk to</b></p> | <p>Explore with young people who they would consider to be 'trusted adult'</p> <p>Assessment Process to highlight family strengths</p>   | <p>Develop a poster with information about key professions to be displayed in young people's settings</p> <p>Young Carers and their families feeling confident that their views/experiences</p>   | <p>Posters available for distribution</p> <p>On-going</p> | <p>Director of Public Health Award &amp; School Nurses</p> <p>Young Carers Service</p>  |  |

|   |   |  |          |   |  |
|---|---|--|----------|---|--|
|   |   | valued.  |          |   |  |
| <b>3.Create a safe environment for young carers and their families to be fully involved in the development and delivery of support services</b> | <p>Consultation –Young Carers Newsletter Group<br/>Young Carers</p> <p>Young Carer representative to take part in the Young Leaders Group &amp; YCs in Anti bullying Strategy Group</p> | <p>Opportunities for Young Carers voice to be heard</p> <p>The Needs of young carers being represented at strategic levels by young people</p> | On-going | <p>Young Carers Service</p> <p>Young Carers Service &amp; PSHE Lead</p> |  |

## 2. Holistic Assessment of Young Carers

| Objective   | Action  | Outcomes  | Timescale                       | Lead Officer   | Update |
|---|---|---|---------------------------------|--|--------|
| <b>1. Ensure young carers are identified and their needs are recorded and monitored</b> | <p>Young Carers Project &amp; Children's social Care to review the assessment processes</p> <p>Assessment process in Adult &amp; Children's Social Care Teams</p> | <p>Children's Social Care staff able to identify whether there are young people in a caring role and signpost to relevant services</p> <p>Identification of young carers through assessment</p> | <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> | <p>Young Carers Service &amp; Children's Social Care</p> <p>Adult Social Care, Adults Commissioner &amp; Children's Social</p> |        |

|   |  |   |                                 |   |  |
|---|--|---|---------------------------------|---|--|
|   | <p>designed to appropriately identify needs young carers within families where wider issues are being considered. Develop a pathway</p> <p>Ongoing training to Youth Service Staff re: importance of identifying young carers in their projects</p> <p>Project 28 has identified YCs of parents with drug &amp; alcohol misuse</p> | <p>process</p> <p>Clear Pathway of referral from Adult Carers Support Service to Children's Services</p> <p>Youth service staff able identify, support and advice young carers</p> <p>YCS &amp; Project 28 working in partnership to deliver Young Carers Support Group</p> | <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> | <p>Care Rep</p> <p>Youth Services &amp; Young Carers Service</p> <p>Young carers Service &amp; Project 28</p> |  |
| <p><b>2. Joint Protocol between Adult &amp; Children's Social Care to ensure young carers are not providing inappropriate levels of care.</b></p> | <p>A protocol to be developed and shared between adult and children's services for identifying and assessing young carers</p>  | <p>Protocol to clearly outline the roles/responsibilities of each department to ensure that both adult &amp; children's services are working jointly to meet the families' needs</p>  |                                 | <p>Dee Chaddha, Angela Smith &amp; Roy Maguire</p>  |  |

|   |  |   |                                  |   |  |
|---|--|---|----------------------------------|---|--|
|   | <p>Systematic Family assessment to consider appropriate level of care for age. Needs of Young carer i.e. education, employment, leisure, unmet needs, support /advice.</p> <p>Review process of young carers accessing service</p> | <p>To ensure the holistic needs of young carers are being identified</p> <p>Ensure that changing needs are identified &amp; appropriately addressed</p> | <p>On-going</p> <p>6 monthly</p> | <p>Young Carers Service<br/>Angela Smith<br/>Children's Social Care</p> <p>Young Carers Service</p> |  |
| <p><b>3. Improved transitions from young carers service to adult carers service</b></p> | <p>Provision of support to Young Adult Carers as part of the provision of the YCS</p> <p>Raised awareness of 12 -19 services for young people about young adult carers and their needs</p>   | <p>Clear transition processes and partnership working between Children &amp; Adult Services</p>   |                                  |   |  |

### 3. Provision of support to young carers and their families

| Objective  | Action  | Outcomes  | Timescale       | Lead Officer   | Update   |
|--|---|---|-----------------|--|----------|
| <p><b>1. Young carers will be able to access the Young Carers local project that provides safe, quality support to those children who continue to be affected by any caring role within their family</b></p> | <p>YC Youth Inclusion Group who will inform Carers Centre of how best to ensure our current practice achieves this &amp; that the service is accessible to all young carers</p> | <p>Flexible interventions and approach for engagement home visits/transport provision / engagement with Special schools</p>   | <p>On going</p> | <p>Young carers Service</p>  | <p>.</p> |
| <p><b>2. Young carers will have access to the same education and career opportunities as their peers</b></p>   | <p>Increase no. of designated leads in B&amp;NES schools</p> <p>Young Adult Carers Group providing support to enable YACs to access further education,</p>                      | <p>Identify 'Delegated Lead' within schools to ensure schools are actively engaged in identifying &amp; supporting young carers.</p> <p>Increased no. of YACs in education, employment &amp; training (figures from Connexions)</p> | <p>Ongoing</p>  | <p>Young Carers Service keep updated list of school leads/contacts</p> <p>Young Carers Service</p> |          |

|   |  |  |                                   |   |  |
|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|---|--|
|   | <p>training and employment</p> <p>Provide training &amp; Support to schools re: young Carer</p>  | <p>School staff &amp; Delegated Leads access training and appropriate information via PSHE &amp; schools assemblies.</p> <p>Ensure robust systems in place to support young carers in school.</p> <p>Increased number of schools displaying information about services &amp; support for young carers.</p> | <p>On-going via PSHE training</p> | <p>Young Carers Service, Director of Public Health Award &amp; PSHE Lead</p> <p>Young Carers Service, Director of Public Health Award &amp; PSHE Lead</p> <p>School Nurses, Director of Public Health Award &amp; PSHE Lead</p> |  |
| <p><b>3. Young Carers will have the same access to social /leisure opportunities as their peers</b></p> | <p>Provision of a wide range of short breaks &amp; youth activities/ opportunities for young carers to take part in</p> <p>Support for young carers to access provision (including</p> | <p>Young Carers have same opportunities as their peers to enjoy a range of social activities</p> <p>Young Carer offered support to access opportunity and relieved from</p>  | <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p>   | <p>Young Carers Service &amp; Youth Service</p> <p>Young Carers Service &amp; Adult Social Care</p>   |  |

|  |   |  |                                 |  |  |
|--|---|--|---------------------------------|--|--|
|  | <p>inclusive) promoting through Newsletter and youth provisions/ Including adult replacement care package to facilitate if this is required- i.e.</p> <p>Young carers enabled to take part in leadership roles within YCS and wider opportunities</p> <p>Identification of any barriers to young carers participating in after school/other mainstream activities</p> | <p>caring role-with provision of 'top-up care' if required</p> <p>Broaden young carers horizons and experiences and raise aspirations</p> <p>Approaches to remove barriers</p> | <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> | <p>Young Carers Service &amp; Young Carers Strategy Group</p> <p>Young Carers Strategy Group</p> |  |
| <p><b>4. Young Carers Health &amp; Emotional Needs are being appropriately met</b></p> | <p>Strong partnership working between YCS, schools, CAMHS and partner agencies ensure that they</p>   | <p>Appropriate information, advice &amp; support provided to Young Carers. Young carer's health and wellbeing needs</p>  | <p>On-going</p>                 | <p>Young Carers Service, Young Carers Strategy Action Group, School Nurses &amp; CAMHS link</p>  |  |



|  |   |                          |  |  |  |
|--|---|--------------------------|--|--|--|
|  | are aware of young carers in their setting and supporting them to have their health and emotional needs met (e.g. pupil premium, counselling support) | identified and improved. |  |  |  |
|--|---|--------------------------|--|--|--|

| <b>4. Raising awareness about young carers and their issues</b>                        |  |   |                  |   |               |
|--|--|---|------------------|---|---------------|
| <b>Objective</b>   | <b>Action</b>  | <b>Outcomes</b>   | <b>Timescale</b> | <b>Lead Officer</b>                                       | <b>Update</b> |
| <b>1. Provide information about young carers in consistent and age appropriate way</b> | Continued use of a range of publications and other communication methods (both internal and external) to raise the profile of young carers and their needs | Young Carers Service publicity materials to be available to all partners and widely distributed | On-going         | Young Carers Strategy Action Group                        |               |
| <b>2. Raise public awareness of the needs of Young Carers</b>                          | Continue to promote 'B&NES Young Carers Strategy' via Public information-  | Raised awareness and profile of young carers in BANES through                                   | On-going         | Young Carers Service & Young Carers Strategy Action Group |               |

|   |   |  |          |  |  |
|---|---|--|----------|--|--|
|   | news articles/presentation s/event<br><br>Young Carers Champion to promote service & advocate on behalf of young carers | media, events and Health & Wellbeing Boards<br><br>Raised public awareness of young carers | On-going | Young Carers Service & Children's Commissioner |  |
| <b>3. Improved multi-agency training provision about Young Carers</b> | Multi agency training programme to develop awareness about young carers   | PSHE, DPH, Health & Social Training to address needs of young carers                       |          | Young Carers Strategy Action Group             |  |

| <b>5. Consultation and participation with young carers and their families</b>                                |   |   |                  |                                   |               |
|--|---|---|------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Objective</b>   | <b>Action</b>   | <b>Outcomes</b>   | <b>Timescale</b> | <b>Lead Officer</b>               | <b>Update</b> |
| <b>Young carers and their families are able to effectively influence the delivery and design of services</b> | Young carers and their families regularly asked their views on the service and activities offered | Young Carers and their families able to see difference their views are making | Ongoing          | Young Carers Service              |               |
|  | Continued mechanism to enable young carers to meet and to   | YCS continue to be service user led   | On-going         | Young Carers Service & Children's |               |

|  |   |  |                |                             |  |
|--|---|--|----------------|-----------------------------|--|
|  | <p>feedback their views to the Young Carers management / trustees</p>   |  |                |                             |  |
|  | <p>Individual support packages which reflect needs identified by family</p>   | <p>Support being offered meeting needs of young carer &amp; their family</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Young Carers Service</p> |  |
|  | <p>Young Carers supported to be engaged in participation activities and share experience of being a young carer</p> | <p>Young carers involved in Anti-bullying Strategy Group &amp; YPEG</p>      | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Young Carers Service</p> |  |

## Appendices

### Appendix 1

# No wrong doors: working together to support young carers and their families

**A template for a local memorandum of understanding between statutory Directors of Children's and Adult Social Services – March 2015.**

### Contents:

- Joint Foreword
- 1. Key Principles
- 2. A Shared Understanding
- 3. Identifying young carers and promoting well being
- 4. Assessment
- 5. Information, advice and advocacy
- 6. Transition to Adulthood
- 7. Information Sharing
- 8. Safeguarding
- 9. Putting these intentions into action
- 10. Local Partnerships

### About this Paper

The template in this paper is a resource to help promote working together between Adult's and Children's social care services and enhanced partnership working with health and third sector partners. The final local text may be varied to reflect local circumstances and policies.

Nothing in this paper seeks to amend or replace statutory or accepted best practice guidance. Whilst every attempt has been made to ensure accuracy and promote best practice, this document does not represent a formal statement of the law or Government policy. Statutory Directors should obtain further information or legal advice, as necessary. The Associations cannot accept any responsibility for loss or liability occasioned as a result of people acting or not acting on any information contained in this paper.

All references to *children* in this paper include *young people under the age of 18*.

### Acknowledgements

The development of the template was made possible through the invaluable contributions of colleagues within both Associations, the ADASS Carers Policy Network, the support and advice of the Department for Education and Department of Health. Thanks are also due to the SE ADASS Network who kindly arranged funding to support development of this shared resource.

## Joint foreword to template

Young carers tell us of the importance of joint working and the real difference that timely and effective support services make. To help support this, a model local Memorandum of Understanding was published jointly by ADCS and ADASS in December 2009 and updated in 2012.

The revised template in this third edition reflects the important new duties and powers placed on local authorities by the Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014. These obligations are reinforced in the Young Carers Assessments Regulations 2015, the Guidance related to both of these Acts and "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (DfE – 2015). We are delighted to note that many of things highlighted as good practice in earlier versions of the Memorandum of Understanding are now incorporated into law.

Our starting point is that children and young people who are carers have the same rights as all children and young people. Young Carers should be able to learn, achieve, develop friendships and enjoy positive, healthy childhoods; just like other children. Where services are working with families we should try to ensure that the needs of children in the family, including those who may be assisting with caring, are recognised. This means taking account of their hopes, aspirations, strengths and achievements; and the need for advice and support for all the family.

Young carers and families are experts on their own lives. It falls to professionals across all sectors to include them in shaping the personalised and integrated responses that best respond to their needs. This applies equally whether care needs arise as a result of mental or physical illness or disability, substance misuse and whether a parent, a sibling or a family member is the focus of support.

The updated template offers a framework which professionals can use to provide personalised and joined up support for young carers and their families. This should apply equally when working in partnership with colleagues in health and the third sectors and include where local authorities delegate portions of their assessment processes. This might, for example, include mental health services hosted within NHS Trusts or Carers Centres contracted to undertake carers' assessments.

Where one person holds both statutory roles the memorandum template may still be relevant for use by their operational leads for adults and children's social care within the organisation.

Finally, this revised template jointly agreed between our four organisations reflects our shared commitment and we hope that widespread adoption and use of the template can help us all to build on national policies, support local progress and achieve better outcomes for young carers and their families.

**Issued jointly by the Association of Directors of Children's Services, the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, The Children's Society and the Carers Trust - March 2015**

# No wrong doors: working together to support young carers and their families

## A memorandum of understanding

### 1. Key principles

Young Carers have said that there should be “no wrong doors” for young carers and their families. Young carers should be identified, assessed and their families supported regardless of which service is contacted in the first place. Children and Adult Social Services therefore commit through this memorandum to work together locally, adopting a whole system, whole council, whole family approach to providing support for young carers and their families. This will be achieved through working across systems, in partnership with health and with local carers’ organisations. Children and Adult Social Services will work together to fulfil duties in law<sup>1</sup> and ensure that the following key principles<sup>2</sup> underpin practice:

- *The starting point should be to assess the needs of the adult or child who needs care and support and then see what remaining needs for support a young carer in the family has.*
- *The presence of a young carer in the family should always constitute an appearance of need and should trigger either an assessment or the offer of an assessment to the person needing care.*
- *A whole family approach is key when assessing an adult needing care where there are children in the family providing care to the adult or undertaking wider caring responsibilities. The adult’s assessment and eligibility for support should take into account their parenting responsibilities and the functioning of the family.*
- *Assessments should ascertain why a child is caring and what needs to change in order to prevent them from undertaking excessive or inappropriate caring responsibilities which could impact adversely on their wellbeing, education, or social development. It will be good practice to seek the views of children and adults separately, as it may be very difficult for children to say how they really feel in the presence of an adult who may also be the person they care for.*
- *Consideration must be given to whether a young carer is a ‘child in need’ under the Children Act 1989. The assessment must establish if they are unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of services and whether their health or development may be impaired if they or their family are not provided with support.*

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<sup>1</sup> Responsibilities for identifying and supporting young carers are placed on the local authority as a whole. These responsibilities are set out in the Children’s Act 1989 (as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014) and under the Care Act 2014. Section 96 of the Children and Families Act 2014 introduces new rights for young carers to ensure young carers and their families are identified and their needs for support are assessed. From April 2015 all young carers will be entitled to an assessment of their needs from the local authority. This new provision works alongside measures in the Care Act 2014 for transition assessment for young carers as they approach adulthood, and for assessing adults to enable a “whole family approach” to providing assessment and support. These obligations further explained in The Young Carers (Needs Assessments) Regulations 2015 and in Guidance related to both of these Acts and “Working Together to Safeguard Children” (DfE – 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Joint statement on key principles for supporting young carers made by DH and DfE (updated 2015)

These principles apply equally to all children up to the age of 18, recognising that young carers may require more focused support during the period they will be making the transition to adulthood. It is also intended that a consistent and coordinated approach is taken to identifying and supporting young adult carers aged 18 to 24.

## **2. A Shared Understanding**

The definition of a young carer is taken from section 96 of the Children and Families Act 2014; "...a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person (of any age, except where that care is provided for payment, pursuant to a contract or as Voluntary work). For the purposes of this Memorandum, this relates to care for any family member who is physically or mentally ill, frail elderly, disabled or misuses alcohol or substances. This memorandum also applies to young adult carers aged up to 25 and the transition from children's services to adult care and support.

## **3. Identifying young carers and promoting well being**

At the first point of contact, all those undertaking or receiving referrals or with responsibility for undertaking assessments will have a key role in identifying young carers. At the point of assessing the cared-for person, it is important to ask whether there are children in the same household as the person they are assessing and, if they do, to establish how much care and support is undertaken by any children through discussions with any adult who is being assessed and other family members, including the child(ren) concerned. Practitioners responsible for assessing people with care needs should identify how it will be possible to support the person in need of care so that children and young people are not relied on to provide excessive or inappropriate care. It will be essential that the particular vulnerabilities and needs of children and young people are recognised. Practitioners responsible for assessing adults with care needs must be able to recognise and respond to risks to children's safety and welfare. They must know how to respond where they have concerns that children are, or may be, suffering significant harm.

## **4. Assessment**

### **4.1 Responsibilities for assessment provision**

There will be provision for an assessment of needs for support for all young carers under the age of 18 on request from them or their parent or on the appearance of need. This will be available regardless of who they care for, what type of care they provide or how often they provide it. Young carers, the person cared for and, if different, the parents of the young carer will be informed about the assessment process and we will ensure they are able to participate in the process as effectively as possible.

The primary responsibility for responding to the needs of young carers and young adult carers and ensuring an appropriate assessment rests with the service responsible for assessing the person they support, rather than the age of the carer. This means that:

- Young carers of disabled children are the responsibility of the Children's Service which will also need to undertake carers' assessments for any young adult carers who look after disabled children.
- Adult Services will identify children in the household / family network and ensure that young carers are not left with excessive and inappropriate levels of caring responsibilities that risks them becoming vulnerable. They will also need to undertake

carers' assessments for young adult carers. Adult Services will refer to Children's services where the child is thought to be a child in need or to young carers' services or Early Help where other preventative services are needed.

(**Note;** In each area a decision should be made concerning in which circumstances it would be reasonable for adult workers or voluntary sector partners to undertake young carers assessments and when, in more complex cases, to refer to Children's Services. What is appropriate will vary based on local circumstances).

## 4.2 Whole family approach to assessment

A whole family approach will be embedded into local assessments. This means making sure any assessment takes into account and evaluates how the needs of the person being cared for impacts on the needs of the child who is identified as a possible young carer, or on any other child or on other members of the household. A thorough assessment centred on the family should result in appropriate support being provided for the person in need of care and support. This may result in the young carer being relieved of part or all of his or her caring role. Any remaining unmet support needs for the young carer should then be considered and responded to.

Further information and practice guidance is available in "**The Care Act and Whole Family Approaches**". This was published by ADASS March 2015 in association with several partners and was commissioned by the Department of Health. (See link to LGA website [Needs assessments and carers' assessments](#) )

## 4.3 Principles of practice in undertaking a young carer's needs assessment

No care or support package for a parent, other adult or sibling should rely on excessive or inappropriate caring by a young carer to make it sustainable.

When carrying out a young carer's needs assessment we will work to determine:

- the amount, nature and type of care which the young carer provides;
- the impact of the caring role on the young carer's wellbeing, education and personal and emotional development;
- whether any of the caring tasks the young carer is performing are excessive or inappropriate having regard to all the circumstances
- whether a needs assessment of the cared for person (be they a child or adult) has been carried out, and if not, to request one;
- Whether any of the young carer's needs for support could be met by providing support or services to:
  - the person cared for [by the young carer]; or
  - another member of the young carer's family.
- what the young carer's needs for support would be likely to be if he or she were relieved of part or all of his or her caring role and whether the young carer has any remaining unmet needs.

When carrying out a young carer's needs assessment, we will:

- ensure that the assessment is carried out in a manner which is appropriate and proportionate (in the light of the young carer's age, needs and wishes and feelings;



- adopt a whole family approach;
- ensure that any person who is to carry out a young carer's needs assessment has sufficient competence, knowledge, skills and training to be able to carry out that assessment and be an appropriate person to carry out the assessment in the light of the young carer's age, sex and understanding
- where considered appropriate or necessary to do so, consult persons with expertise and knowledge relevant to the young carer; and also to consult any person the young carer or their parent wishes to involve
- ensure that the young carer, the person cared for and, if different, the parents of the young carer are informed about the assessment process, usually prior to the assessment, and are helped to be able to participate in the process as effectively as possible.
- We will provide young carers, their parents and any person at the request of the young carer or their parent with a copy of the assessment with information about the actions to be taken including whether the young carer has been assessed as a "child in need" and confirming arrangements for review.

Where a young carer a "child in need" needing protection and support or needs early help support, adult workers will discuss the case with the Children's Services to decide if further action is needed. Further action might include:

- a referral to an independent Young Carers' service;
- accessing preventative support through the "Early Help Network"
- a joint assessment where appropriate (there is provision in the Care Act Guidance and in Section 17 of the Children Act to combine a young carers assessment with that of the adult); or
- further investigation by Children's Services about safeguarding concerns if there is a likelihood of significant harm to the child.

Where there are any aspects of a situation that indicates there are concerns about children's and/or vulnerable adults' safety and they require protection from harm these will be responded to swiftly and in line with local safeguarding procedures. Typically, children's services will undertake the provision of services or support to children in need and adult social services will undertake services and support to the adult. These may be directly provided or commissioned from other providers.

## **5. Information, advice and advocacy**

Together with our partners, we will work towards a position where services are available to all young carers and their families offering information, advice, advocacy, representation and support. This includes, where appropriate, support through local young carers' services, young adult carers projects or parenting groups. We will work with partners in the local community to ensure that information and advice for young carers is available in a range of appropriate settings and formats that are accessible by children and young people.

## **6. Transition to Adulthood**

We will assess the needs of young carers as they approach adulthood wherever it appears that there may be 'significant benefit' to the individual in doing so. Young adult carers often find their education, training and employment prospects are challenged by their caring role. We will therefore consider how to support young carers to prepare for adulthood and to raise and fulfil their aspirations. This is regardless of whether the young carer currently receives

any services and includes young carers whose parents have needs below the local authority's eligibility threshold.<sup>3</sup>

Where young carers are not eligible for services, the transition assessment will be followed up with good information and advice about support in the community.

We recognise that the power to join up assessments can be important at transition and where appropriate we will consider combining any existing Education Health and Care plans with transition plans and plans for the adult carer. When assessments are combined, we will as appropriate designate a named person to coordinate transition assessment and planning across agencies.

## **7. Information Sharing**

Effective and timely information sharing between agencies, including health, is critical to empowerment, preventative work, supporting transitions and promoting the welfare of young carers. Within the framework of existing local information sharing protocols our aim is to ensure specific recognition of the position of young carers and their identification and support.

## **8. Safeguarding**

### **8.1 Joint responsibility**

We will ensure that practitioners are aware of local safeguarding policy and practice and accept a joint responsibility to work in partnership to identify and respond to any young carers who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Early sharing of information is key if there are emerging concerns. No professional should assume that someone else will pass information on that they think maybe critical to the safety or wellbeing of any child or adult. If a professional has concern about a child's or adult's welfare and believes they are suffering or likely to suffer harm or neglect then they should share the information with the local authority and, or, the police if they believe or suspect a crime has been committed. Information sharing should be in line with local agreements and Caldicott principles.

### **8.2 Local Safeguarding Boards**

Local Safeguarding Children and Adults Boards will be made aware of issues surrounding young carers and of this Memorandum of Understanding. This is to ensure consistency with local multi-agency policies and procedures. This will also raise awareness of the way in which safeguarding work forms part of a continuum of person-centered and proportionate risk-based responses. We can all use these to ensure that those adults and children at risk of harm are kept safe and their welfare is promoted.

## **9. Putting these intentions into action**

Actions arising from this agreement will form part of our commissioning plan for carers and of a more detailed action plan. We will put in place arrangements for periodic audit and the provision of reasonable assurance to the Council, partners, young carers, their families and

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<sup>3</sup> Paragraph 16.18 Care and Support Statutory Guidance; Issued under the Care Act. DH 2014

the community on how this memorandum of understanding is being implemented. Feedback from young carers and their families will be an essential element of audits.

Programmes for learning and development will be put in place to raise awareness and understanding of young carers and their families. Training will be designed to support those undertaking young carers' assessments to have the necessary knowledge and skills. This should include ensuring that practitioners in the local authority and partner agencies are aware of the specific requirements concerning young carers of the Care Act and amendments to the Children Act and accompanying Guidance and Regulations.

## 10. Local Partnerships

There should be no "wrong doors" for young carers and their families. Young carers should be identified, assessed and their families supported in ways that prevent excessive or inappropriate caring and support parenting roles regardless of which service or agency is contacted first. Partnership working is key to providing joined up seamless services. This will include working with the NHS, voluntary organisations, education (including further education), public health, housing and local communities to support young carers.

Work through the local Health and Wellbeing Board and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (will include identification of the needs of young carers and young adult carers in the local area. The local Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy will include shared strategies for meeting these identified needs, setting out arrangements for working together and the actions that each partner will take individually and collectively.

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Strategic Director, People and Communities Department

**Note:** Variations may be agreed to reflect changing legislative, policy and local evidence of what works best for young carers and their families.

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**Further information:** can be obtained from the background notes for this paper and also from "The Care Act and Whole Family Approaches" 2015 (See link to LGA website [Needs assessments and carers' assessments](#)).