

How can school governors help?

“Governing bodies in schools make provision for policy and practice that supports young carers and promotes good communication with their families.”¹

Who is this chapter for?

- Governing body
- School lead or school staff interested in becoming/establishing a school lead within your school and team
- School leadership team

This chapter will support schools to:

- inform governors of their roles and responsibilities in relation to supporting young carers.

Synopsis

As a governor, you should be aware that not only are young carers attending your school, but that young carers have specific needs for which your school should be making adequate provision. Your school should consider designating a governor to take special interest in the provision of services and support for young carers and measure its effectiveness.

The role of governors in supporting young carers' needs

In Ofsted's evaluation schedule for schools², the following are all pertinent to the support of pupils who are young carers:

- School inspectors should evaluate:
 - how rigorously governors and supervisory boards challenge and support leaders and managers, holding them to account for tackling weaknesses and further improving outcomes for all pupils.
- School inspectors should take account of:
 - the rigour of the governing body's procedures to ensure the health, safety and well-being of staff and pupils.
 - how effectively governors fulfil their duties to promote community cohesion and inclusive practice relating to special educational needs, race equality, disability and gender equality.
 - the extent to which the governing body understands the school's performance data and has an accurate picture of how well all the pupils are achieving compared with those in other schools, as well as how different groups of pupils within the school are performing.



- governors' understanding of barriers to learning, including attendance and behaviour issues, and what the school is doing to overcome them.

See the tool at the end of this chapter to facilitate your evaluation of how your school stands in its support for young carers and to use as a guide on what steps should be followed to develop your school's support further.

The new framework for the inspection of maintained schools in England³, contains seven main judgments for pupils' outcomes and all are highly relevant to young carers. In addition to the five *Every Child Matters (ECM)* outcomes, pupils' behaviour, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development will be judged.

Being a young carer can impact on these particular areas of their life, particularly in relation to behaviour and social development. It is, therefore, key that schools support young carers in these areas, with the aim of removing barriers to learning so that they have the same access to education as their peers.

Judgments on the effectiveness of the provision in schools will include the effectiveness of care, guidance and support provided and for young carers they need all three of these in order to prosper in school and reach their full potential.

Among the leadership and management judgements each of the following are especially pertinent to supporting young carers through a whole school approach:

- the effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers.
- the effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being.
- the effectiveness with which the school promotes equal opportunity and tackles discrimination.
- the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures.

Other chapters to help you understand this topic

- 2** Young carers and their education
- 3** National legislation and guidance
- 11** School leadership teams
- 12** Developing a school policy for young carers and their families
- 13** Developing a school lead for young carers and their families

Key resources

As well as the tool at the end of this chapter and those in the above suggested chapters, the following resources are key.

→ Supporting young carers

A survey by Ofsted exploring how effectively young carers were identified by councils and their partners

www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Documents-by-type/Thematic-reports/Supporting-young-carers



¹Frank, J. & McLarnon, J. (2008). *Young carers, parents and their families: Key principles of practice*. The Children's Society

²Evaluation schedule of judgements for schools inspected under section five of the Education Act 2005, from September 2009:
www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-by/Other/General/Evaluation-schedule-of-judgements-for-schools-inspected-under-section-five-of-the-Education-Act-2005-from-September-2009

³Evaluation schedule of judgements for schools inspected under section five of the Education Act 2005, from September 2009:
www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-by/Other/General/Evaluation-schedule-of-judgements-for-schools-inspected-under-section-five-of-the-Education-Act-2005-from-September-2009



10.1 A checklist for governors*

This checklist helps you to evaluate where you feel your school is now in terms of supporting carers and demonstrates what needs to be achieved in order to provide further support. The following questions assume that evidence is available to support the responses.

Management			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Has your school established procedures to support young carers and if so, how effective are they? → Has any budget allocation been made to support the particular needs of young carers? → What funding streams is the school accessing to support young carers in school? 			
	Yes	No	Notes
The school has begun to identify young carers.			
A school lead has been identified.			
The school has adequate and funded provision for care, personal development, SEAL, etc.			

Policy			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Is there a whole-school policy on young carers? Is appropriate reference made to young carers in other school policies and is this effective? → Are the needs of and provision for young carers expressed clearly in the Ofsted Self-Evaluation Form sections, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A2.8, 2.9 and 2.11 • A3.3 and 3.4 • A4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, and 4.8 • A8.1 • B 1.26 (Extended Services) → Are the needs of and provision for young carers expressed in other major school documents? 			
	Yes	No	Notes
All school policies reference the needs of particular groups of vulnerable pupils in the school, including young carers.			
All relevant documents (Self Evaluation Form (SEF), Prospectus, School Profile, etc.) show reference to groups of vulnerable pupils, including young carers.			



Provision

- Is the school taking steps to ensure that young carers are given every opportunity to be fully involved in school life and activities?
- How effectively does the school link with outside agencies and support young carers to access them? Does the school signpost children and young people to them?
- How does the school communicate with the parents of the young carers and how effective is this?
- Has there been a rigorous review of the curriculum and assessment that takes account of vulnerable pupils, including young carers?

	Yes	No	Notes
The school is making provision for groups of vulnerable pupils in the school, including young carers, enabling them to make appropriate progress throughout the school.			
Young carers have the same access to a full education and career choices as their peers.			
The school is supporting the particular and identified needs of young carers with a whole-school approach.			
The school uses appropriate curriculum opportunities, such as Personal, Health, Social and Citizenship Education (PHSCE), Rights, Respect and Responsibilities (RRR) and Health and Safety within the curriculum, to address the needs of all pupils including young carers.			

**Developed in Hampshire as part of The Children's Society/Include partnership.*