



Policies and Procedures 2023-24

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POLICY STATEMENT:

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Northumberland Skills (NS) is committed to supporting young carer's to access education. This policy aims to ensure young carer's at Northumberland Skills are identified at an early stage and offered appropriate support to access the education to which they are entitled.
- 1.2. Most young carer's are not known to be caring by staff, so being a young carer can be a hidden cause of poor attendance, under achievement and bullying, with many young carer's dropping out of education or achieving no qualifications.
- 1.3. A young carer is a child or young person who is helping to look after someone who could not cope without their support. Most are caring for a parent, but some may be taking responsibility for a sibling, grandparent or other relative. In some instances a young carer may care for more than one family member.
- 1.4. The person they look after will have one or more of the following:
 - Physical disability (including sensory disability)
 - Learning disability
 - Mental health problem
 - Chronic illness
 - Substance misuse problem

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1. At Northumberland Skills, we believe that all young people have the right to an education, regardless of what is happening at home.
- 2.2. When a young person looks after someone who has a serious illness, disability, a mental health issue, or substance misuse problem, they may need extra support to help them get the most out of college. Our Young Carer's Policy says how we will support any learner who helps to look after someone who could not cope without their support.

3. Policy Objectives

- 3.1. Northumberland Skills is committed to:
 - 3.1.1. promoting the education and welfare of 'Young Carer's
 - 3.1.2. ensuring that 'Young Carer's have a voice in issues relating to their education
 - 3.1.3. challenging negative stereotyping and promoting inclusion
 - 3.1.4. targeting support appropriately
 - 3.1.5. ensuring appropriate level of support for parents / carer's

4. Policy Implementation

- 4.1. On disclosure, relevant staff will ensure that all other staff who may work with the young person are made aware of their circumstances in order that the learner receives the appropriate information, advice and guidance.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1.1. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) acts as the Lead for Young Carer's.

5.1.2. The DSL has a responsibility to ensure the policy is up to date annually.

5.2. Staff

5.2.1. It is important that all staff who are in contact with a child or young person are aware that he/she is a young carer. However, it is important that information around the reasons for the young person being a carer is shared on a need to know basis and in accordance with the wishes of the young person and will:

5.2.1.1. Recognise that flexibility may be needed when responding to the needs of the young carer. Available provision includes (but is not limited to):

- access to a telephone during breaks and lunchtime, to phone home;
- negotiable deadlines for homework / coursework (when needed);
- arrangements for college work to be sent home (when there is a genuine crisis);
- access for parents with impaired mobility; and alternative
- communication options for parents who are sensory impaired or housebound.

5.2.1.2. Ensure that attendance of young carer's is regularly monitored and an at risk form is completed. Any issues with regards to absence from college or particular lessons are addressed through the normal pastoral care arrangements. Northumberland Skills will give consideration to alternatives if a young carer is unable to attend college due to their caring commitments.

5.2.1.3. Ensure that Northumberland Skills is accessible to parents who have mobility and communication difficulties and involves them in parents' evenings.

5.2.1.4. Staff will follow the safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults policy & procedure if any young carer is at risk of significant harm due to inappropriate levels of caring.

5.3. Curriculum Lead

- 5.3.1. The curriculum lead for the young person's qualification are responsible to the Head Of Service for the implementation and conduct of this policy and will:
 - 5.3.1.1. act as a contact point for all relevant agencies, the Local Authority, Social Care, Health and other voluntary agencies involved in supporting the young person; this information will be shared with the DSL at all times.
 - 5.3.1.2. promote awareness amongst staff of the difficulties and educational disadvantages of young people who are carer's;
 - 5.3.1.3. Lecturers will act as an advocate for young carer's and refer for further support to the local YoungCarer's Service, who can also put families in touch with other support services; Northumberland County Council.
 - 5.3.1.4. ensure that educational information required for the care planning process / court proceedings (*if applicable*), and StatutoryReviews is available as required and that if asked, the education perspective can be given at such meetings by lecturer or an appropriate staff representative;
 - 5.3.1.5. ensure that all staff have access to training and information to enable them to recognise the indications that a child / young person has a caring responsibility, as well as increasing their understanding of such responsibilities; Units are available on Learn Together for this purpose.
 - 5.3.1.6. ensure that any children in need are identified or feel able to ask for help, are listened to and offered direct services and protection, if needed.

5.4. The Child/Young Person

- 5.4.1. It is important that a child / young person is aware that information is being recorded regarding their personal circumstances. It should be explained that Northumberland Skills, the Social Worker, curriculum Lead and the child / young person's parent/carer are working together to promote his / her education.
- 5.4.2. It is important to establish the child/young person's view of their circumstances and identify what they want others to know.

6. Related Policies and Procedures, Statements, Guidelines and Legislation

- 6.1. The Care Act 2014
- 6.2. The National Carer's Strategy (1999)
- 6.3. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Articles 28 and 29
- 6.4. The Children and Families Act 2014

- 6.5. DfE Advice and Guidance to Schools and Local Authorities on Managing Behaviour and Attendance
- 6.6. Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedure
- 6.7. KCSIE 2023

7. Implications

- 7.1. A young carer will take on responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development. A young carer might be providing the main care or share responsibilities with another family member. The caring tasks that a young carer has to deal with can range from:
 - Nursing care
 - Personal intimate care
 - Emotional care Domestic
 - Financial care
 - Child care
 - Mental Health and well-being
- 7.2. Northumberland Skills acknowledges that there are likely to be young carer's among its learners, and that being a young carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education.
- 7.3. Because of their responsibilities at home, a young carer might experience:
 - Being late or absent due to responsibilities at home
 - Concentration problems, anxiety or worry in college
 - Emotional distress
 - Tiredness in college
 - Lack of time for homework
 - Poor attainment
 - Physical problems such as back pain from lifting
 - False signs of maturity, as a result of assuming adult roles
 - Behavioural problems (taking out their anger or frustration)
 - Lack of time for extra-curricular activities
 - Isolation, embarrassed to take friends home
 - Limited social skills
 - Bullying
 - Feeling that no one understands and that no support is available
 - Low self esteem
- 7.4. It also might be difficult to engage their parents (due to fears about the young person being taken into care, fears about their condition being misunderstood or their parenting skills being called into question). They may be unable to attend parents' evenings.