

Young Carers and the Schools Census

Dear colleague,

In Norfolk, there are estimated to be 1 or 2 young carers in every class in every school across the county. A young carer is someone under the age of 18 who looks after someone who has a disability, illness, mental health condition, or drug or alcohol addiction. As well as those caring for parents, they may also look after brothers, sisters or elderly relatives too.

From speaking with young carers regularly over a number of years, we know that many young carers are not identified until they hit crisis point. This means they often miss out on crucial support that is available to them and their families, and risks significantly impacting their own health and wellbeing as well as their education.

I am writing asking for your support to help us to change this.

From Spring 2023, young carers are for the first time going to be included on the school census return. We believe that this will provide us all with a much clearer picture of the number of young carers in Norfolk schools, but also presents opportunities to use this data to monitor attendance and attainment of young carers.

What are we asking schools to help with?

To help ensure that every young carer in the county is identified at the earliest opportunity and linked into available support, young carer organisations across the county have set a challenge that by the end of the 2022-23 Academic Year, every Norfolk school will:

1. Have a Young Carers Champion so that every young carer has a trusted adult in school they can go to if things are difficult at home or they need more support
2. Have a Young Carers agreement/policy (ideally designed with young carers) so that every young carer in Norfolk knows what support is available to them in their school and locally
3. Ensure young carers are correctly identified in their school pupil management systems, so they are picked up in the census return. Monitor indicators such as attendance and attainment using the young carer flag.

We believe that by getting these things in place in every school, we can help ensure that all of our county's young carers get the best possible start in life and receive the support they and their families need before it reaches crisis point.

What support is available for schools?

We are not asking you to do this on your own. Caring Together have produced a comms pack and accompanying resources around the school census and are running a range of free support sessions for schools throughout the Autumn term. Topics include:

- Awareness-raising sessions for school staff
- Creating a Young Carers Policy
- Introductions to Caring Together's Carer Friendly Tick (Education) accreditation.
- The role of a Young Carers Champion

Visit www.caringtogether.org/youngcarerchallenge for the list of dates.

They are also commissioned by Norfolk County Council to support individual schools and multi-academy trusts in the county to work towards the Carer Friendly Tick (Education) Award.

How can schools sign up to the challenge?

Schools should visit www.caringtogether.org/youngcarerchallenge where you can find out more, register your support for the challenge and let us know who your young carers champion(s) is. For Young Carers Action Day 2023 on Wednesday 15 March 2023, Caring Together will publish a list of the schools who are taking part in the challenge and have got a Young Carers Champion.

You can also e-mail carerfriendlytick@caringtogether.org with any questions that you might have.

I hope that we can count on the support of your school as we aim to ensure that every young carer in Norfolk has the opportunity to flourish.

Kind regards,



Sara Tough
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Andy McGowan
Head of engagement, Caring Together



pp Maria Plumb
Head of support for Young Carers Matter Norfolk, Voluntary Norfolk