

Brechin High School values are: Friendliness, Achievement, Inclusion, Trust & respect, Honesty.

Young Carers Policy

Rationale

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 identifies young carers as a specific group that may need additional support for learning to overcome barriers to learning caused by their caring responsibilities.

"A young carer is anyone under the age of 18 whose life is in some way restricted because of the need to take responsibility for the care of a person who is ill, has a disability, is experiencing mental distress, or is affected by substance misuse." (Carers National Association, 1998)

Aims

To identify and provide sufficient support to young carers helping each young person to maximize his/her potential.

Principles

Unless the school is made aware of a child or young person's home circumstances, young carers are at risk of first being identified by negative aspects of their behaviour or work. Potential warning signs which **may** indicate that a young person has unrecognised caring responsibilities include:

- regular lateness
- increasing rates of unauthorised absences
- tiredness in school
- lack of concentration, anxiety
- incomplete or late-return of homework
- Concerns about presenting behaviour
- few peer friendships
- being bullied
- lack of interest in extra-curricular activities, especially after school
- parental non-attendance at parent meetings
- change in / erratic attendance pattern
- drop in achievements / grades
- change in attitude

Practice

School staff will recognise the young person's right to confidentiality and, if they have to talk to a young carer about their caring responsibilities, it should be in private and not in front of their friends unless the young carer asks for a friend to be present. Sensitivity to the needs of the young carer will include being careful not to ask even well-intentioned questions about how the family members are when the young carer is in the presence of their peers.

If a young carer is given a detention, school staff will consider allowing this to take place at break and lunchtimes rather than after school.

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Where possible, deadlines for the submission of homework will be negotiated with the young carer in advance of the deadline being set. (It is recognised that deadlines for some key tasks cannot be changed, such as the presentation of coursework as part of an externally moderated module.)

Regarding parental contact, the individual circumstances of young carer will be considered as the parent may not be able to attend parents' evenings or other parental meetings on school premises. Alternative arrangements such as a home visit can be arranged.

Young Carers who are registered with Angus Young Carers Service can apply to the service for a "Young Carers ID Card". The named teacher indicated on the "Young Carers ID Card – Consent Form", will be informed by a Young Carers Support Worker that this card has been issued. The Young Carers Card acts as proof of the pre-agreed specific needs of a young carer - such as the need to keep a mobile phone on during school, authority to collect prescriptions for family members, and permission to leave school early to pick up siblings.

School staff will include Young Carer Awareness as part of the PSE curriculum, and will invite staff from Angus Young Carers Service to contribute to assemblies or PSE lessons to make pupils more aware of Young Carers and the support available to them and their families.

School staff will be mindful of sensitive topics within lessons that may impact on young carers e.g. alcoholism/drug dependency

The School will maintain a notice board where information regarding young carers, and the support which may be available to them, along with the contact details of Angus Young Carers Service can be clearly displayed. The notice board will be up-dated regularly. Quarterly newsletters distributed by Angus Young Carers Service will be displayed, or otherwise made available for pupils and staff.

School staff will make every effort to assist in the identification and, where appropriate, the referral of young carers who may benefit from the support available from Angus Young Carers Service. Where consent has been received to share information all staff/adults involved with the carer should be informed of the caring role. If the young carer(s), in discussion with the school and/or Young Carers, feel a safe space or a "drop in" is required, school staff will work in partnership with Young Carers to see if this is made available.

School staff will also take an active role in seeking to identify and provide support to hidden young carers.