

# Manchester Communication Academy

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Young Carers Policy



with you, for you, about you.

## Revision Information

<b>This document has been approved for operation within</b>	All Trust Establishments
<b>Date of last review</b>	July 2025
<b>Date of next review</b>	July 2026
<b>Review Period</b>	Annually, or where there have been material changes to the relevant courses of business
<b>Date of Trustee Approval</b>	
<b>Status</b>	To be approved
<b>Person Responsible for Policy</b>	
<b>Owner</b>	Greater Manchester Academies Trust
<b>Signature of Approval</b>	

## Revision History

Review Date	Changes Made	By Whom
02/05/2023	New Policy	AW
10/07/2025	Policy review	JW

**Equality Statement:** Under the public sector equality duty (PSED), all schools/academies must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010. To advance equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it and to foster good relations across all protected characteristics. This means schools/academies must take into account equality considerations when policies are being developed, adopted and implemented. Manchester Communication Primary Academy (part of Greater Manchester Academies Trust) regularly reviews all policies and procedures, which are recommended to schools/academies to ensure compliance with education and employment legislation including the Equality Act 2010.

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## **Introduction**

Here at MCA we are committed to providing ongoing support for our Young Carers and their families. We understand that it is essential for us to recognise that some adaptations or adjustments may need to take place in order for our Young Carers to receive appropriate support. We adopt a holistic approach to education and we are dedicated to supporting our students through any personal challenges they may face. Through this policy, we acknowledge that Young Carers may need further support to ensure they have equal access to their education and have the same opportunities as their peers.

We recognise that Young Carers have a valuable role to play and are supported thoroughly within their families. However, we are committed to ensuring that their education is not at risk as a result of their caring role.

The policy includes a commitment from senior leadership and school governors to continue to support the role of the Young Carer Champion, which should also include provision for when there is a change in staffing structures to ensure a timely replacement of the young carer champion role and connection with the Manchester City Councils Young Carer Coordinator.

## **Who is responsible for this policy?**

The Trust has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory or Trust framework. The Trust has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy to GMATs SLT, the Local Governing Body and the Head of each establishment.

The Local Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team at each establishment has a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all members of staff are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.

## Aims

- To review this policy annually.
- To support Young Carers and their families to feel recognised, valued and supported.
- To help remove any barriers to Young Carers access to learning.
- To support our Young Carers in recognising their valuable skills and using these to their full potential.
- Ensuring that Young Carers can take part in all school activities where possible.
- To create a high level of staff awareness throughout the academy and ensure the identification of any Young Carers can be achieved as early as possible.
- To make reasonable adjustments to usual school policies and show flexibility on a case by case basis. This will only be done in the students best interests and where it means the student will receive the same opportunities as their peers.
- Ensuring that we give a smooth transition to the students' next educational provision through sharing of information.
- To ensure we receive the information from any feeder primary schools when a student is already identified as a Young Carer.
- To offer Young Carers extra curricular activities that promote relaxation, social time and leisure, alongside our standard ESA offer.
- To access the universal offer and partnerships for young carers within our city.
- Follow the MCC pathway to assessment and support.
- Ensuring that the annual Census data is accurate and up to date when a Young Carer is identified through any means.

## Strategies

- We are members of the Manchester Young Carers Partnership and work closely with the Young Carers operational lead at Manchester City Council
- We have been committed to receiving the Manchester Young Carers in Schools Award and have contributed to the development of this model.
- We have one or more members of staff who are dedicated to their Young Carers Champion role within the school. This member of staff will stay up to date with training, updating members of SLT and ensure we are in communication with the Young Carers lead at Manchester City Council.
- We ensure that all of our staff receive training on the identification of Young Carers and their roles. This ensures all staff members are comfortable and confident in reporting back to our Young Carers lead.
- Head of year and Directors of pastoral care are all made aware of Young Carers identified within their year group to ensure they are kept up to date.
- We have a noticeboard dedicated to our Young Carers. Here they can find statistics, useful information, signposting and details of supporting staff members within the school.
- We deliver whole school assemblies at the start of each academic year to raise awareness and reduce the stigma associated with being a Young Carer.
- Our MCA website has a section dedicated to Young Carers and this will be updated regularly with any new information we receive from the council.

- We have an open door policy for any of our students who identify with the term Young Carer meaning that students can seek some 1-2-1 support from our Young Carers Lead when needed.

## How we identify Young Carers

We pride ourselves on building and maintaining positive relationships with our families and young people. Through parent coffee mornings, telephone conversations and trusting relationships with our students we can gain a sense of what is going on for our families. This enables us to understand individual situations and identify what specific support may be needed.

Any student identified as a Young Carer by their primary school, will automatically be added to our Young Carers list.

We also refer to lists of children on Child protection and looked after children plans, to identify children in households affected by adult mental health conditions or substance misuse.

Ensuring staff awareness is raised, and having clear and effective communication systems between staff members allows us to identify young carers within school.

Students who are the main English speakers in their household and often translate for their parents are also recognised as Young Carers. In many cases they take on the responsibility of translating at medical appointments as well as legal and financial meetings.

Students can self identify in confidence to the Young Carers lead or to another trusted adult within the school. We will have 1-2-1 conversations with the student where this is the case to gain a better understanding of their caring role and outline any support that is available to them.

Parents can also contact our Young Carers lead to identify their children as Young Carers when they recognise that their child(ren) take on additional roles and responsibilities within the household that go beyond what is typically expected for their age.

## Support offer once a student is identified

- Young Carers ESA is available for students to sign up to and attend once a week. This is a space that will allow students to unwind, meet new friends who also have similar responsibilities at home and have a chat with our Young Carers lead if needed.
- Miss Ward will aim to have an initial check in with every student where it has been highlighted that the student has an additional role at home. We can do this on a 1-2-1 basis with the student's consent, away from any other classes taking place.
- A Young Carers assessment including The Multidimensional Assessment of Caring Activities and The Positive and Negative Outcomes of Caring can be carried out with identified students and this will be recorded on our systems. This gives a good indication as to what impact their caring role is having on them physically and emotionally.

- Specific information regarding their caring role can be shared with staff members if the student requests this, in order to create a wider understanding of their caring role, as we are aware there are times when this can impact on their learning.
- Young Carers have the option to wear a small pin badge, allowing them to identify themselves to staff discreetly, should they choose to do so.

It is important to note that there are many other ways we can support a child with their caring role, and this is usually done on a case by case basis as we understand not every student requires the same levels of support. If there is ever a substantial adaptation that would need to be made, we will contact parents for their views and support in the adaptation process.

## Reducing barriers to learning

We are aware of the impact a young carer role can have on a child's education and the barriers that this could create. Here at MCA we aim to reduce those barriers and encourage all students to thrive. During the transition process from primary to secondary education and then onto further education, Capturing and sharing appropriate information to ensure the students needs are met.

We are able to signpost children and their families to external services and/or undertake whole family work that aims to support on a holistic level.

We understand that taking on a caring role can increase the likelihood of a young person struggling with their mental health; therefore, we are able to offer wellbeing support within school, which in turn can support them in accessing a full curriculum.

We are able to keep a track of student's attendance and attainment patterns, and identify when things have changed in order to further support and improve in these areas.

We have a post 16 / careers team at MCA who will be able to identify young carers at risk of falling into the not in education, employment or training category and taking appropriate actions to address this.

### The school ensures Young Carers and their families know how to access support by:

Including information signposting young carers and their families to other resources , we have a young carers notice board where support offers and information can be found easily by students.

Using the curriculum to promote a full understanding, acceptance of and respect for issues such as caring, disability and impairment, for example, embedding the challenges faced by young carers into aspire lessons and delivering regular assemblies raising awareness of young carer issues. Assemblies include information on where to find the young carers lead and how to access them should any students feel they need to.

Having a dedicated section of the MCA website for Young Carers and their parents to access whenever they need to do so.

Ensuring that communication between identified young carers, staff and parents is open. Letters are sent home at the beginning of the academic year to alert parents to any students we have identified as Young Carers. We also send out termly messages to parents, giving them regular opportunities to identify their child as a Young Carer and alert us to any support that they may need.

## Roles and responsibilities for Young Carers and their Families

In order for this policy to be effective, Young carers and their families will need to maintain clear communication whenever there are any circumstantial changes that affect the young person's ability to access their education. Alongside this, Young carers and their parents or carers will need to inform a trusted member of staff where their caring role has changed and this means that the young person requires additional support, or it is having an impact on their mental wellbeing. Parents can call the main reception on 0161 202 0161 and ask to speak to Miss Ward directly. In line with our attendance policies and procedures, parents or carers must call up to inform us when their

child's punctuality will be affected due to their caring responsibilities in the morning. We strongly encourage having a class charts account to further enable clear communication between staff and parents.

Young carers themselves also have a responsibility to make every endeavour to catch up on any lost learning time that has happened as a result of their caring role. We ensure that this is possible via attending the Young Carers ESA where students can catch up on their homework and lost learning time independently. We encourage students to speak to their class teacher or the Young Carers lead whenever there has been any missed content and you are struggling to catch up. Staff may be able to put some additional supportive measures in place where this is the case, such as a library pass for before and after school.

So that all adults and teams in school can support you in line with this policy, Young carers are encouraged to wear their YC badge, this will help to ensure that all reasonable adjustments and considerations are in place. Lastly, Young Carers agree to using a trusted adult to communicate any challenges that could lead to the student not always meeting the expectations in line with their peers.

## CPD for staff

The need for in-service training of all staff is recognised and GMAT Academy is fully committed to providing up to date CPD for staff.

We ask that all of our staff members complete Young Carers awareness training at least once each academic year. There is always an opportunity to refresh the training and expand their knowledge at any point throughout the academic year if a staff member wishes to.

We also send regular reminders out to all staff members at MCA about the role of Young Carers and any signs to look out for, that might help them identify when a student in their class has additional responsibilities at home.

Staff members are encouraged to speak to our Young Carers lead whenever they have any queries about how to approach the conversations with students who are young carers, or if they have any concerns about a student's roles and responsibilities at home.

Acknowledgement: This policy includes suggestions provided by members of the Young Carers' Alliance and we greatly appreciate their support and guidance. Manchester City Council Young Carers Partnership are proud members of the Young Carers Alliance.

