

BRIEFING NOTE

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5 January 2016

Young Carers

1 Young Carers in Walsall

- 1.1 A Young Carers Partnership Group is currently chaired by the Head of Youth Support Service, with partners from across the partnership reflecting the Children and Young People's Partnership Board (CYPPB) membership. The group meets on a quarterly basis and reports to the CYPPB Board.
- 1.2 The Young Carers Partnership Group has contributed to the development of the Young Carers Strategy, see **Appendix A** attached, which was approved by the Children and Young People's Partnership Board in July.
- 1.3 Walsall continues to address the challenge of how we identify the total number of Young Carers in the Borough. This challenge is reflected across the West Midlands and Nationally.

2 Vision for the Future

- 2.1 The Young Carers Strategy identifies a plan for three years, 2015-2017, which sets out a set of priorities for Young Carers as follows:
 - **Ensuring early identification of children and young people who are Young Carers through** the Children's Workforce Development Strategy. We will develop awareness of the Young Carers agenda via the Workforce Development programme which supports professionals working with adults and children to identify Young Carers, understand their needs and raise awareness of the resources and support available to recognise and support Young Carers and the demands of a caring role.
 - **Targeted support for children and young people at risk of taking on inappropriate caring roles.** We will work with key agencies to improve early identification of children and young people who are at risk of not reaching their full potential because of their caring role.
 - **Support young carers to enable them to identify their own needs and reach their potential.** We will seek to provide information that empowers Young Carers to make informed decisions/choices. We will work with Adult Social Care and other professionals working with children and young people to support the transition to adult services.
- 2.2 The 3 year delivery plan emphasises the need to adopt a Whole Family Approach. This places responsibility on a range of agencies including health, social care, education and the voluntary sector. Staff members from these services are often

best placed to identify Young Carers and enable them and their families to access appropriate and timely support.

- 2.3 Walsall commits to developing a range of methods and approaches to youth engagement, which will play a significant role in ensuring that the voice of young people is heard and acted on through the appropriate routes, and the profile of these young people is raised.
- 2.4 The national guidance for Young Carers identifies a number of actions to ensure that children and young people who take on this role are supported and safeguarded against inequalities. The action plan at the end of the strategy is a starting point to bring together partners to support and implement work streams to improve the outcomes for children and young people.

3 Issues/Challenges

- 3.1 Ensure accurate collection of data from across the partnerships, with recording systems capturing this data.
- 3.2 Data does not accurately reflect the current position of young carers. The change of electronic case file management system from Paris to Mosaic will allow us to provide a full detailed report on this area of work. Much was previously dependent on how staff recorded this information.
- 3.3 Ensure working agreements are implemented between Children's and Adult Services to ensure the transition arrangements for young carers are embedded.

For further enquiries please contact **Alan Michell (Head of Youth Support Services) Tel: 01922 650346**. Email: alan.michell@walsall.gov.uk



Walsall Children and Young People's
Partnership

Strategy for Supporting Young Carers

2015-2017

	Name	Email	Phone
Partnership Lead	Alan Michell	Alan.Michell@walsall.gov.uk	01922 650346
Lead Officers	Shain Akhtar	Shain.Akhtar@walsall.gov.uk	01922 714966
	Julie Hill	Julie.Hill@walsall.gov.uk	01922 658373
Version	2		

Walsall Children & Young People's Partnership

1. Introduction to our Young Carers Strategy

The Young Carers Strategy supports the Walsall Children & Young People's Partnership Vision and Priorities. Underpinning all the work in our partnership, reflected in this strategy, is the promotion of safety and welfare for children and young people – Implementing sound safeguarding practices and procedures and always adhering to the Walsall Safeguarding Children's Board policies and procedures.

The Young Carers Strategy in Walsall is led by Youth Support Services and takes a partnership approach to support Young Carers in response to recent legislation. The strategy includes those services directly delivered by Youth Support Services, including commissioned/procured services, and those that directly contribute to Adult Social Care – Whole Family System, Early Help and Targeted Youth Support.

The Children and Families Act 2014 and Care Act 2014, which came into force in April 2015, significantly strengthen the rights of Young Carers. Through the changes outlined in the Children and Families Act all Young Carers under the age of 18 have the right to an assessment regardless of who they care for and/or based on the appearance of need. The changes in the Care Act reinforce the rights identified in the Children and Families Act, requiring Local Authorities to take a whole family approach to assessing and supporting adults, consequently the needs of Young Carers are also identified when undertaking an adult carer's assessment.

This means when a child/young person is identified as a Young Carer, the needs of everyone in the family are to be considered. This should trigger action from both Children's and Adults Services and the wider partnership– assessing why a child is caring, what needs to change and what would help the family to prevent children from taking on this responsibility in the first place.

Young Carers include children and young people under 18 years who provide regular and ongoing care and emotional support to a family member, including siblings who are physically or mentally ill, disabled or misuse substances. A Young Carer becomes vulnerable when the level of care-giving and responsibility to a person in need of care becomes excessive or inappropriate for that child, risking and impacting on his/her emotional or physical well-being or educational achievement and life chances.

Being a Young Carer can have a detrimental effect on young people, including problems at school, health problems, emotional difficulties, isolation, lack of time for leisure, feeling different, pressure from keeping family problems a secret, problems with transition to adulthood, lack of recognition and feeling they are not being listened to.

We know from evidence and research carried out by the Carers Trust that a range of arrangements need to be in place to successfully support and identify Young Carers:

- Effective engagement of Partner Organisations
- Effective transition to Adult Social Care
- Focus on Targeted Interventions
- Effective Workforce development
- Improving outcomes for Young Carers

We know from research carried out by The Carers Trust that it is important that special consideration is given to specific groups to ensure inclusive practice, especially when undertaking the assessment of needs. For example:

- Black and minority ethnic groups
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Very Young Carers

2. Our Three Priorities

- 1. Ensuring early identification of children and young people who are Young Carers through the Children's Workforce Development Strategy.** We will develop awareness of the Young Carers agenda via the Workforce Development programme which supports professionals working with adults and children to; identify Young Carers, understand their needs and raise awareness of the resources and support available to recognise Young Carers/caring role.
- 2. Targeted support for children and young people at risk of taking on inappropriate caring roles.** We will work with key agencies to improve early identification of children and young people who are at risk of not reaching their full potential because of their caring role.
- 3. Support Young Carers to enable them to identify their own needs and reach their potential.** We will seek to provide information to empower the Young Carers to make informed decisions/choices. We will work with Adult Social Care and other professionals working with children and young people to support the transition to adult services.

Where we are now

The National Picture:

There are no accurate national figures available, but a survey carried out by the Social Survey Division of the Office for National Statistics on behalf of the Department of Health estimates that there are approximately 32,000 Young Carers aged 8–17 in the United Kingdom, with a lower estimate range of 19,000 and an upper range of 51,000 (Walker, 1996).

The most recent nationwide study was carried out in 1998 by Young Carers Research Group at the University of Loughborough. They undertook a study of 2,203 Young Carers and found the following:

- The average age of a Young Carer was 12
- 86% were of compulsory school age (i.e. 5–15 years old)
- 57% were girls; 43% were boys
- 14% were from ethnic minority groups
- 54% lived in lone parent families
- 58% cared for their mother
- Tasks performed ranged from basic domestic duties to very intimate care.
- One in three had missed school or had educational difficulties because of their caring role
- 29% cared for a relative with mental health problems
- 63% cared for a relative with physical health problems
- One in five provided intimate care
- One in four had no external support (other than local Young Carers' project)

(Dearden and Becker: 1998)

In April 2001, the London Young Carers Workers Forum mapped the demographics of Young Carers from 21 London projects. The outcome of this exercise showed that of the 2,180 Young Carers registered with these projects, on average:

- 41% gave primary care
- 50% lived in a lone parent family
- 64% cared for a parent.

(Baker, PRTC: 2002)

The figures above specify lone parent families but also highlight the fact that a significant number of Young Carers are assisting with care needs in two-parent families

The Local Picture:

At present we do not have a robust framework for identifying Young Carers and members of the families, outside our current Young Carer's Service. As a result we do not have an accurate figure of those who have a caring role and therefore we do not fully understand the scope, range and the implications of support required.

We recognise that a cohort of Young Carers and their families do not wish to be identified due to stigma. However we need to ensure those that are classified as such are informed of the reasons for and the benefits of identification, in order to ensure that appropriate support is in place and offered.

We understand and appreciate that some children and young people who may undertake caring roles do not identify themselves or classify themselves as Young Carers. This has also been reinforced in recent research on Young Carers which highlighted how certain community groups and cultures see this as part of the family function and not as an additional responsibility or role.

We do have some information about the numbers of Young Carers in Walsall. In 2013 Walsall Council developed and launched the Youth of Walsall (YOW) survey, an anonymous online survey for secondary schools in Walsall. The questionnaire was developed and designed in partnership with colleagues in the police and public health as well as children and young people themselves. Twenty five were invited to take part, with the majority of responses coming from 6 schools. 3482 young people from 10-19 years of age completed the survey fully or partly.

Whilst the survey did not go into great depth around the definition/understanding of what defines a Young Carer, respondents did identify when they looked after a relative for one or a number of medical afflictions. This was higher in the younger year groups (Year 7 and 8) than for older students. One quarter of young people who stated that they spend between one and nine hours per week looking after a relative. Those children and young people who identified themselves as 'Young Carers' are more likely to be those who have had support from a social worker.

Information on the views of parents and carers is limited, aside from parents that have Young Carers who attend the youth provision offered by Youth Support Services.

We are also aware that we have Young Carers that access generic youth provision across the Borough and do not wish to be identified, but through conversation share this information with workers. We have developed a process which has been endorsed by Adult Social Care and Children Service's, in terms of supporting Young Carers identified through a formal process.

3. Where do we want to get to?

The Children's Partnership Board will raise the profile and ensure better identification of Young Carers, and ensure commitment to addressing the gaps that exist in meeting the needs of Young Carers. In order to achieve this goal we have developed a strategic plan which not only sets out the direction of travel, but defines the actions needed from partners.

We will continue to work with Adult Social Care colleagues and other agencies to increase the identification of Young Carers locally. The aspiration for the Strategy is to identify Young Carers in Walsall and as a starting point, we have used the NSPCC formula of 4% to initially give us a potential number in Walsall. Based on this formula of youth population from 6 to 18 years (midyear 2010) at 39,437, would equate to 1327 Young Carers. We recognised that this figure is higher than the information that has been gathered from the YOW Survey, however through the partnership we will begin to establish a more accurate picture of Young Carers in Walsall.

At the heart of this strategy and delivery plan is the need to see an increase in the number of Young Carers being identified. We need to establish an effective way of routinely gathering information on Young Carers within our communities to support the action plan complimenting this strategy. Without this information we will struggle to understand the scale or nature of the issues effectively for Young Carers and their families.

Using our three priorities we will ensure that:

- Our workforce has the knowledge, skills to identify children and young people that are Young Carers.
- We provide targeted support to children and young people that are at risk of taking on inappropriate caring roles, through our assessment and interventions.
- To empower children and young people in decision making to fulfil their aspiration and potential

The 3 year delivery plan emphasises the need to adopt a Whole Family Approach thus placing responsibility on a number of agencies including health, social care, education and the voluntary sector. Staff members from these services are often best placed to identify Young Carers and enable them and their families to access appropriate and timely support.

We will commit to developing a range of methods and approaches to youth engagement, which will play a significant role in ensuring that the voice of young people is heard and acted on through the appropriate routes, and the profile of these young people is raised.

The national guidance for Young Carers identifies a number of actions to ensure that children and young people that take on this role are supported and safeguarded against inequalities. The action plan at the end of the strategy is a starting point to bring together partners to support and implement work streams to improve the outcomes for children and young people.

The table below has been used as a starting point to assess the current position of work/support for children and young people that have a caring role. It identifies areas where further work is required.

Good or better	Requires Improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision established for Young Carers at Myplace Centre • Initial referral pathways established with Adult Social Care • Early Help process captures the category for Young Carers • Development of links with Carer Champions for NHS • Purchase of the Care Aware e learning tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from parents on services they are in receipt of in terms of support for Young Carers • Embedding referral pathways between Adult Social Care and Children Services in the identification and referral of Young Carers. • Development of Parent group to support and advise on service development for Young Carers, through Walsall Information Advice Support Service. • Identification of Young Carers in Schools

4. How will we get there?

We are working with colleagues from Adult Social Care and MAST/Early Help to capture the number of young people identifying themselves as Young Carers through our information gathering processes, this will hopefully be captured through our systems.

Our three priorities:

1. Ensuring early identification of children and young people who are Young Carers through training and support to staff and other agencies.
2. Targeted support for children and young people at risk of taking on inappropriate caring roles.
3. Support Young Carers to enable them to identify their own needs and reach their potential.

The strategy will aim to ensure that Young Carer's needs are met and are acknowledged through the Young Carers Partnership Group.

We will work alongside performance colleagues to ensure that our systems are capturing the right data to identify the Young Carers that are accessing or coming through our services. This information will help identify gaps and service development that is needed for children and young people to meet their full potential. The performance indicators below will be initially used to capture the information and develop an understanding of Young Carers, needs and numbers in the Borough. The intention is that this area of work around performance will be evolving.

- Number of children and young people identified as potential Young Carers by Adult Social Care via the completion of First Contact Assessment
- Number of young people referred by Adult Services to children's services as potential Young Carers

- Number of young people receiving a child and family / outcomes star assessment as a Young Carer
- Number of young people receiving a service from children's services as a result of assessment (break down by Social Care / youth support / Early help)
- Duration of service provision
- Reason for case closure (step up / step down reasons are well defined)

We need to ensure that professionals working with children and young people across Walsall have an understanding and awareness of Young Carers and the implications of interventions and plans to support them and their families.

Our strategy and related activity will be underpinned by the following principles which compliment the Department of Children, Schools and Families principles * (see below):

- Young Carers are children and young people first; they have the right to take part in every day experiences.
- Young Carers have the right to choose not to be a Carer, or reduce the amount of care they provide.
- No Child, or young adult, should be disadvantaged because of taking on caring responsibilities for another member of their family.
- Caring responsibilities should not be assumed to be a problem. Many Young Carers would be reluctant to give up their responsibilities as they are pleased to help and proud that they are able to provide support.
- The level of support provided by the Young Carer is appropriate and consideration should be given to the level of care taking place, to assess the potential impact on the Young Carer.

**In 2008 The Children's Society, funded by the Department of Children, Schools and Families published 'Young Carers, parents and their families - Key principles of practice'. These principles are intended to be used alongside legislation and guidance is already in place to enable agencies to respond to the recommendations of national policy, which affect Young Carers and their families in ways that are sensitive to their needs. Using these key Principles of Practice will help ensure the best use of resources and promote whole family working.*

The six key principles are detailed below:

- Children's welfare should be promoted and safeguarded by working towards the prevention of children undertaking inappropriate care of any family member.
- The key to change is the development of a whole family approach and for all agencies to work together including children and adult services, to offer co-ordinated assessments and services to the child and the whole family.
- Young Carers and their families are the experts on their own lives and as such must be fully involved in the development and the delivery of support services
- Young Carers will have the same access to education and career choices as their peers.
- It is essential to continue to raise awareness of Young Carers and to support and influence change effectively. Work with Young Carers and their families must be monitored and evaluated regularly.
- Local Young Carer projects and other targeted services who work directly with Young Carers should be available to provide safe quality support to those children who continue to be affected by any caring role within the family.

The delivery plan (Table One) sets out how our key priorities will be addressed and provides a tool to measure of progress and development.

The Children and Young People's Partnership Board will be used as a vehicle to engage and keep our partners fully updated on developments and also to steer head the development of Young Carer support services in Walsall.

Adult Social Care via its Operational Carers Group will be used as a means of making connectivity between the two services, and ensure that pathways reflect the resources and transition arrangements for both the adult and Young Carer.

The implementation of referral pathways and raising the awareness of Young Carers in Walsall will enable services to identify and ensure that appropriate support is in place for Young Carers. Young Carers will have the opportunities with appropriate support to achieve their aspiration in their personal development and have an active voice in future developments, be it in services or in relation to their own personal circumstances

DRAFT

Table1 - Our Strategic Direction and key milestones

What improvement will CYP and Parents experience	Our Strategic Actions	Who is responsible	By when	What plans support this work	Performance Measure
Strategic Improvement 1: Promoting the welfare of Young Carers					
1.1 We will ensure Children/Adults Services and wider Children Partnership that engage with Young Carers are aware of their rights to a carer’s assessment and ensure that the right interventions are in place.		Adult Social Care/Children Services	March 2016	Young Carers Strategy/Active Involvement Strategy	Intervention plans in place/the completion of Outcome Stars
1.2 We will ensure that any vulnerabilities highlighted are referred into the MAST for appropriate allocation i.e. CIN, EH		Adult Social Care/Other agencies	August 2015	MOU Young Carers Strategy Adult Social Care Strategy	Number of assessments completed and referrals made
Strategic Improvement 2: Development of a whole family approach					
2.1 We will work in partnership to provide a holistic approach to meeting the needs of young people via children & adult social care, with young people telling their story once		Adult Social Care/Other agencies Children’s Service – Workforce Development Strategy	August 2015	MOU Young Carers Strategy Adult Social Care Strategy	Reducing the number of times children and young people are referred
2.2 We will improve staff understanding across the partnership through the e-learning tool for Carer Aware. Training will be implemented at a staged approach			March 2016	Workforce development Strategy and Young Carers Strategy	All front line practitioners will be required to complete this training

Strategic Improvement 3: Raising the voice of Young Carers				
3.1 We will develop a children and young people's (Young Carers) steering group which will help develop and capture the wishes and feelings of Young Carers in Walsall, to support the development of this work	Youth Support Services	July 2015	Young Carers Strategy/Active Involvement Strategy	Group established with terms of reference in place
3.2 We will engage Young Carers in decision making to influence the shape and delivery of services for and to Young Carer in Walsall, by ensuring that they are represented at appropriate decision making tables.				
Strategic Improvement 4: Advice & Support in Education, Training/employment				
4.1 We will work with partners to ensure Young Carers have access to appropriate information, advice and support service, to make informed decision in relation to education, training/employment	Walsall Youth Support Connexions	December 2015	Young Carers Strategy and Information Advice Guidance Plans To be agreed	Number of Young Carers identified that access service delivery
4.2 We will work with the children's partnership and key stakeholders i.e. School Nursing, Community Champions, Schools in community setting to identify and support Young Carers to achieve their potential, through the clear identification of joint pathways	WHG/Public Health	To be agreed		
Strategic Improvement 5: Implementation and monitoring of MOU				
5.1 We will monitor through the Young Carers Partnership Operational Group the implementation of the MOU	Alan Michell	August 2015	MOU/Young Carers Strategy	Engagement of partners
5.2 We will through the partnership review the working relationships to ensure they are fit for purpose and explore data of the numbers that are identified as Young Carers through the Making it Real Action Plan	Alan Michell	December 2015	MOU/Young Carers Strategy	
5.3 We will monitor the number of Young Carers identified through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of children and young people identified as potential Young Carers by Adult Social Care via the completion of First Contact Assessment Number of young people referred by Adult Services to children's services as potential Young Carers Number of young people receiving a child and family / outcomes star assessment 	Karen Marcroft	November 2015	Young Carers Strategy	Number of Young Carers

as a Young Carer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of young people receiving a service from children’s services as a result of assessment (break down by Social Care / youth support / Early help) • Duration of service provision • Reason for case closure (step up / step down reasons are well defined) 				
Strategic Improvement 6: Targeted Interventions/Service				
6.1 We will provide targeted provision for Young Carers in order to ensure that bespoke support is available for them to achieve the best outcomes.	Youth Support Services	April 2015	Young Carers Strategy	Number of Young Carers identified and accessing service
6.2 We will establish well embedded links with MAST/MASH and Early Help to targeted interventions for Young Carers	Young Carers Partnership Operational Group	September 2015	Young Carers Strategy	

Table 2 – How we will know we have arrived

Strategic action	Performance measure	Baseline (year)	2015-16	2016-17	2017-2018
1.1	Number of assessment completed for Young Carers Number of CYP flagged on SC system as YC’s	New arrangements Compared to national formula	1326 (based on NSPCC formula)		

Young Carers Key Performance Indicators 2015/2016

KPI	No. Of Young Carers	Period Time	Further Information/Comments
Number of Young Carers identified and reported by the partnership	61	1 st April 2014 to 30 th September 2015	
Number of children and young people identified as potential Young Carers by Adult Social Care via the completion of First Contact Assessment	Not available	Q1 & Q2	Information to be provided at the end of Q3, for Q1,Q2 & Q3
Number of Young People referred by Adult Services to Children's Services as potential young carers	Not available	Q1 & Q2	Information to be provided at the end of Q3, for Q1,Q2 & Q3
Number of Young People receiving an Outcomes Star Assessment as a Young Carer and attending the Young Carers Support Group	13	From 1 st April 2015	These are from Youth Support Services – Young Carers Support Group. Further work to be undertaken to understand the full picture across Early Help and the wider partnership. Young Carers Support Group continues to support those young people that have completed an Outcome Star Assessment.
Young Carers registered at the Young Carers Support Group, to obtain ongoing information, Advice and Support but not attended.	11	2014/2015	Access as and when needed and not included in the 13 above.
Number of young people receiving a Children and Family Assessment	13	2015/2016	CFA:13 (9 Families), 2 CPP (different families), 1 CIN, 8 Single Agency Referrals (7 referred to Young Carers Support Group and 1 to Targeted Youth Support). 2 Young people of the 13 are included in the Youth Support Carers Group
Reason for case closure (step up / step down reasons are well defined) from the above Children Family Assessments completed.	13	15/16	Step-up: 3: 2 CPP (different families), 1 CIN Step-down: 10 (Single agency responses- 7 Referred to Young Carers Support Group, 1 Targeted Youth Support and 2 Early Help) Further work to be undertaken to understand subsequent outcomes.