

Early Help Young Carers Support

Ward(s): All

Portfolios: Cllr Stacey Elson. Children's

1. Aim

To provide a national and local overview of Young Carers, detailing the Walsall Early Help Young Carers Support, the ongoing co-production and collaboration as part of the commitment to improving the support for young carers, along with further opportunities and planned improvements.

2. Recommendations

1. For the direction of travel for the Early Help Young Carers to be supported
2. For progress and planned improvements to be endorsed and ask members to support the on-going awareness raising of young carers

3. Report detail – know

3.1 National Context

What do we mean by young carer: Definition: "Young Carers are children and young people under the age 18 who provide **regular** and **ongoing** care and emotional support to a family member who is physically or mentally disabled or misuses substances".

The Children's and Families Act 2014 and the Care Act 2014 both significantly strengthened the rights for young carers and outlines the requirements of local authorities, along with the Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995, there has been a clear and gradual shift in the focus for local authorities to deliver support to young carers and their families including carrying out a young carers needs assessment, taking a whole family approach and the need to improve the support for young carers transition to adulthood.

3.2 What do young carers do: Young carers carry out a range of practical home tasks such as shopping, cooking, cleaning, washing, overseeing medication, personal care such as helping with bathing, dressing and often look after younger siblings.

3.3 How many young carers are there: National Context: According to the 2011 census data released 16th May 2013 there are 166,363 young carers in England, compared to 139,000 in 2001, where for the first time census questions were asked about whether there were young carers in a household.

The Children's Society however believe this to be the 'tip of the iceberg', within their report [Hidden from View 2013](#) they state that many children and young people remain 'hidden' from official sight for a host of reasons, including family loyalty, stigma, bullying and not knowing where to go for

support or who to speak to and that 1 in 12 young carers spends more than 15 hours a week looking after a parent or sibling.

- 3.4 What do we know about these young carers? : The table below shows the changes in number of children and young people in the population, in the number and proportion of young carers recorded and in the overall proportion of young carers age group between the 2001 and 2011 census

Age group	2001			2011			% change	
	Overall population	Number of young carers	% of young carers	Overall population	Number of young carers	% of young carers	Overall population	% of young carers
5-9 years old	3,118,934	12,386	0.4%	2,970,186	20,744	0.7%	-5%	+67%
10-15 years old	3,812,511	78,026	2.0%	3,696,524	89,969	2.4%	-3%	+15%
16-19 years old	2,261,676	97,878	4.3%	2,490,524	116,694	4.7%	+10%	+19%
20-24 years old	2,805,853	135,961	4.8%	3,411,283	176,196	5.2%	+22%	+30%
All years (5-24)	11,998,974	324,251	2.7%	21,568,517	403,603	3.2%	+4.7%	+24%

Source: Census tables M205 CT0415, Office for National Statistics (ONS)

We also know that girls are slightly more likely to be carers than boys.

- 3.5 What is the impact of being a young carer? : Being a young carer can have a big impact on the things that are important to growing up. It can, according to research

- Have an impact on their ability to attain and achieve with education or training, many young carers struggle to juggle their education and caring which can cause pressure and stress
- 27% of young carers aged 11-15 miss or have difficulties at school due to their caring responsibilities. (*Childrens society 2021*)
- The COVID-19 pandemic risks exacerbating the situation, stopping young carers from reaching their full potential.
- With the added complications of COVID-19, young carers are missing even more school than before and urgent support is needed if they are not to be left behind their peers
- Caring can have a dramatic detrimental effect on the education and aspirations of young and young adult carers, so urgent support is essential.

The Carers Trust carried out a survey (2017) with young carers, findings reported

- 39% of young people who took part in a survey reported that their school were not aware of their caring role and
- 1 in 20 said they missed school because of their caring responsibilities
- 26% said they have been bullied at school because of their caring role

Young carers overall development can be significantly and negatively impaired, irrespective of the type of care or frequency of care provided. Many young carers report feelings of isolation and are rarely 'stress free' from the pressures of home tasks, taking on adult 'responsibilities' both practically and emotionally and miss out on opportunities that other children have and take for granted such as seeing friends, playing, having hobbies, having opportunities to learn.

However that said there is also some good things about being a young carer, again according to the Carers Trust survey findings said that young carers

- Had a sense of accomplishment

- Are more independent - a quote from a young carer "As I was a Young Carer, I had to grow up fast. I was left to do everything by myself, but as a result, I am more mature for it. I knew how to pay bills and run the house by the time I was 8 years old. I was doing the weekly shopping and cooking everyone's meals (every night) by the age of 10, (I had been doing much of it since I was about 5 but full blown, just me on my own from about 10 years old).

Have the ability to handle different situations, having the confidence to cope and take 'charge'.

3.6 Local context

Young carers service review: Over the past 2 years there has been a review and refocus around the young carers support and services available, in collaboration with young carers, their families, key partners including school nurses, adults social care, Walsall Manor Hospital, Walsall College, Walsall Carers Service, GP's and a cohort of both primary and secondary schools the Walsall Young Carers Support service has been refreshed and relaunched as part of the National Young Carers Action Day in March 2021 and further enhanced and shared as part of the National Young Carers Action Day March 2022.

To support the review and refresh a number of consultation events have been held including

- a) A questionnaire designed by the young carers sent out to schools, partners and other young carers who were not involved at the time in the young carer groups. The questionnaire aimed to get a baseline understanding from schools and the wider partnership about the knowledge and approach they had around young carers, as well as ensuring opportunities for strengthening the support service available.

The response received:

- Whilst the questionnaire was sent to every school within the borough, it was disappointing that only 6 school completed and returned it, however they did acknowledge the lack of approach to young carers and this has subsequently lead to a wider piece or work with schools, detailed below
 - 7 partners returned the questionnaire and a presentation was delivered to the Early Help steering group, this has helped formulate the young carers champion role, detailed below
 - The young carers fed back a range of area's for action, all of which were addressed in the action plan, detailed below
- b) Activity days providing opportunities to really listen to our young carers, capture their voice and views on how their services could be improved.

Through the questionnaires and events held our young carers raised:

Issues discussed	Action to date
Raise awareness of young carers	<p>Early Help have met with young carers, their families' and partners in collaboration produced leaflets, developed a bespoke young carers website Young_carers(walsall.gov.uk), visited schools, held assemblies and meetings with the senior leadership team to discuss the impact on education for young carers.</p> <p>Joined the annual national action days in 2021 theme Protecting Our Young carers Future and 2022 theme Taking Action to Reduce Isolation, where over 200</p>

	attended the local webinars raising awareness and impact of being a young carer.
<p>Improve information available</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce training resources • Let people know how to make a referral 	<p>Produced promotional material:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifically for schools and colleagues, distributed to all schools within the borough and presented awareness session at Heads briefing sessions • Adult Social Care purchased a bespoke training package to include young carers , this has recently been updated with local information and was due to be launched September 2022, there has been a slight delay and now looking at launch January 2023, the package will provide all schools and partners free training resource and legislative updates for all • Refreshed the Young Carers assessment and introduced a referral pathway via MASH • Added the referral, assessments and reviews onto the Mosaic database
<p>Improve support available, consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young carers champions • Young carers ID card Scheme • Consider other opportunities for young carers • Young carers group 	<p>Young Carers Champions: developed a young carers champion project along with awareness material and bespoke training package, which resulted in training and bespoke young carers champions being recruited as follows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 47 schools being trained and now having a named 'School Young Carers Champion' ➤ School Nurse Young Cares Champion ➤ Walsall College Young Cares Champion ➤ The Beacon Young Cares Champion ➤ Manor Hospital Young Cares Champion, with a Paediatric Liaison Nurse within A&E ➤ Adult Social Care Young Cares Champion ➤ Walsall Housing Group Young Carers Champion ➤ Turning Point Young Carers Champion ➤ Police Cadets Young Carers Champion ➤ 1 GP practices having a Young Carers Champion (Sycamore House Medical Practice) <p>ID Cards: Young carers wanted to develop an approach with schools and public health specifically where they could be formally recognised as a 'Young Carers', following consultation and an agreement across schools and public health we have together designed, printed and issued a total of 145 cards for young carers to use if school and when having any liaison with parents/carers with the hospital or with GPs.</p> <p>Leisure Passes: In partnership with leisure services we have developed a partnership and secured leisure passes for all of our young cares which gives them free access to gym facilities and swimming, promoting emotional health and wellbeing along with physical</p>

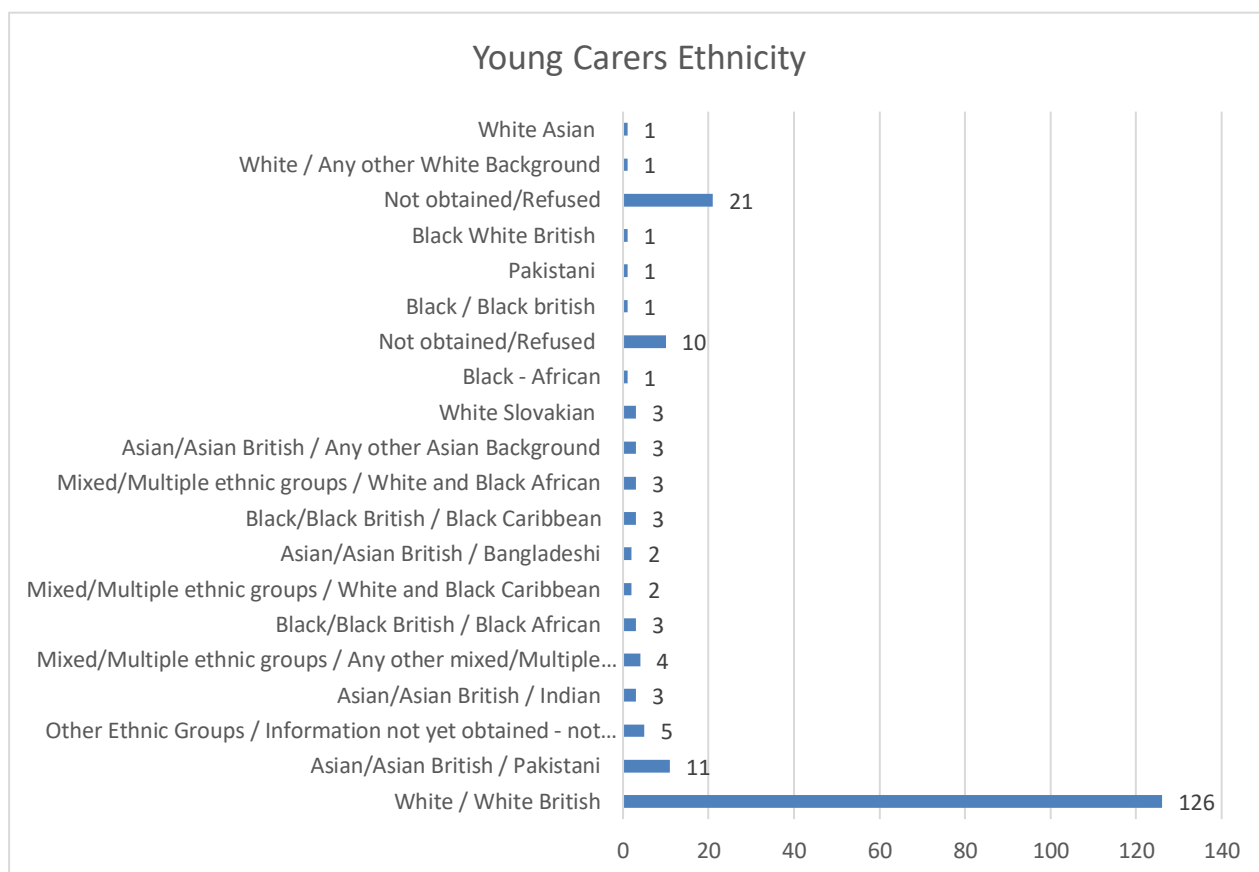
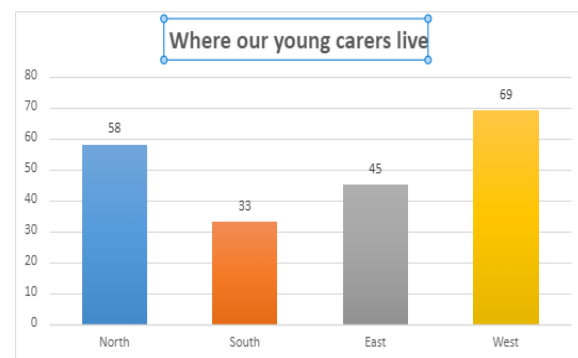
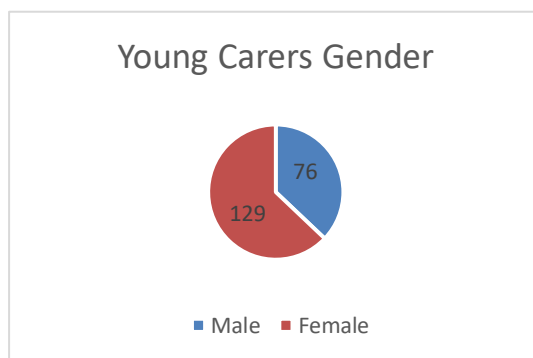
	<p>fitness, the passes also enable their family members to access the facilities at a reduced rate. To date we have issued 145 passes.</p> <p>Holiday Activity Fund (HAF): young carers have been included in the Walsall HAF programme, irrespective of their entitlement to free school meals, all young carers can attend the holiday provision</p> <p>Young Carers Group: My Place delivery of a support and fund two young carer groups monthly, one for 8 to 12 year olds and one for 13 + year olds</p> <p>Secured a £10k fund for delivering young carers group work and consultation</p> <p>Secured a part time dedicated Early Help Young Carers Practitioner (started Monday 14th November 2022)</p>
Regular focus and consultation events	<p>Young Carers Action Group: A multi-agency group of partners have formed an 'action group' and meet quarterly with young carers to review and update the action plan.</p> <p>Young Carers Group: as part of the delivery of the Young Carers group at My Place we have joined force with the Walsall Carers Centre where we come together and hold monthly evaluation around the support group and activities held which shape both the service improvements.</p>

- c) A strength based approach, taken to understand and promote from their perspective not just the roles and responsibilities they have but what skills they feel this gave them, this is what they told us

1. Cooking, cleaning, money management, administering medication, confidence, resilience, ability to communicate to a wide range of people, time management, empathy

Many incredible skills our young carers have developed through being a carer, how many other children and young people have these transferrable skills prior to starting a career.

- 3.7 Walsall Young Carers: what do we know? We are currently aware of and actively supporting 205 young carers aged between 8 and 18 yrs, this has significantly increased from 2019 when we were supporting 62 young carers, this increase is due to the awareness campaigns and specific focus on young carers. We know however this work needs to continue as we feel still many children and young people go unrecognised as young carers.



3.8 What needs to happen next: In consultation with young carers the Young Carers Action Group have agreed to

1. Look at delivering the Young Carers Group across various localities within the borough we know that at time transport and accessibility of My Place can be a barrier for young people to attend the group
2. Connected to the wider Adult Carer strategy being drafted, include a section around young carers with agreed longer term action plans and themes to support young carers
3. Continue being part of and delivering the National Young Carers Action Day, 2023 theme is 'Making Time for Young Carers', where webinars events and a celebration will be held, recognising the valued role of our young carers
4. Strengthen the support available, linking further to the Carers Centre to enable wider range of support to be available, including support with homework, emotional health and wellbeing, exam revision and transition support
5. Actively recruit young carers' volunteers as part of the wider Early Help volunteering service.

4. Financial information

There is a budget of £30,000 within the Early Help Young Carers service, this includes a 0.5FTE Early Help Practitioners and a budget of £10,000 per year to deliver a programme of support and consultation for your carers.

5. Reducing Inequalities

Effective and timely support to young carers is essential to not just avoid poor outcomes but to have ambition and thrive, work continues to support schools and health services in identifying, as early as possible a child or young person who maybe carrying our caring roles and responsibilities, to reduce a range of issues including poor educational attainment, isolation and bullying, further work is planned with adult social care to consider the wider impact on child and young people when an adult carers assessment is made along with a focus on transition support from being a young care into becoming an adult carer.

6. Decide

The Early Help Young Carers partnership has set out key priorities for 2022/23, as detailed in section 3.8 above based on the needs of and feedback from our young carers. Whilst there is no decision for scrutiny to be made around the priorities, scrutiny are asked to support the direction of travel and endorse the achievements made so far.

7. Respond

The Early Help Young Carers Service and multi-agency action group is responding to the needs of young carers, the Early Help Steering group oversees the delivery of the action plan and will oversee the young carers strategy and has this as an agenda item for update reports to be taken quarterly, with an annual review planned September of each year. Achieving and evidencing the outcomes secured for young carers continues to be a priority along with further identifying children and young people who carry out caring roles and responsibilities and who should be supported as a young carers.

8. Review

A review report to scrutiny is scheduled for 12 month, detailing the achievements, barriers, the changes to the early help process and payment by results.

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