

Young Carers Protocol

Assessment & support of young carers

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this protocol is to outline good practice in identifying, assessing and supporting children and young people who are young carers, which is expected of all staff within Warwickshire County Council and partner agencies who may come into contact with young carers and their families. It aims to make certain that all staff members in adult and children's services and partner agencies understand their respective roles and responsibilities in ensuring that families and in particular young carers are offered appropriate support, and where relevant, an assessment of their needs.
- 1.2 Young carers are children under 18 with caring responsibilities. Their rights to be assessed come mostly from the [Children's Act 1989](#) and the [Children and Families Act 2014](#). As part of the whole family approach, if there is a disabled adult being cared for, then the local authority has a duty to consider whether there are any children involved in providing that care, and if so, what the impact is on that child.
- 1.3 The local authority have a duty to assess 'on the appearance of need' (i.e. without a 'request' having to be made) and the assessment must involve the child with caring responsibilities, their parents and any other person the young carer requests in the assessment process.
- 1.4 The duty to assess young carers has been delegated to the Carers Support Service and the service is known as [Warwickshire Young Carers Project \(WYCP\)](#). Warwickshire County Council's young carers' service is a commissioned service and the contract for this was awarded to the Carers Support Service as of October 2015. The aim of the service is to provide high quality needs-assessed support to young carers aged under 22 years in order to reduce the negative impact of their caring responsibilities and enable them to achieve their own aspirations. Young carers will be supported to remain healthy, to access opportunities for social and recreational activities, and to participate, and achieve, in education, work and training.
- 1.5 Warwickshire Young Carer's Project Contact Details:
- Warwickshire Young Carers' Project
Ryton Gardens
Wolston Lane
Ryton on Dunsmore
Warwickshire
CV8 3ES
Tel: 024 7621 7740
Email: info@warwickshireyoungcarers.org.uk
Website: <http://www.warwickshireyoungcarers.org.uk>
- 1.6 The [Practice Guidance to the Carers \(Equal Opportunities\) Act 2004 \(SCIE 2005\)](#) states that all local authorities should have "a protocol, shared between adults and children's services, for identifying and assessing the needs of young carers." This

Protocol is based on relevant legislation and guidance, which is detailed in Appendix 1.

1.7 Under Section 17ZA of the Children Act 1989 (as inserted by the Children and Families Act 2014) the protocol is designed for: any child or young person under 18 (or up to 25 for learners with learning difficulties or disabilities (LLDD)) who is:

- living within the boundaries of the local authority who:
 - Provides or intends to provide care for another person (other than by virtue of a contract or as voluntary work unless the local authority considers it necessary for such a person to be considered as a young carer);

And/or

- Who has needs for support (either because they appear to have such needs or they, their parent or other professional has requested an assessment).

2. Background

2.1 The 2011 Census showed 1,124 children aged 0-15 years and 2,562 young people aged 16 to 24 years were providing unpaid care in Warwickshire, approximately 2.3% of all children and young people in the county. This rate is broadly in line with the national average of 2.6%. Data from this Census also shows that the number of young carers nationally who are aged 5-7 years old has risen by 80% since 2001, so we can estimate that there has been a proportional increase in Warwickshire.

2.2 According to [‘Hidden from View’](#), a report published by The Children’s Society on the experiences of young carers in England, caring has a significant long-term impact on a child’s life.

2.3 **Frequent effects for children and young people who are providing care are:**

- Problems at school, with completing homework and obtaining qualifications;
- Isolation from other children of the same age and from other family members;
- Lack of time for play, sport or leisure activities;
- Conflict between the needs of the person they are helping and their own needs, leading to feelings of guilt and resentment;
- Feeling that there is nobody there for them, that professionals do not listen to them and they are working only with the adult;
- Lack of recognition, praise or respect for their contribution;
- Feeling that they are different from other children and unable to be part of a group;
- Feeling that no one else understands their experience;
- Problems moving into adulthood, especially with finding work, their own home, and establishing relationships.

2.4 Like all carers, young carers need recognition and support. Their caring responsibilities may increase gradually from a low level of “helping out around the house”, which is found in many families, to a higher degree, which could potentially compromise the young person’s own welfare and life opportunities. Reasons for this

may include family reluctance to approach statutory services, social isolation, cultural difference, lack of awareness of support resources and more.

2.5 Young carers' needs are increasingly more clearly recognised as they undertake important caring responsibilities for parents, siblings, another family member or a friend who does not necessarily live in the same house as them. Some young carers care for:

- Parents/siblings who are disabled or have a long term illness;
- Parents/siblings who are physically or mentally ill;
- Parents/siblings dependent on alcohol or involved in drug use;

3. Definitions

3.1 [The Children and Families Act 2014](#) defines young carers as:

- A person under 18 (or up to 25 for LLDD) who provides or intends to provide care for another person who is disabled, physically or mentally ill or has a substance misuse problem (Section 93 (3)).

4. Legislation

4.1 The Children and Families Act 2014 and the [Care Act 2014](#) requires local authorities to use a whole family approach to assess young carers and young adult carers in order to:

- Work with other local organisations to make sure they are proactively identifying all young carers, not just those who request an assessment;
- Offer information, advice and guidance;
- Provide an assessment and appropriate support.

4.2 Please see appendix 1 for a full list of legislation and guidance related to young carers.

5. The principles

It is Warwickshire County Council's commitment to ensure that:

During any assessment process, WYCP will:

- **Work with colleagues from Warwickshire children's and/or adults services and refer to appropriate services for example; housing, mental health services;**
- **Ensure that the assessment process is appropriate to the carer's age and specific to their needs as a young carer;**
- **Respond to young carers' needs for emotional support and counselling;**
- **Be sensitive to cultural perceptions and needs around disability, illness and caring whilst recognising a child's fundamental rights to a safe and secure childhood.**

6. Warwickshire Young Carers Project

6.1 Contract

- 6.1.1 The contract for the young carer's service was awarded for two years with the option to extend for up to an additional two years. The contract started on 1st October 2015 and runs to 30th September 2017 with an option to extend to 30th September 2019. The contract value is £170,000 per annum was awarded and is funded as follows:

Service Area	Funding per annum (£)
Children & Families, SEND social care	£103,000
Public Health Service	£67,000
Total	£170,000

6.2 Young carers assessments

- 6.2.1 In Warwickshire assessments are undertaken by WYCP on the local authority's behalf. WYCP will conduct young carers assessment of young people who have been identified as potential young carers and referred by children's services, adult services, schools, GP's and any other service who may come into contact with children and their families in Warwickshire. Parents and family members are able to refer into the service and young people are also able to self-refer. Referrals can be made using the online referral form found on the WYCP website. Please see appendix 2 for referral form and appendix 3 for the referral pathways. Use of Warwickshire County Council's single assessment for the assessment of young carers is under review.
- 6.2.2 WYCP will carry out assessments of young carers as part of the whole family assessment and transitions assessments.
- 6.2.3 During any assessment process, WYCP will:
- Consider the family as a whole, acknowledge parents' strengths and be aware of undermining parental capacity;
 - Recognise that families may be fearful of acknowledging children's caring roles;
 - Ascertain if the illness/disability of a parent/carer/sibling is stable or changing;
 - Maintain a focus on positive outcomes for the young person and their family when working with other departments/ agencies;
 - Identify potential safeguarding risks and other professionals/services who are involved with the family and work together;
 - Consider the family's housing needs and access to benefits.

6.3 Transition assessments

- 6.3.1 The Care Act 2014 introduces a new duty on local authorities to carry out assessments for young carers who are approaching their 18th birthday – young carers' assessments (YCA) 'in transition'. An assessment must be carried out by the local council where it considers that:
- the young carer, child or carer of a disabled child is likely to have care and support needs after the child becomes 18 and
 - there is 'significant benefit' to the young carer, child or adult carer if an assessment is made
- 6.3.2 Young carers and carers of disabled children are entitled to an assessment even where the individual cared for (child or adult) does not receive care and support services. There is no rule about what age the child needs to be before an assessment can be requested or made.
- 6.3.3 For young carers' approaching adulthood (16 - 18 years old), in addition to a young carer's assessment that has taken place or is due to take place, they will be offered an adult carer's assessment by adult services (under section 63 of the Care Act).
- 6.3.4 If it appears that the young carer is likely to have needs for support after becoming 18 this assessment will seek to establish both their current and continuing needs after they reach 18. WYCP will support the young carer through the process of transition according to their individual needs, support plans and willingness to engage.
- 6.3.5 WYCP will support those young carers approaching transition who are not likely to be eligible for adult services by signposting to alternative services, providing reduced support through transition, and ensuring strategies are in place to cope without adult service input.

6.4 Safeguarding in the assessment process

- 6.4.1 The assessment **must** decide to what extent the young carer provides or intends to provide inappropriate or excessive care. This is defined in the Care Act 2014 statutory guidance as anything which is likely to have an impact on the child's health, wellbeing or education, or which is unsuitable for that particular child.
- 6.4.2 In order to do this the assessment must consider:
- **Background and environment for family and parenting capacity:** It **must** determine if the young carer is in a position where other people in the family rely on them to keep them safe and well. If this is the case then it may be a sign that the local authority should provide services to the family. It must look at whether the young carer's needs for support can be prevented by providing services to the person they care for or another member of their family. The local authority should identify the young carer's

friends and family and consider how they can help the young carer to achieve their goals identified in the assessment.

- **Child's development needs:** including participating fully in education (school, college, and university), training, recreation and employment. The assessment should consider whether the caring role has an impact on the young carer's wellbeing, personal development, physical health, mental health and emotional health

6.4.3 All WYCP staff will have attended WCC safeguarding training through the Learning and Development team and make appropriate safeguarding referrals to Warwickshire's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). A variety of training from WCC has been provided to the staff to support their learning needs and build upon their processes so they are aligned with WCC protocol and procedures.

7. Roles and responsibilities

Whole family assessment:

- 7.1 For services/practitioners undertaking an assessment of an adult or a child with a disability, illness or a long term condition, the wider needs of the family will need to be considered in terms of identifying a young carer. If a Warwickshire County Council practitioner/service is visiting a family and identifies a potential young carer, they must notify WYCP by means of an online referral form completed on the website.
- 7.2 Warwickshire Young carers Project will assign the referral to a member of staff who will complete a Young carers Assessment and work together with the practitioner to ensure the young carer is appropriately supported. This approach could prevent a child or young person, at an early stage, from taking on an inappropriate caring role that has a negative impact on their own mental or physical well-being, education, access to leisure or life opportunities.

8. Monitoring and review

- 8.1 WYCP provide monitoring and performance information on a quarterly basis and an annual report at each contract year end as set out in the contract. Monitoring and performance data and reports will be shared with Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board, Children and Families social care and Public Health. WCC Strategic Commissioning will undertake an audit of completed assessments of young carers on an annual basis.
- 8.2 WCC Strategic Commissioning will chair quarterly contract monitoring meetings with WYCP. Meetings will include WCC commissioning, WYCP Chief Executive and WYCP Manager as a minimum. Funding partner representatives from Children and Families social care and Public Health will be invited to attend annual meetings.

9. Further Information

<https://carers.org/about-us/about-young-carers> - Carers Trust website offers online support to young carers and includes a section for professionals.

www.youngcarer.com – The Children’s Society’s Young carers Initiative includes a database of local Young carers Services and the DfES Principles of Practice for working with young carers.

<https://www.carersuk.org/> -

www.disabledparentsnetwork.org.uk - Disabled Parents Network is the leading organisation advocating for the rights of disabled parents. The website includes information on the legal rights of disabled parents.

Appendix 1 – Legislation & guidance

- Children and Families Act 2014
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/pdfs/ukpga_20140006_en.pdf
- Care Act 2010
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/pdfs/ukpga_20140023_en.pdf
- Children Act 1989
- <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>
- Department of Health (2000) Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families Guidance
- <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/Framework%20for%20the%20assessment%20of%20children%20in%20need%20and%20their%20families.pdf>
- National Services Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services
- https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/199952/National_Service_Framework_for_Children_Young_People_and_Maternity_Services_-_Core_Standards.pdf
- Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995
- http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1995/12/pdfs/ukpga_19950012_en.pdf
- The Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000
- https://www.thh.nhs.uk/documents/Patients/PatientLeaflets/general/Carers_Act-DoH.pdf
- Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004
- http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/15/pdfs/ukpga_20040015_en.pdf

Appendix 2 – referral form

New Referral Contact Details



Date referral received Click here to enter a date.

1 Young Carers Personal Details

Name	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>			
Home Address	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>			
Postcode	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>			
Council District	Choose an item			
Home No.	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>			
Mobile No.	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>			
e-mail	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>			
Date of birth	<small>Click here to enter a date.</small>			
Gender	male <input type="checkbox"/>	female <input type="checkbox"/>	Age	Choose
Ethnicity	Choose an item.			

The above named young person is the primary carer and carries out the majority of all of the caring tasks

The above named young person, whilst not the primary carer, is adversely affected by the caring situation

2 Family details

List all family members below; give details for any additional family in the notes section. Select "C/F" if young carer is "caring for". Select "YC" for any other "Young Carers" – use separate form to make a referral for them.

Name	Relationship	Date of birth	C/F	YC
<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	Choose an item.	<small>Click to enter date.</small>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	Choose an item.	<small>Click to enter date.</small>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	Choose an item.	<small>Click to enter date.</small>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	Choose an item.	<small>Click to enter date.</small>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	Choose an item.	<small>Click to enter date.</small>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	Choose an item.	<small>Click to enter date.</small>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3 Details of main cared for person

For any additional persons cared for please use the notes section

Name	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>		
Gender	male <input type="checkbox"/>	female <input type="checkbox"/>	
Ethnicity	Choose an item.		
Disability / illness / condition	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>		

4 What do you do / why are you a Young Carer?

Use this space to briefly tell us why you believe you are a Young Carer, the things you do / how you are affected by your caring role.	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>
--	--

5 Other professionals / Organisations

Tell us of any organisations you currently access. Mark the box on the right so we know you are happy for us to contact them about being known to us.

Doctor and/or Surgery	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School or College	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Worker	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CAF Lead Professional	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6 Referrer details

Is this a self-referral from the family/home?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	<small>If YES, ignore the rest of this section.</small>	<small>If NO then please complete this section.</small>
Name	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	
Job title	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	
Organisation	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	
Address	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	
Postcode	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	
Phone No.	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	
e-mail	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	
Why do you feel a referral would be appropriate to the Young Carers service at this time?	<small>Click here to enter text.</small>	

7 Office use only

Date	Contact type	Staff initials	Outcome / Actions
Entered onto Database	<input type="checkbox"/>	Initials	Database ID number

8 Notes section**Use this space to detail any additional / relevant notes or areas of concern**[Click here to enter text.](#)**9 Referrers only.**

Please ensure ALL sections are completed fully and accurately as any missing or incorrect information WILL delay this referral.

Do we have permission to contact the family? Yes No

Signature		Click here to enter text.	
Name	Click to enter text.	Date	Click to enter date.

10 Families / self-referrals only.

Please note that it is not necessary for this section to be completed if referral is being made by a third party.

Whilst involved in any activities operated by the Young Carers' Project you must agree to behave in such a way that does not put yourself or others in any danger. You must treat others with respect and follow the instructions of the staff and volunteers that are there to help you.

The Young Carers Project will not share any of your personal information with any other organisation/s other than those you have

given us permission to, or if we have concern for the safety of yourself or others. At all times, if we intend to share any information about you with another organisation we will make you fully aware of our intentions beforehand.

By signing this form you are giving consent for your personal details to be stored on the Warwickshire Young Carers' Project database.

Do you understand and are you in agreement with this? Yes No

Young Carers Signature		Click here to enter text.	
Name	Click to enter text.	Date	Click to enter date.

Parents Signature		Click here to enter text.	
Name	Click to enter text.	Date	Click to enter date.

Appendix 3 – Young carers’ referral pathway



