

Carer Passport



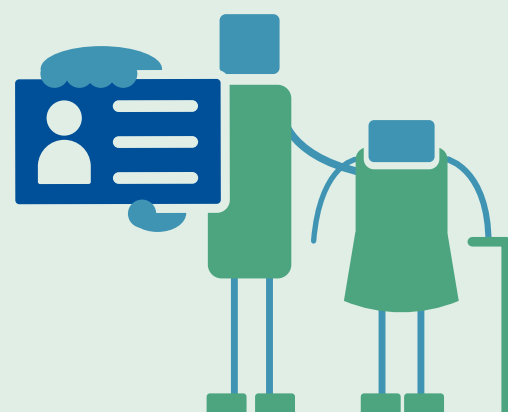
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Department
of Health &
Social Care

Your guide

The new Carer Passport
in schools



This Carer Passport Guide has been created by:

[carerpassport.uk/
education/schools](https://carerpassport.uk/education/schools)

 **carersUK**
making life better for carers

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About this guide

The aim of this toolkit is to provide you with the know-how, insight and expertise to build your own Carer Passport scheme in schools – to provide a clear offer to carers, as well as links to advice and information and provide a mechanism to improve identification and support.

There is a clear recognition that Carer Passport schemes are often owned and developed locally, or by an employer, to suit their needs. We use the experience and knowledge from key leaders who have developed a Carer Passport locally as well as the experience of carers to provide all the insight and content needed to get a scheme going.

The work is being carried out by Carers UK and Carers Trust with funding from the Department of Health and Social Care with the aim of increasing the number of Carer Passport schemes in England which seek to support carers. It is part of our broader work and drive to build Carer Friendly Communities.

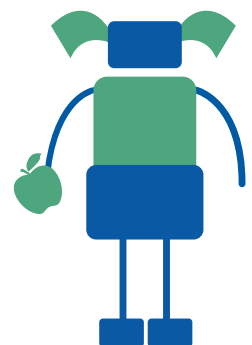
What benefits can a Carer Passport bring?

Experience locally shows that a Carer Passport schemes can:

- Aid identification and support of carers.
- Raise awareness of caring.
- Provide a concrete, easily understandable offer of support.
- Provide a mechanism that makes carers feel valued.
- Provide help/assistance to managers or key professionals.
- Provide a short-cut to knowing what support is needed, without having to ask lots of questions.
- Help in local discussions and support.

Where are Carer Passports currently used?

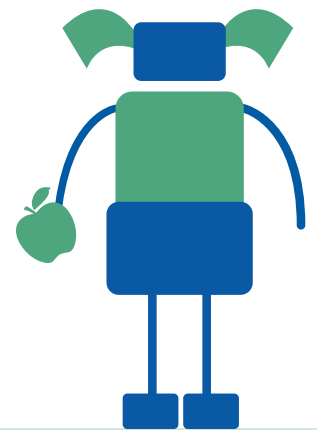
- Employers use a Carer Passport to support carers in the workplace.
- Hospitals use a Carer Passport and similar schemes to identify, recognise and support carers on specific wards or across the whole hospital.
- In a local community a Carer Passport scheme looks at whole a range of support and information as well as discounts for local services. They are often a popular way of engaging with carers who might not otherwise ask for help.
- Schools, colleges and universities have a Carer Passport to support pupils and students who might need additional information and advice or adjustments because they are caring.



Carer Passport guide:

Schools

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Schools

Key facts about young carers



What is a young carer?

- A 'young carer' is the term used for children and young adults who have informal caring responsibilities, often for a family member. Legislation in England defines a 'young carer' as a 'person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person'.
- A Local Authority in England must take reasonable steps to identify the extent to which there are young carers within their area who have needs for support. (HM Government, 2014)

- Many young carers remain hidden, but we do know from the 2011 Census in England that there are 166,363 young carers aged under 18 years old.¹
- In 2010, a survey by the BBC indicated that 1 in 12 secondary school students have moderate or high levels of caring responsibility, that's 700,000 young carers in the UK.²
- If not supported, young carers have significantly lower educational attainment at GCSE level, the equivalent to nine grades lower overall than their peers.³
- Young carers aged 11 to 17 were more likely to report being bullied than those without a caring role (16% compared to 3%).⁴
- Ofsted's **Common Inspection Framework: Education, Skills and Early Years (2015)** states that inspectors will look at young carers' outcomes when making judgements.⁵

16%

of young carers aged 11-17 reported being bullied (compared to only 3% of those without a caring role)

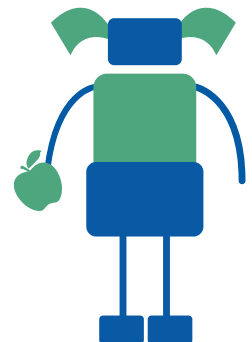
1 Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census

2 BBC, 2010. The BBC, with assistance from The Princess Royal Trust for Carers, surveyed 4,029 pupils in ten secondary schools and found 337 had caring responsibilities

3 Hidden from View: The experiences of young carers in England, Children's Society, 2013)

4 The lives of young carers in England. TNS BMRB, 2016, Aldridge, J., Clay, D., Connors C., Day, N., & Gzika, M. (2016)

5 Ofsted, 2015





What is a Carer Passport in a school?

Identification and recognition

A Carer Passport in a school is a simple tool that will help schools to coordinate their support for young carers through a **'whole school approach'**.

It supports the early identification of students who are young carers and improves staff understanding of their personal circumstances and individual needs. Once a student is identified, a Carer Passport will trigger an 'offer' of a range of personalised support within the school and can act as the gateway to appropriate support for their family. Schools need to create a safe environment where young carers and families feel understood, valued and supported. A Carer Passport scheme will help schools make this a reality. The 'front end' or visible form of a Carer Passport may be a card, wallet, badge or perhaps a sticker within a student's school handbook.

Linked to this will be information held by a school about the student and their individual circumstances and needs.

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Once a student is identified, a Carer Passport will trigger an 'offer' of a range of personalised support within the school and can act as the gateway to appropriate support for their family.

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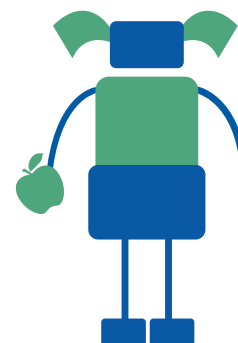
The role of a Carer Passport in schools

Improves identification of young carers

Many schools do not know which of their students have caring responsibilities as young carers often do wish to self-identify. Schools however are ideally placed to identify young carers at an early point and before their family circumstances and caring roles begin to impact them.

As a Passport demonstrates to young carers and their families that they are recognised, understood and supported by the school, and where the benefits of a Carer Passport are clearly communicated, young carers (and their families) will be encouraged to self-identify.

Once a student has been identified, the Carer Passport will signify to all staff, including supply staff, that the student is a young carer which will prevent them having to explain their circumstances multiple times. Where circumstances change, the Carer Passport will help students to explain things more easily to staff.



Sets out an offer of personalised support

Identification of a young carer should trigger an assessment of how the student's situation impacts on their school life and their learning needs. This should inform a personalised learning plan, or 'offer' of support that is clearly communicated to a student so they are clear what they can expect.

The offer is likely to include a range of practical support and dispensations including an offer of flexibility and extensions with homework, access to a phone, support with transport to school and with after school clubs and activities. A Carer Passport should also be a gateway for young carers to access emotional support from pastoral staff, a school nurse, through counselling, or through peer support.

Improves understanding and communication with family

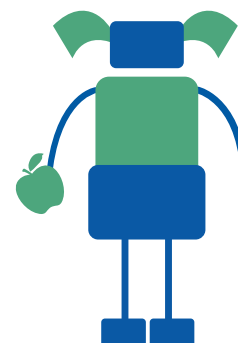
A Carer Passport scheme in a school will help to raise the awareness and understanding of all staff of the specific needs of students with caring responsibilities. Where an individual student holds a Carer Passport, this should advise staff of their circumstances. The information held should include how caring impacts on a student's education, the additional support that has been agreed for them by the school and monitoring information on their attainment and attendance. A Passport can also hold information to support accessible communication with the student's family and how to help the family to fully engage with their child's education.

Initiates and facilitates other services

A Carer Passport should also be the trigger for schools to provide information about further support that students and their families can access and to connect families with other services, such as a local young or young adult carer group. A directory of local young carers services can be found on the [Children's Society website](#).

Concessions and discounts

A Carer Passport that is recognised and supported across an area also has the potential of providing young carers with concessions on sport, leisure activities and travel, and other discounts.





What examples are there?

Awareness and good practice have increased in schools over the last ten years, aided by the inclusion of young carers in Ofsted's Common Inspection Framework (2015), the national Young Carers in Schools (YCiS) programme and many local young carer services working collaboratively with schools. This means that leading schools are now delivering an offer to young carers, some of which are already described as a 'Carer Passport.'

However, there are no offers or mechanisms in place across schools in England to ensure that young carers and young adult carers are routinely identified and supported consistently.

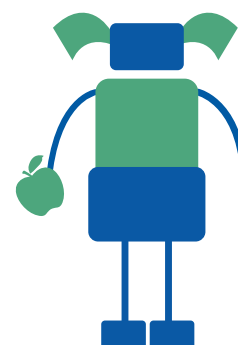
The Young Carers in School programme (YCiS)

Young Carers in Schools is a free programme that helps schools to support young carers and rewards and shares good practice. Run jointly by Carers Trust and The Children's Society, it works with schools across England and Wales to provide relevant tools and training, and to celebrate the great outcomes that many schools achieve for young carers. A comprehensive set of tools are available for schools to use and adapt for supporting students who are young carers, which could also be used to create a Carer Passport, such as tools for assessing young carers.

Stockport School

Stockport School has identified 45 young carers out of 1150 students. A Young Carers Passport scheme is run which educates staff about how a student's caring role might affect their learning. Assessment tools are used with young carers to understand the impact of their caring role, and with the agreement of young carers, this information is fed into a 'One-Page Profile' which is stored electronically for staff to access easily. Young carers are reviewed on a termly basis to ensure their information is up to date.

Young carers, and their parents where appropriate, are regularly offered concessions or free school trips and other extracurricular opportunities that arise. The school, which is considering whether to introduce a physical card for students, also sees the potential for a similar Carer Passport scheme to be delivered by its feeder primary schools. Caring has now become a 'comfortable topic' at the school where caring by young people is perceived as something that is common and normal.



Calderdale

Calderdale Young Carers Service administer a Young Carers Passport by training schools to participate in the scheme and support the 173 young carers who hold a Passport. When a young carer starts receiving support from the service, they are given an application form for the Carer Passport, which initiates a conversation between the family and the school. The school returns the application form to the young carer service who then allocate a Passport to the young carer.

The Carer Passport itself is a wallet holding **plastic cards** from Calderdale of their passport card that set out three potential areas of support a young carer may require; flexibility with homework, 'timeout' from class, and access to a phone to call the person they care for.

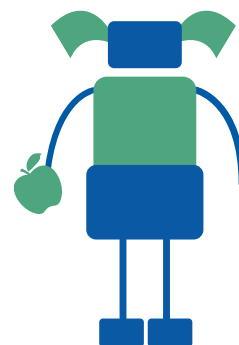
Crucially, the Passport prevents students having to explain anything in front of their class, which can be difficult and can act as a barrier for young carers requesting help. A member of staff signs the back of the Carer Passport each time it is used.

Winchester & District

The Winchester and District Young Carers Project administer a 'Young Carers ID Card' in secondary schools. The credit card sized **card** gives students a range of 'personalised allowances' to support their learning and help them concentrate including extensions for homework, 'timeout' of a lesson and being able to phone the person they care for. If a young carer receives a detention, the Card will allow this to take place during a lunchtime rather than after school. The allowances are agreed between the young carer service and the school Heads of Year and are written on the reverse of the card, which students can show staff or place on their desk. Staff understand the reasons why students need particular support, so it is not necessary for students to have to explain each time in front of peers.

York City

York Carers Centre and the City of York operate a **card** for schools and colleges across the city.





What difference does it make?

To young carers?

“As a young carer it’s one of the best ideas I’ve seen yet, it should be in all schools to help young carers and make it less stressful and worrying for us every day, especially if things are particularly bad or my mum’s got worse for example.”

– *Young carer*

“A young Carer Passport would help me because I get so frustrated when many teachers don’t know my situation and I have to continually repeat myself. Sometimes I could use more support but don’t like to ask, these Passports may help that.”

– *Young carer*

To people being cared for?

“For a child, it’s important the school know they are a carer so they can get support.”

– *Parent*

To teachers?

“Carer Passports would give a security and confidence to students, where normally they would be worried or anxious about explaining their situation. For current staff and any cover teachers, it would give the information that is needed immediately.”

– *Head of Pupil Support*

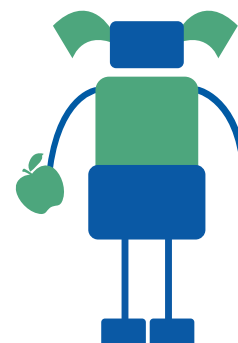
“At our school, we encourage our young carers to be proud of themselves and how they balance home and school life. These Passports will give them a belonging and a chance to stand up for who they are.”

– *Head of Pupil Support*

To the school as a whole?

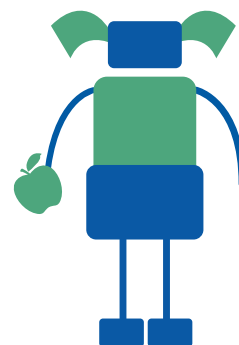
“A Carer Passport would ensure that young carers’ individual needs are met and understood. Individual allowances could be agreed with the Head of Year and then teaching staff informed so that the young person has the correct level of support in place to allow them to achieve in education. Allowances could be: Additional support and time to complete homework; having a mobile phone on silent; not having a detention when arriving to school late due to caring role; time out from a lesson if feeling stressed etc.”

– *Schools and Support Coordinator*



“Young carers often tell us that the singular most important thing to them is that there is someone at school who knows that they care for someone and understands when and how this impacts on their time in school that they can talk to. They find it particularly frustrating to have to explain over and over again, and this is where Carer Passports could be key to supporting them.”

– *Carers Trust and The Children’s Society*





Introducing a Carer Passport scheme in schools

The benefits and business case

Impacts of supporting young carers in schools

A Carer Passport can help schools to implement the **Young Carer in Schools (YCiS) programme** by improving how students are identified and increase their own awareness of the support they can expect and how to access it. A Carer Passport scheme can be a positive way to support whole school working and can help to solidify and extend existing support within a school.

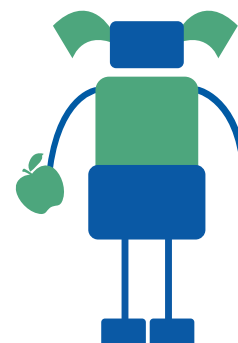
In order for a Carer Passport to have impact, support for young carers needs to be embedded. There is evidence from the YCiS programme that this support is improving the health and wellbeing of students, their engagement at schools and their attendance and achievement.

In a survey of schools awarded by the YCiS programme, 100% reported that staff members had a better understanding of the potential signs of pupils being young carers and what to do when a young carer is identified. 77% also reported an improvement in young carers' achievement and 94% said they had seen improvements in the wellbeing of young carers.

Facilitates identification in school

Many young carers remain unidentified by any service, including schools and all too often are only identified at crisis point when the impact of caring has already been significant on their health, wellbeing and education. Schools are ideally placed to identify young carers early and initiate timely support. A Carer Passport scheme will encourage young carers (and their families) to self-identify, and students will know what support is available and what to expect.

Early identification is pivotal in turning around a young carer's life and their caring situation, and will help prevent their circumstances from negatively impacting their own health, wellbeing and education. A Carer Passport can initiate crucial support from their school as well as a 'whole family approach' where families are given information and navigated to support from external agencies. This can transform the situation for a young carer. For example, young carers can be referred to a young carer service or referred to the local authority for a **Young Carers Needs Assessment**.



Stopping young carers having to re-tell their story

A Carer Passport will reduce the necessity for young carers to have to explain their circumstances multiple times. By using a Carer Passport, young carers are more likely to access the support they need at critical points. It can be shown to staff to access specific dispensations or can help to initiate a conversation between a young carer and staff.

Facilitating financial incentives

Where a Carer Passport is are linked to concessions for leisure activities, sports and public transport, this will support young carers to socialise, relax and have fun which is vital in protecting their own health and wellbeing.

Schools gain a better understanding of students who are young carers

A Carer Passport can help improve a school's communication with a young carer and their family and develop a better understanding of a student's home situation and circumstances. Schools can then begin to address the barriers to their education that a young carer is facing.

Examples of how schools share information between staff to aid this can be found in the Stockport School case study above.

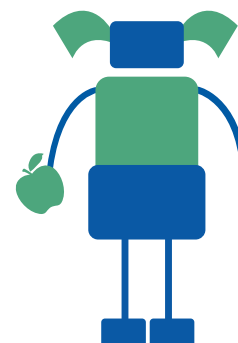
A more consistent approach to supporting young carers

Carer Passport schemes will bring more consistency to how schools support their students who are young carers and where the same or a similar scheme is used across an area, this will bring about a more standardised approach so that students in different schools will receive more consistent support. This also will assist young carers to continue to access a similar level of support when they move between year groups, transition to secondary school and prevent support dropping off when young carers move between schools.

Elements of success

Buy-in from senior management

To facilitate the implementation of a whole school approach to support young carers and manage a Carer Passport scheme, the school's senior leadership team must be clear about the



rationale of supporting these students, the benefits of a Carer Passport and give support for young carers, and the Passport scheme its backing. The wider provision of support for young carers must be embedded within policies and school action plans alongside a Passport and its monitoring procedures and indicators for its success should be developed.

A 'School Operational Lead'

A Carer Passport scheme will be most effective where schools have designated a 'School Operational Lead' to coordinate the scheme and the wider provision of support for young carers. In schools where provision for young carers is operating successfully, the School Operational Lead acts as a main contact for young carers and families and is the contact point for external agencies and feeder or linked schools. Their role should also include championing and promoting the Carer Passport scheme and the support for young carers, and to coordinate staff training on the use of the Passport and on young carer issues in general.

Consulting young carers

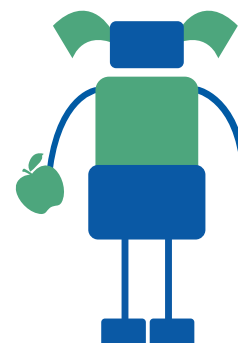
Schools should be informed by the expertise and insights of students known to be young carers within a school. A young carer steering group could be established to guide the development and implementation of the scheme. Consultation could take place with young carers from a local carer service which often have an established young person's participation group. Students themselves may wish to design the Carer Passport and other materials for the scheme.

Organisational and area wide approach

It is vital that all staff across a school, including supply staff and other professionals working within the school, are aware of the Carer Passport and how it works. This can be communicated through staff training and through the development of a tool such as Calderdale Young Carers Service Carer Passport **guidelines**.

Having a consistent approach within an area to Carer Passports and one that is backed by the local authority has several advantages.

Firstly, young carers and their families will be familiar with the Passport scheme when students move between schools. Secondly, where a Carer Passport is transferable between



schools, this will support a seamless transition and prevent the support for young carers being dropped. A consistent approach can be achieved where schools work collaboratively in developing a scheme or where it is coordinated and championed by a young carer service.

Implementation

Clear guidance for how the scheme runs should be developed, and the scheme must be communicated clearly to all staff, students and parents. Individual students may prefer to have a choice about the form the Carer Passport takes depending on how comfortable they are with being identified as carers by peers.

Potential challenges and how to overcome them

Schools not acknowledging young carers

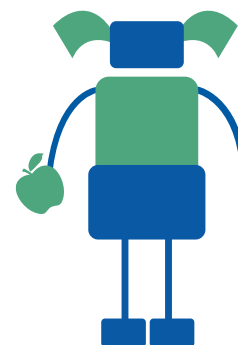
There is a perception in some schools that they do not have students who are young carers. This is unlikely, as statistically there will be at least one young carer in each average-sized class room. Once a school sets up support and proactively seeks to identify young carers, it is common for a school to begin to identify significant numbers of students with caring responsibilities.

Conversely, some schools are nervous that they might unearth large numbers of young carers who would be difficult to support. However, not identifying young carers and establishing preventative support early is likely to be more draining on schools and their pastoral resources.

Without support, negative impacts of caring on students are more likely and students' mental or physical health or behaviour can be affected.

Time and competing priorities

Young carers should not be held back because of their family circumstances, and the benefits of supporting them will help support other school priorities. Where young carers are identified and supported early, they are more likely to attain better grades and improve their attendance. Moreover, young carers are one of the specific groups that Ofsted pays particular attention to. Working with a local young carer service will increase the capacity of schools to support young carers with the Young Carers in Schools programme backed up by a Carer Passport scheme.



Uptake of the Carer Passport

As young carers and families are often fearful of self-identifying, the uptake by young carers of a Carer Passport scheme could potentially be a challenge. This may be particularly so where students are caring for people with conditions that may be stigmatised such as mental-ill health and substance misuse. However this fear can be mitigated by schools developing sensitive and easy mechanisms for young carers and families to come forward and by ensuring that young carers can talk privately with staff.

The actual form of the Carer Passport and procedures must be well thought through to enable young carers to use them discretely. As support becomes embedded, and awareness of the support is well communicated, students and parents will increasingly feel understood, and see the school as a safe place to open up about their own situation. Again, a young carer service can play a supportive role in this.

It can support and encourage young carers and families to inform the school and help facilitate a joined up approach.

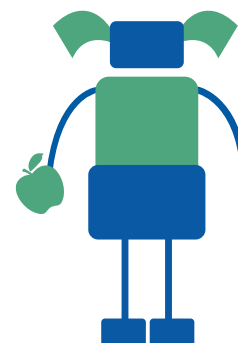
Funding

Some schools highlight that funding for a Carer Passport, would be challenging. However, many of the interventions that schools can initiate through a Carer Passport are cost free and can be built into existing pastoral systems. There are already numerous resources available to pick up for free through the Young Carers in Schools Programme and local young carer services. Furthermore, Carers Trust estimates that a significant proportion (60%) of young carers receive Pupil Premium, because of the number of their families likely to meet the free school meals criteria. This therefore could be used to fund a scheme.

Promoting the Carer Passport in schools

Good promotion, and accessibility, will result in prospective and current students (and their families) knowing what they can expect from the school and feeling recognised and supported.

All teaching staff including supply staff and other professionals working within the school need to be aware of the Carer Passport and how it works. Students and their families also need to be aware of the Passport and its benefits, and how to attain one. Both students and staff are transient, and therefore regular promotion of the Passport is important to ensure that it is seen as a current and relevant initiative.

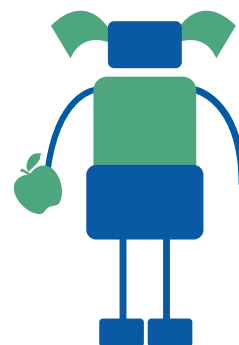


It can be beneficial for the lead role to be responsible for the coordination of the promotion of the Passport and the wider support for young carers within the school. Staff training and a setting up a 'young carer' noticeboard in the staffroom are useful ways of keeping the information on the radar

The Carer Passport should be promoted within school literature, on the school website, in a school handbook and on a prominent noticeboard visible to students and parents. It is important that the Carer Passport is highlighted to parents and students during the admission's process and that opportunities are provided at an early stage for students or parents to request one.

The annual '**Young Carers Awareness Day**' provides an ideal opportunity to raise the awareness and understanding of young carers and the Passport, and schools can invite a local young carer service to deliver a lesson or assembly. Resources developed for the annual awareness day and those already developed by the Young Carers in Schools Programme are ideal for schools to adapt and use.

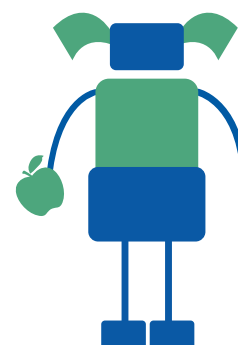
In promoting how they support young carers, schools should be mindful of the messages they give out. Young carers should be depicted neither as victims nor heroes. Young carers should be portrayed simply as being like any other pupil, except that they happen to have caring responsibilities in addition to the pressures that they are juggling as a young person. Schools need to take care how challenges that young carers may face due to their caring responsibilities are communicated, as it is important to not limit young carer aspiration.





Going ahead

- Gain senior management backing for the Carer Passport and establish a lead member of staff to coordinate the scheme.
- Establish whether there is a similar scheme already in place in other local schools.
- Allocate funding – perhaps from the Pupil Premium – for the coordination and management of the scheme.
- Be informed by the expertise and insights of students who are known to be young carers within the school and build their trust.
- Undertake an audit of existing support for young carers and other students in the school and consider how this other support might be linked into a Carer Passport offer.
- Discuss with a local young carer service about how a scheme might be delivered collaboratively. Some young carer services have taken on the coordination role for a Carer Passport across a local area.
- Try to establish a consistent approach and identity for the Carer Passport with other schools in your area.
- Develop clear guidelines and communicate clearly which students can access the Carer Passport.
- Promote clearly the purpose of a Carer Passport and what it offers the student.
- Make clear agreements around confidentiality and data sharing considerations.
- Develop a clear and simple mechanism for applying for a Carer Passport.
- Make use of the resources from the Young Carers in Schools programme and sign up to the newsletter.
- Consider carefully what information should and should not be visible on the Carer Passport in order to protect students.
- Establish a procedure for review and renewal of the Carer Passport.
- Establish procedures for recording and monitoring usage of the Carer Passport, measuring outcomes, and evaluating the impact of the initiative.



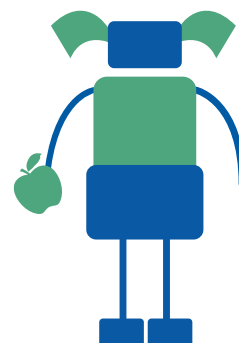
- Establish systems for recording young carers and with appropriate consent, feeding this into the local authority.
- Access the Carer Passport templates and examples of good practice which are available, and which can be adapted by schools and young carer services.

In conclusion

A Carer Passport within a school setting can be a useful tool to promote the safety of its pupils, engagement with carers and development of a truly inclusive community.

Each school can, in partnership with carers, plan and execute their Passports with creativity to meet the needs of their pupils. A Carer Passport scheme can be an opportunity for schools to integrate the work they do with carers into their everyday practices and seeks better outcomes for young carers and their families.

If you would like to view templates, good practice examples and get some ideas about developing your own Carers Passport, go to www.carerpassport.uk





Appendix

What might a Carer Passport offer?

Resources and templates

- >>> Leaflet to explain the scheme
- >>> Poster to promote the scheme
- >>> Application form
- >>> ID card template
- >>> Checklist of things to consider when implementing
- >>> Going Ahead summary

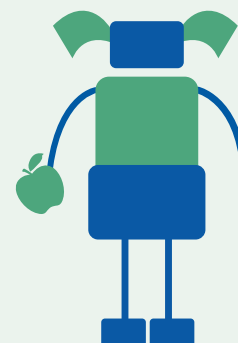
External resources and examples

- >>> Applemore College Family Support Questionnaire
- >>> Calderdale Application Form
- >>> Calderdale Carer Passport Card
- >>> Calderdale Guidelines for Young Carers
- >>> Winchester Action Checklist for Teachers
- >>> Winchester Anonymous ID card
- >>> Winchester ID Pack
- >>> Winchester ID Schools Talk
- >>> York Card
- >>> York Final Referral Form

Other resources

Young Carers in Schools Programme
www.youngcarersinschools.com

The Young Carers in School Award
www.childrenssociety.org.uk/youngcarer/schools/award



Supporting Young Carers in School: A Step-by-step Guide for Leaders, Teachers and Non-teaching Staff

<https://professionals.carers.org/stepbystep>

Toolkit for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Providers

(Can also be used in schools)

<https://professionals.carers.org/professionals.carers.org/initialteacher%20educationtoolkit>

Young Carer Assessment Tools

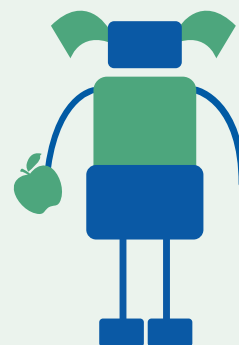
<https://professionals.carers.org/young-carer-assessment-tools>

Protecting Young Carers from Bullying: A Guide for Schools, Community Groups and Policy Makers

<https://professionals.carers.org/bullying>

A structured course to identify and support young carers affected by the stresses and challenges of caring

<https://professionals.carers.org/sites/default/files/winchester-proof2-6716.pdf>



Carer Passport



Find out more and access resources at:

[carerpassport.uk](https://www.carerpassport.uk)