

# STEP Academy Trust

## Young Carers Policy

**Date of Policy:** July 2015

**Review:** July 2016

### **Introduction**

The STEP Academy Trust Board of Directors has agreed this Policy and as such, it applies to all Academies within the Trust.

### **Rationale**

The STEP Academy Trust values the abilities and achievements of all its pupils, and is committed to providing for each pupil the best possible environment for learning. We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils. This means that equality of opportunity must be reality for our children. We make this a reality through the attention we pay to the different groups of children within our Academies.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with our:

- Pupil Premium Policy;
- Safeguarding policies;
- Inclusion Policy;
- Equality Policy;
- Behaviour and Anti Bullying policies;
- Curriculum and Teaching and Learning policies.

### **Introduction**

In STEP Academies, the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children are important. We encourage all our children to achieve the highest possible standards. We do this through taking account of each child's life experiences and needs.

We are committed to meeting the needs of Young Carers across our Academies, ensuring that this vulnerable group of young people are enabled and encouraged to attend and enjoy school and have equal access to their education as their peers, promoting a culture of high expectations and aspirations for how Young Carers learn. This policy aims to ensure that our Young Carers are identified and offered appropriate interventions in order for them to access the education to which they are entitled.

### **Aims and Objectives**

- To bring the educational achievements of our Young Carers nearer to those of their peers;
- To ensure that the Virtual School and the Young Carers Project are kept fully informed of the Young Carers progress, attendance and attainment;
- To ensure that Young Carers take as full a part as possible in all school activities, or in all aspects of school life.

### **Young Carers**

A Young Carer is a child or young person who is responsible for caring on a regular basis for a parent or sibling who has an illness or disability; such as a physical disability, mental health issues, substance misuse as well those who are terminally ill. A Young Carer will take on additional responsibilities to those that are deemed appropriate for their age and development, and will often be providing the main care for a family member as well as sharing responsibility with another family member. These tasks will often include

domestic activities, household and financial management and personal and emotional care, and because of these additional responsibilities a Young Carer will regularly experience poor attendance or lateness, under achievement, anxiety, tiredness, behaviour problems, difficulties in completing homework and often bullying.

**It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to:**

- Identify a Young Carers Representative who has special responsibility for Young Carers within the Academy; including maintaining a register and ensuring that all pupils, staff and families are aware of who they are to enable them to access support if needed;
- Ensure that all staff receives relevant training and are aware of their responsibilities under this policy;
- Ensure the Academy uses the Pupil Premium Grant to minimise any barriers to education and learning experienced by eligible Young Carers to improve their wellbeing, attainment and attendance;
- Ensure the Academy keeps up to date with national and local developments and with legislation and guidance effecting Young Carers and their families;
- Ensure the Academy uses the curriculum to promote a full understanding, acceptance of, and respect for issues such as caring, disability and impairment; for example, embedding the challenges faced by Young Carers into PSHE or Citizenship lessons;
- Ensure that Young Carers are prioritised for booster sessions to assist in raising their attainment;
- Ensure the Academy is accessible and welcoming to parents with disabilities and illness, offering additional support to enable them to attend parents' evenings or other Academy events, and that home visits are considered where appropriate;
- Ensure the Academy offers support to the Young Carer and their family during the transition process, sharing agreed information with their new school/college/university lead for Young Carers and their families;
- Ensure the Academy will identify Young Carers at risk of falling into the NEET category and take appropriate actions to address this
- Ensure that there is flexible communication between home, Virtual School and the Young Carers Project.

**The Young Carers Representative will:**

- Ensure all Young Carers are supported sensitively and that confidentiality is maintained as well as respecting their right to privacy and only sharing information about the Young Carer and their family with other staff on a need to know basis;
- Make referrals to Young Carers Project and other relevant support services;
- Work in partnership with Croydon Virtual School to provide progress data as requested;
- Allow access to a telephone during breaks and lunchtime, so that Young Carers may phone home if required.

**Responsibilities of school staff:**

- Contribute to the Young Carers Representative's requests for information on educational attainment and needs, as appropriate;
- As with all children, ensure that no child is stigmatised in any way;
- As with all children have high aspirations for the educational and personal development of Young Carers;
- To consider alternatives if a Young Carer is unable to attend a detention or sports events due to their caring role;
- Allow negotiation of deadlines for homework/coursework as appropriate;
- Ensure that Young Carers and their families are aware of opportunities for additional support within school educationally, emotionally and financially.

**Confidentiality**

Information on Young Carers will be shared with Academy staff on a “need to know basis”. The Young Carers Representative will discuss what information is shared and with which staff with the family. Once this has been agreed, complete confidentiality is to be maintained.

**Training**

The Headteacher and Young Carers Representative will be responsible for ensuring all staff are briefed on the regulations and practice outlined in this policy.

**Further Information**

Support for Young Carers is provided by Croydon Virtual School and the Young Carers Project, for further information please contact them on the following:

Jill Thorp Beverly Boyd  
Data Manager Education Support Worker  
Croydon Virtual School Young Carers Support Project  
Direct Line: 0208 604 7884 Tel: 0208 649 9339 Option 2  
jill.thorp@croydon.gov.uk [bevboyd@offtherecordcroydon.co.uk](mailto:bevboyd@offtherecordcroydon.co.uk)