



## Young Carers

### Introduction

The Care Act 2014 defines young carers as

*“means a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for an adult...providing practical or emotional support”* (HM Government 2014:15).

The Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on local authorities to *“take reasonable steps to identify the extent to which there are young carers within their area who have needs for support”* (HM Government 2014c:73).

Carers at the heart of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Families and Communities defines carers as –

*A carer spends a significant proportion of their life providing unpaid support to family or potentially friends. This could be caring for a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems.’* (HM Government 2008:19).

The ADASS / ADCS Joint Memorandum of Understanding (ADCS 2012:7) defines young carers as having

*“caring responsibilities are important and relied upon within the family in maintaining the health, safety or day to day well-being of the person receiving support or care and/or the wider family.”*

Looking at early intervention preventing (ADCS 2012:7)

*“a young carer becomes vulnerable when the level of care-giving and responsibility to the person in need of care becomes excessive or inappropriate for that child, risking impacting on his or her emotional or physical well being or educational achievement and life chances”*

The “All Age Carers Support Service for Bedfordshire” (Central Bedfordshire Council 2011:6) defines carers as:

*“People who provide unpaid support to a relative, partner, and friend or neighbour who is ill, frail or disabled or who has a mental health or substance misuse problem. Young Carers are children and young people aged under eighteen who have significant caring responsibilities for member(s) of their family in excess of what a typical person of their age would be expected to assume.*

*Young carers can be classified into three distinct age groups; each with distinct characteristics and needs. These groups are under 6, 6 to 14, and 14 to 17. Young Adult Carers are aged between 18-24 who particularly require support around education and employment. The format of delivering appropriate support to young adult carers may be different to that for young carers and adult carers”*

There are three main types of care which a young carer may be supporting a family member. These are:

- physical (e.g. personal care, household jobs, meals, errands)
- emotional (e.g. listening, being there for them, talking with them, helping them to feel better)
- where they are taking responsibility (e.g. to keep the person feeling safe, administering medicines, keeping appointments, responsible for getting help if needed)

The vision for Bedford Borough Young Carers is to ensure they are “*protected from inappropriate caring and have the support they need to learn, develop and thrive*” (Bedford Borough Council 2013).

The vision for carers of any age in Bedford Borough is

*‘That carers will be able to have a life of their own alongside their caring role. They will be supported to stay mentally and physically well and treated with dignity by integrated and personalised services. They will be recognised as expert partners in care and not forced into financial hardship by the caring role. Young carers will be protected from inappropriate caring and have the support they need to learn, develop and thrive’* (Bedford Borough Council 2013).

Young carers can find it difficult to combine their caring role with education and work, they can at times find it challenging to speak up but also when adults de-value their role or the love they have for their cared one, can experience stress and anxiety as a result of their caring role and value time with other young carers or specialist and knowledgeable support workers. (Bedford Borough Council 2014)

Only young carers are being considered for this chapter, up to the age of 17. Carers who are 18+ will be represented in the Carers Chapter

### **What do we know?**

#### **Facts, Figures, Trends**

Within Bedford Borough there are currently 399 identified young carers / sibling carers known to our Carers Support Service – Carers in Bedfordshire with 137 of this number being new young carers registered with Carers in Bedfordshire between April 2013 and March 2014 (Carers in Bedfordshire 2014). 144 young carers accessed a Young Carers Break in 13/14.

Young carers are known in Bedford Borough to be as young as 4 years old up to 17, from every ethnicity and supporting a range of caring requirements due to mental health issues, substance misuse, disability, terminal illness, short term issues (such as broken limbs) and more.

The Bedford Borough Census data from 2011 (ONS 2013) identified that there were 1215 carers aged 0-24 compared to 1058 in 2001. There are 27,698 children and young people in Bedford Borough aged 4 – 17 years (ONS 2012).

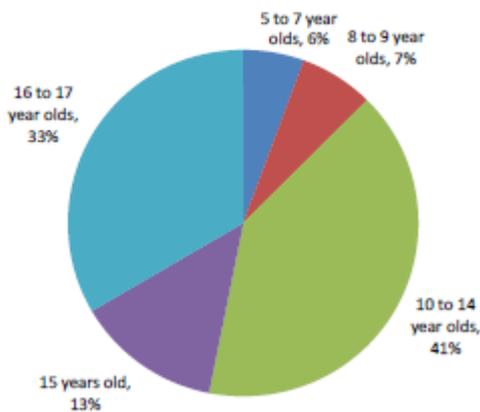
Hidden From View (Children’s Society 2013) states nationally 166,363 young carers

were identified in the 2011 Census which is a 20% increase from the 2001 Census data. However, national research carried out in 2010 by the University of Nottingham claims that one in 12 of 4,029 school children have caring responsibilities which would then equate to 700,000 young carers (British Broadcasting Corporation 2010). Locally using the ONS 2011 Mid year estimates for Bedford Borough the 4-15 year old population is 23,422 so that would be 1952 young carers.

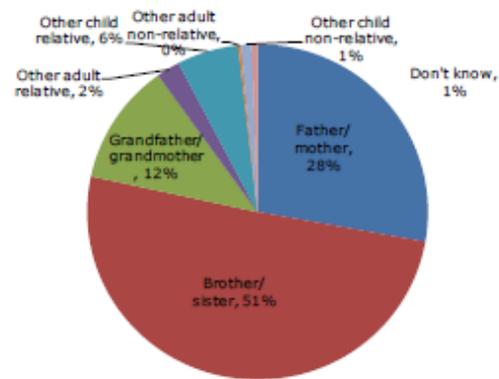
Under-reporting of young carers is a significant issue within the Borough, with a “missing” cohort of around 1200 – 1600 young carers. Whilst they might not all be in crisis, having accurate knowledge of their needs and roles would support future proof commissioning for Young Carers services locally.

**Young carers headline statistics (national / regional):**

*Age profile of young carers from the 2011 Census*



*Who young people are caring for, using LSYPE data*



*Children's Society 2013 pg 8 - 9*

- Over 13,000 care for over 50 hours per week (Carers Trust (2013))
- The average age of a young carer is 12 (Barnardos 2013)
- One in 12 young carers is caring for more than 15 hours per week. Around one in 20 misses school because of their caring responsibilities (Children's Society 2013:5)
- Young carers are 1.5 times more likely than their peers to be from black, Asian or minority ethnic communities, and are twice as likely to not speak English as their first language(Children's Society 2013:5)
- Young carers are 1.5 times more likely than their peers to have a special educational need or a disability (Children's Society 2013:5)
- The average annual income for families with a young carer is £5000 less than families who do not have a young carer (Children's Society 2013:5)
- There is no strong evidence that young carers are more likely than their peers to come into contact with support agencies, despite government recognition that this needs to happen (Children's Society 2013:5)
- Young carers have significantly lower educational attainment at GCSE level, the equivalent to nine grades lower overall than their peers e.g. the difference between nine B's and nine C's (Children's Society 2013:5)
- Young adult carers aged between 16 and 18 years are twice as likely to be (NEET) not in education, employment, or training (Carers Trust 2013)
- 27% of young carers aged 11-15 experience educational difficulties. This rises

to 40% where young carers are caring for a relative with drug or alcohol problems (Carers Trust 2013a)

- For the East of England there has been a significant rise in the last 10 years from 13,100 to 17,497 young carers aged 5 – 17 in England (ONS 2013)

### Local statistics

Data released from ONS in Sept 2013 regarding numbers of young carers in Bedford Borough can be seen below.

Age Group	Total Population	1-19 hr/wk	20-49 hr/wk	50+ hr/wk	Total Carers
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#### ONS 2001 Census: Table ST025

5-15	21,160	231	20	19	270
16-24	16,049	614	97	77	788
5-24	37,209	845	117	96	1058

#### ONS 2011 Census: Table LC3304EW

5-15	21,509	279	35	28	342
16-24	17,912	635	136	102	873
5-24	39,421	914	171	130	1215

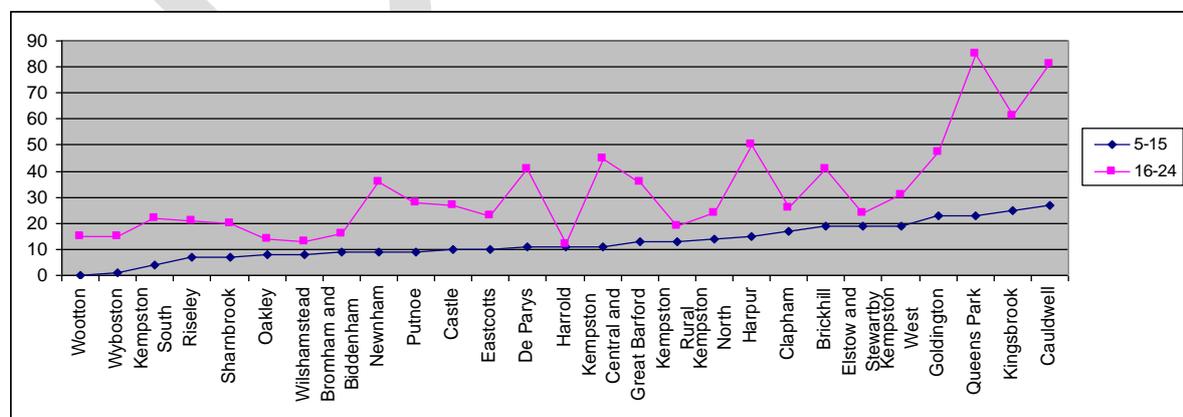
ONS 2013

### Young Carer and Sibling Carer Data – Bedford Borough

Numbers of young carers recorded by CiB as at 30.06.14	Total	M	F
Young Carers up to 17	208	102	106
Sibling Carers up to 17	155	68	87
Young Carers only accessing grants	36	18	18

Carers in Beds 2014

Data by ward has also been provided – it is interesting to note where there are particularly low or high numbers of young carers registered on census day.

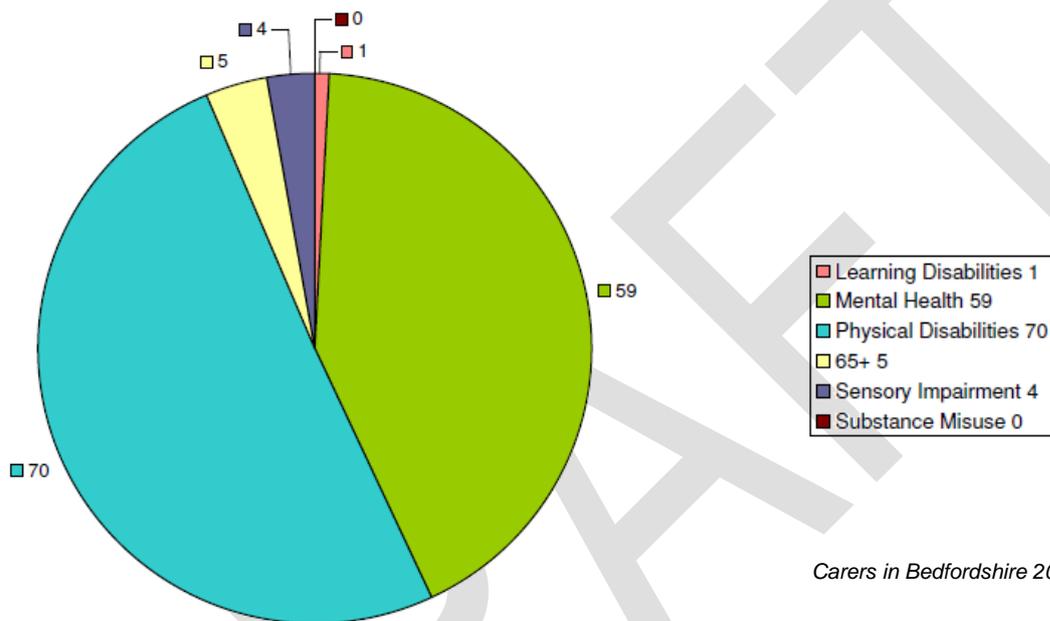


ONS 2013

Of note –

- Wootton has 0 young carers aged 5 – 15 and 15 young carers in the 16 – 24 range
- Kempston Rural has 14 young carers aged 5 – 15 and 19 young carers in the 16 – 24 range
- Kingsbrook and Cauldwell has 52 young carers aged 5 – 15 and 142 young carers in the 16 – 24 range

**Caring Categories of 139 Young Carers in Bedford Borough as of 15/08/2013**



*Carers in Bedfordshire 2013*

Carers in Bedfordshire has provided an ethnic breakdown of the young carers who are currently known to their service. As with the adult carers data, the low numbers of those from BME backgrounds make further analysis difficult however conclusions can be drawn around the need for further, targeted promotion to these community groups.

As at 30.06.14	Young Carers up to 17	Sibling carers up to 17	Young carers only accessing grants
African/African Caribbean	4	9	3
Asian	9	8	9
British (Black)	4	7	2
British (Mixed Race)	23	12	4
Other	5	2	1
Traveller		8	
White British	152	102	14
White European or	7	7	3



White other			
South African	1	7	
White Caribbean	3	7	

Carers in Bedfordshire 2014

**Referrals**

- During 2013/14 factors identified at both contact and at assessment stage will record those that are Young Carers on the AzeusCare Children’s Social Care database. This is in line with new statutory guidance requirement as part of the Children in Need Census (Bedford Borough Council 2013a). AzeusCare launched in March 2014.
- There is no known data regarding referrals for support via CAF, intake and assessment or through the allocation panels in Bedford Borough (Bedford Borough Council 2013a)
- There is no central system across all Borough schools to record young carers with each school opting for a different tracking system (Bedford Borough Council 2013b)

Carers in Bedfordshire have recorded referrals for Bedford Borough young carers as having come from the following sources (young carers only)

<b>Referral source</b>	<b>Young Carers up to 17 (2014)</b>	<b>Young Carers (2013)</b>
Self referral	60	23
Other professional	40	4
Bedford Borough Council (includes Education Welfare Officers, Bedfordshire Youth Offending Service)	40	28
School	37	17
Carers in Bedfordshire	12	5
Community Mental Health Team / SEPT	12	
GP	3	3 GP / 6 NHS
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service	1	
CHUMS (charity)	1	
One Support	1	
Unknown	1	64 (includes transferred from pervious service provider)

Carers in Bedfordshire 2014

Carers in Bedfordshire deliver the BCCG Young Carers Breaks programme provided young carers with access to a financial award to support an activity, trip or break from their caring role. Across Bedfordshire, the reasons for young carers applying for their breaks are detailed below with reference to stress, anxiety or depression as a

reason for requesting a break.

Year	Number of young carers who were awarded a break	Number of young carers who reported they were suffering from stress, anxiety or depression	Percentage of carers reporting stress, anxiety or depression
11/12			73%
12/13	236	147	62%
13/14	144	83	58%

*Carers in Bedfordshire 2013 & 2014*

In July 2013, 20 schools took part in a phone interview finding out about how they support young carers. All schools were offered the chance to take part in the survey. Headline results are (Bedford Borough Council 2013b);

- 94% stated they did not have a young carers policy
- 83% said that they do not have a designated lead for young carers
- 40% collect the reasons for care (e.g. substance misuse, mental health, disability)
- 35% had referred young carers on for support from external agencies
- 30% discuss young carers in leadership meetings
- 10% have a standing item as part of school governors meetings

### **Young Carers Assessments**

There is now an enhanced legal duty in relation to Young Carers Assessments. The Care Act 2014 states

*A young carer's assessment must include an assessment of—*

- (a) whether the young carer is able to provide care for the person in question and is likely to continue to be able to do so after becoming 18,*
- (b) whether the young carer is willing to do so and is likely to continue to be willing to do so after becoming 18,*
- (c) the impact on the matters specified in section 1(2) of what the young carer's needs for support are likely to be after the young carer becomes 18,*
- (d) the outcomes that the young carer wishes to achieve in day-to-day life, and*
- (e) whether, and if so to what extent, the provision of support could contribute to the achievement of those outcomes.*(HM Government 2014:55)

The Act states that young carers assessments must acknowledge work, education, recreation, training wishes, involve the young carer, parents and other identified bodies, support that could be offered to improve the outcomes and goals of the



young carer with provision to amend to a carers assessment when they turn 18 if still carrying out their role as a carer.

There is no guidance on the age at which the local authority must assess young carers, it is on a case by case basis based on where there would be “significant benefit” to the young carer. The Act is clear that the young carer does not have to be in receipt of other social care services or children’s services in order to “qualify” for an assessment which can be carried out at any point up to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday (it should not be delayed due to turning 18 in the near future). (HM Government 2014b)

### **Local Views**

In April 2014, members of the SuperKids Young Carers Forum presented to Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny about their experiences of being a Young Carer. The full information can be found in the committee minutes at [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk) (direct link to pdf <http://tinyurl.com/k7oveph>) with some headline messages below (Bedford Borough Council 2014)

*It takes a lot of responsibility to be a young carer because you have to look after whoever you are caring for (age 9)*

Hardest thing is that mum can’t walk. Washing upstairs, do most of the jobs. If I have 2 pieces of homework it might be hard to fit it in (age 10)

*Mum is feeling ill but the doctor doesn’t know why her face is numb and she has headaches. My heart feels bad as doctors don’t know I try and help. We are worried at home and school (11)*

I care for my grandma who has depression. Sometimes mum is crying and stressed for brother and no time as a family to sit down (12)

*It is difficult to give medicines (12)*

Standing for our rights is good (10)

*Opportunities we get here and at Kempston Youth Centre and free time is a good thing (11)*

Bad thing is people don’t like expressing themselves and keep it to themselves (13)

*It’s amazeballs being a carer (11)*

Good to take care of other people in need and learn about their medicines and learn about more than school work – we’ll know more (13)

At the Carers Forum in April 2013, young carers were asked about what they would like from an all age carers forum for Bedford Borough. Their responses were (Bedford Borough Council 2013c);

- *We would like to have question and answer sessions with people who have the answers (access to decision makers)*
- *We would like to talk about things that are happening in our lives*
- *We would like to let people know that there is help and not to leave them*
- *We want to talk about things that could happen and change things*
- *We want our views to be considered and be heard*
- *We want to be able to meet people in similar situations that know what you’re going through*
- *We want to be able to learn things from other people*

**Current activity & services****Carers in Bedfordshire**

A new all age carers' service was commissioned for Bedfordshire from October 2011 for 18 months, providing support, advice and opportunities for carers in Bedfordshire. Carers in Bedfordshire will provide this one stop service and is funded jointly by Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council and the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group. This has been re-commissioned to provide:

- 121 support for young carers including a minimum of 6 sessions
- Activity clubs
- Peer mentor project
- Young Carers Newsletter
- Training workshops
- Awareness raising events and activities
- Support carers voice in strategy and decision making
- Carers Café

Opening times: Monday to Friday 8:30am -4:30pm  
Telephone: 0300 111 1919  
Fax: 01234 341766  
Website: [www.caresinbeds.org.uk](http://www.caresinbeds.org.uk)  
Email: [contact@carersinbeds.org.uk](mailto:contact@carersinbeds.org.uk)  
Chief Executive Officer Helen Satterthwaite 0300 111 1919  
Young Carers Support Worker Austin Trudgill 07772 231230  
Young Carers 12 - 17 years old Shelley Hobbs 07805 861821  
Young Carers 4 – 11 years old Amy Smith 07772 231222  
Sibling Carers lead Janice Shankland 07772 231225  
Young Carers Grants lead Mandy Lee 07772 231234  
Address: Suite K, Sandland Court, The Pilgrim Centre, Brickhill Drive,  
Bedford, MK41 7PZ

**Young Carers Breaks**

NHS Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group has provided a grant to support young carers. Young carers under the age of 18 can apply for a grant of up to £150 to go towards a service that will benefit and enhance their wellbeing. Examples of how the grant could be used include

- Fun Activities
- A day trip
- Taking up a hobby
- Joining a club
- A school trip
- Training
- Or your own idea!

**Bedford Borough Council Children's Services**

For a young carers assessment of need for early intervention support, please complete a CAF (Common Assessment Framework) form

Office number: 01234 718700

Website: <http://tinyurl.com/qeu3tgk>  
Email: [multiagency@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:multiagency@bedford.gov.uk)

For a young carers assessment of need for specialist support, crisis support or to access direct payments (16+) please contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) at Bedford Borough Council.

Office number: 01234 718700 (MASH team)  
Emergency Duty Team: 0300 300 8123 (out of hours cover)  
Email: [mash@bedford.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:mash@bedford.gcsx.gov.uk)

### **Bedford Borough Council's Engagement and Development Team**

The team works to inform, consult and involve children and young people in services and issues that affect them. To get in touch with the team please contact: [emma.sparrow@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:emma.sparrow@bedford.gov.uk)

The SuperKids young carers action group meets throughout the year bringing together children, young people and young adults to have a strategic voice within Bedford Borough Council inputting directly into service development, Borough wide consultations and meeting with senior managers and elected members. They have led projects including the Undercover Heroes DVD, Time Out Card, Carers Rights Day video and more! To get in touch with them, contact Emma Sparrow.

### **Bedford Borough Council's Family Information Service**

A confidential service that can sign post parents / young people / workers to appropriate support groups, services or activities for children and young people. 0800 023 2057 (lines open: Mon – Thurs 8am – 5pm, Fri 8am – 4.45pm. 24 hour answer phone service) or email [fis@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:fis@bedford.gov.uk)

### **Adult services**

The role of Adult Services is to advise and support vulnerable people age 18 years and over who are in need of social care services. Bedford Borough Council's Adult Services new on line service is now available for self assessment

<https://bedford.firmstep.com/popup.aspx/RenderForm/?F.Name=KAfYZomCRvR&HideToolbar=1>

If you have any non urgent questions, please email [care@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:care@bedford.gov.uk). For urgent enquiries, please call on 01234 267422. In emergencies, out of hours, please contact the Emergency Duty Team on: 0300 300 8123

***Bedford Borough Council supports a joint protocol approach with Children's and Adults' Services when delivering support / advice for all young carers across Bedford Borough. Please think family and make a dual referral.***

### **Lead roles for young carers**

There are a number of leads for young carers within Bedford Borough.

The strategic lead for Children's and Adults' Services is the Carers Partnership

Board, chaired by the Assistant Director for Commissioning and Business Support at Bedford Borough Council.

There is a Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group lead role which includes young carers. This role is the “Mental Health Project Manager”

There is a commissioned service that is providing an all age support service for Carers across Bedfordshire, jointly commissioned by NHS Bedfordshire, Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council. This organisation, Carers in Bedfordshire, has a “young carers lead” role.

For crisis support for children and young people in need, at risk or for an assessment of need, please contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) at Bedford Borough Council

Office number: 01234 718700 (MASH team)  
Emergency Duty Team: 0300 300 8123 (out of hours cover)  
Email: mash@bedford.gcsx.gov.uk

#### **Legislative guidance on young carers**

The **Care Act 2014** sets out guidance on expectations in relation to transition of support for young carers to support as an adult carer if when they turn 18 they are continuing with their carer duties. The Act is explicit in requirements for young carers assessments (see earlier section) and the need to include information about the young carers wishes and participation with regards to education, work, recreation and training. (HM Government 2014)

The **Children and Families Act 2014** confirms that local authorities in England must assess whether a young carer in their area has needs and what they needs are if the young carer requests an assessment or if the local authority identifies they may have needs. The assessment must look at appropriateness of the care provided by the young carer, take into account education, work, recreation and training, involve the young carer, their parents and any relevant person and that they must receive a written record of the assessment. The written record must also be clear as to whether they are considered to be a child in need.

The Children and Families Act also places a duty on local authorities to “*take reasonable steps to identify the extent to which there are young carers within their area who have needs for support*” (HM Government 2014c:73). Care is also defined as being “*practical or emotional support*”. (ibid)

The coalition government have set out a four year plan to prioritise actions to best support young carers. “**Recognised, valued and supported: next steps for the carers**” (HM Government 2010) strategy was published on 25 November 2010 highlighting the importance of support for young carers as a whole.

The Coalition Government identified four key areas in the strategy. These are:

- Supporting those with caring responsibilities to identify themselves as carers at an early stage, recognising the value of their contribution and involving them from the outset both in designing local care provision and in planning

individual care packages

- Enabling those with caring responsibilities to fulfil their educational and employment potential
  - Personalised support both for carers and those they support, enabling them to have a family and community life
  - Supporting carers to remain mentally and physically well.
- It should therefore be the responsibility of all staff within schools and colleges to facilitate the identification of young carers and ensure they have the support necessary to reach their education potential.

Most young carers are not known to be caring by school staff, so being a young carer can be a hidden cause of poor attendance, under achievement and bullying, with many young carers dropping out of school or achieving no qualifications. There are some simple and inexpensive steps that all schools can take in order to ensure that young carers don't place their education in second place to their caring responsibilities.

*'More should be done to identify and support young carers- in particular, schools should be more carer aware and the memorandum of understanding working together to support young carers should be embedded' (HM Government 2010:6).*

The **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child** was ratified in 1991 detailing 54 articles of which 40 give direct rights to children and the remaining 14 relating to the measures countries / states must take to implement the convention. Key articles for young carers include (CRAE 2005)

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Article 3  | Child's best interests must be top priority whenever anything is done that affects children. Governments must do everything to make sure children are protected and cared for. |
| Article 6  | Every child has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to make sure children can develop to their fullest potential.  |
| Article 12 | Every child has the right to express their views feeling in all matters affecting the child.   |
| Article 18 | Governments must do all they can to support both parents in bringing up children   |
| Article 19 | Governments must do everything to protect children from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and mistreatment   |
| Article 24 | Every child has the right to the best possible health and health services  |
| Article 27 | Children have the right to a standard of living that helps them develop fully. Governments must help parents and others caring for the child.                                  |
| Article 28 | Every child has the right to free education  |
| Article 31 | Every child has the right to rest, play and leisure  |
| Article 35 | Governments must protect the child from all other exploitation   |

**Children in Need Census guidance**

From 1 April 2013 onwards there is a statutory duty as part of the Children in Need census to state if a child at the end of assessment (single assessment) has been identified as a young carer (HM Government 2013b p39) . This is due to be reported to the DfE at the end of July 2014 and national data published in December 2014. Further information can be found at

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/strategy/research/a00215565/cin201314>

### **Working Together**

Working Together (March 2013) has identified young carers as a key vulnerable group with specific mention of the LSCB monitoring and evaluating training to support identification and responses to the needs of young carers amongst other vulnerable groups.

All professionals are required to be alert to the potential needs for early help for young carers ensuring that they are given sufficient recognition and prioritisation in the assessment process. (HM Government 2013 p11, 18)

### **Memorandum of Understanding to Support Young Carers**

As part of a joint commitment to help take forward the National Carers Strategy, ADASS (the Association of Directors of Adult Services) and ADCS (Association of Directors of Children's Services) developed a model Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on working together to support young carers. The MoU concentrates on 4 key areas which are

- Empowerment
- Assessment
- Safeguarding
- Accountability

The Model has a number of recommendations for Local Authorities, Health, Education, the Voluntary and Community Sector and other organisations in order to support young carers to achieve their potential. (ADCS 2012)

### **Positive for Youth**

Positive for Youth is the new approach to cross-government policy for young people aged 13 – 19 launched in December 2011.

The themes of the policy are:

- Supportive relationships
- Strong ambitions
- Good opportunities

With specific reference to young carers on page 56 (HM Government, 2011)

*“Young carers are another priority group for the Government. Its new carers strategy has a strong focus on supporting young carers. The strategy emphasises the importance of adult and children's services working together with the voluntary sector to identify and support young carers. It also encourages local authorities to adopt the principles of a memorandum of understanding published by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services and the Association of Directors of Children's Services. This states that no care package should rely on a young person taking on an inappropriate caring role. To support local discussions about improving support for young carers and their families, the two Associations have also recently*

*published a paper that brings together existing good practice and other useful resource materials.*

*The Government is committed to working with local authorities and the voluntary sector to break down barriers and support the spread of evidence based practice on supporting young carers. The Department for Education has awarded funding of up to £1.5 million to The Children's Society and The Princess Royal Trust for Carers over the next two years for this purpose. These organisations will identify and share best practice and case studies, encourage 'whole family' approaches to supporting young carers, and promote the new e-learning module"*

Other pieces of legislation where young carers are specifically mentioned include

The **children's act 2004, children's plan and children's act 1989** where it says there should be a "*planned and coordinated approach for young carers to achieve*"– (section 17 "in need" including young carers effective support from social services, education and health)

**Carers and disabled children combined policy guidance act 2000 / carers equal opportunities act 2004** – young carers right to an assessment of their needs taking into account education. Builds on statutory guidance in the **Carers Act 1995**

**Equalities Act 2010** – strengthens support for carers outside of work (shopping, accessing services, using public transport)

**Direct payments** to carers aged 16+ to support them in their caring role

#### **National & Local Strategies (Current best practices)**

The **Joint Commissioning Strategy for Carers and Young Carers 2013-17** (Bedford Borough Council 2013) collates the local vision, demographic data, priorities, outcomes and action plan for carers of all ages within Bedford Borough. The four national priority areas are used locally to capture all actions and outcomes. These priorities are

1. Supporting those with caring responsibilities to identify themselves as carers at an early stage, recognising the value of their contribution and involving them from the outset both in designing local care provision and in planning individual care packages.
2. Enabling those with caring responsibilities to fulfil their educational and employment potential.
3. Personalised support both for carers and those they support, enabling them to have a family and community life.
4. Supporting carers to remain mentally and physically well.

Each priority area above is accompanied in the strategy with a set of commitments which can be found at

<file:///C:/Users/Will/Downloads/Carers%20Strategy%202013%20final.pdf>

With specific young carer priorities as below (Bedford Borough Council 2013:11)

1. Improve the local evidence base of need for children, young people and families undertaking caring responsibilities
2. Raise awareness of carers issues with staff
3. Ensure services for parents and carers of children with disabilities are able to meet identified need
4. Children's and Adults Services to work in partnership and develop a 'Think Family' approach to supporting young carers
5. Ensure a managed transition for carers between Adults & Children's Services
6. Ensure we improve community and school based services for young carers

Through the work of the **Include Project** (Children's Society 2013b) there have been a number of different local and national programmes aimed at improving the lives of young carers. Key elements of best practice includes

- Young Carers in Focus creating 200 young carers champions across the England including an online safe social network <http://www.youngcarer.com/resources/ycif>
- National Young Carers Festival
- Whole Family Pathway <http://www.youngcarer.com/resources/whole-family-pathway> working to:
  - Encourage and support the effective implementation of interagency, whole family assessments and service delivery at local practice levels.
  - Promote joint working between adult and children's services.
- Toolkits and resources including the participation pack and schools toolkit <http://www.youngcarer.com/resources/ptp/participation-pack>
- Collating local best practice through their national newsletter- Purple News which includes ideas like holding a young carers conference (Hertfordshire), making films (Salford) and trips and activities (various) <http://www.youngcarer.com/resources/e-bulletins-purple-news-international/purple-news>

Locally we have a fantastic DVD and professionals toolkit called **Undercover Heroes** which was made in 2010 by young carers in Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire with a professional film company. The supporting professionals pack has huge amounts of information about identification, policies, games, activities and local support services. [www.bedford.gov.uk/youngcarers](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/youngcarers) then click on resources and support

**Carers in Bedfordshire** offers a range of activities, trips, 121 support and other opportunities such as young carers creating and editing their own newsletter which you can access at <http://www.carersinbeds.org.uk/youngcarerse-magazine.html>

**Central Bedfordshire Council** (2013) have a young carers support officer, a dedicated full time worker who works to

- To develop and manage support and provision for Young Carers across Central Bedfordshire working with Commissioned Partners through a Service Level Agreement.
- To work closely with lower, middle, upper and special education need schools in identifying and supporting Young Carers and their needs.
- To promote closer working relationships between schools and other partners

in the support and delivery of services to Young Carers.

- To implement appropriate aspects of the National Carers Strategy with regards to Young Carers.

**What is this telling us?**

**What are the key inequalities?**

National data suggests the following inequalities -

- Around one in 20 misses school because of their caring responsibilities (Children’s Society 2013:5)
- Young carers are 1.5 times more likely than their peers to be from black, Asian or minority ethnic communities, and are twice as likely to not speak English as their first language(Children’s Society 2013:5)
- Young carers are 1.5 times more likely than their peers to have a special educational need or a disability (Children’s Society 2013:5)
- The average annual income for families with a young carer is £5000 less than families who do not have a young carer (Children’s Society 2013:5)
- There is no strong evidence that young carers are more likely than their peers to come into contact with support agencies, despite government recognition that this needs to happen (Children’s Society 2013:5)
- Young carers have significantly lower educational attainment at GCSE level, the equivalent to nine grades lower overall than their peers e.g. the difference between nine B’s and nine C’s (Children’s Society 2013:5)
- Young adult carers aged between 16 and 18 years are twice as likely to be (NEET) not in education, employment, or training (Carers Trust 2013)
- 27% of young carers aged 11-15 experience educational difficulties. This rises to 40% where young carers are caring for a relative with drug or alcohol problems (Carers Trust 2013a)

Local data suggests the following inequalities –

- Lack of school awareness (Bedford Borough Council 2013b) potentially leading to reduce achievements in education
- Data gap in numbers of young carers who do / do not need additional support
- Increasing work within BME groups to raise awareness and develop packages of support (Carers in Bedfordshire 2013)

**What are the unmet needs/ service gaps?**

Under-reporting of young carers is a significant issue within the Borough, with a “missing” cohort of around 1200 – 1600 young carers. Whilst they might not all be in crisis, having accurate knowledge of their needs and roles would support future proof commissioning for Young Carers services locally.

Recommendations below highlight the unmet needs or service gaps collated In line with the Care Act 2014 and Children and Families Act 2014, local and national research as part of the JSNA process:

**Education & Training**

- Continue to work with education and training providers to raise awareness of young carers and support development of systems and structures to support



them within these settings (schools audit 2013)

- Work with education and training providers to develop young carer policies and protocols which support them to achieve and thrive in and out of formal education (schools audit 2013)
- Reinforce the need for all education and training providers to have a designated single point of contact for young carers (staff, students and parents) who is skilled, trained and has access to the latest information regarding the local offer and procedures (schools audit 2013)
- Ensure in an assessment of young carers needs, that their wishes for and participation in education and training is taken into account (Children and Families Act 2014 / Care Act 2014)

#### Work

- Ensure young carers have access to high quality information, advice and guidance on their future aspirations from schools based carers advisors or the Jobs Hub (18+) (Joint Commissioning Strategy 2013)
- Ensure in an assessment of young carers needs, that their wishes for and participation in work is taken into account (Children and Families Act 2014 / Care Act 2014)

#### Recreation

- Ensure in an assessment of young carers needs, that their wishes for and participation in recreation is taken into account (Children and Families Act 2014 / Care Act 2014)

#### Identifying Young Carers

- Continue to offer workforce development opportunities to raise awareness of young carers, their needs, wishes and views (schools audit 2013 / Joint Commissioning Strategy 2013)
- Continue to work with our commissioned provider, local organisations and services to identify hidden young carers (National / JSNA research)
- To ensure the local authority takes reasonable steps to identify the extent to which there are young carers within their area who have needs for support (Children and Families Act 2014)

#### Support Services

- Ensure young carers form part of the Early Intervention offer for Bedford Borough (Statutory guidance – Working Together 2013)
- Involve young carers in the design and development of services in order to future proof for young carers needs (JSNA research)
- Work with partners to remove the stress and anxiety faced by young carers and the impact this has on their emotional health and wellbeing (Young Carers Breaks annual stats / Schools Survey 2012)
- Ensure we improve community and school based services for young carers (Joint Commissioning Strategy 2013)

#### Strategy and Systems

- Progress and implement the ADASS Joint Memorandum (Joint Commissioning Strategy 2013)
- Increase awareness of young carers within adult services, children's services,

health and education to improve referral rates and joint approach (ADASS joint memorandum 2012 / Joint Commissioning Strategy 2013)

- Develop a tracking system for young carers within the Local Authority and schools (JSNA research)
- Improve the local evidence base of need for children, young people and families undertaking caring responsibilities (Joint Commissioning Strategy 2013)
- Ensure a managed transition for carers between Children's & Adults' Services (Joint Commissioning Strategy 2013)

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