

Introduction to Supporting Young Carers in Schools: Webinar 2, listening to young carers at Bronze level



Purpose

The Young Carers in Schools Award contains five standards:

- Understand
- Inform
- Identify
- Listen
- Support

This transcript from Webinar 2 focuses specifically on the Bronze level criteria of the **listen** standard, which sets out the first things we recommend that schools do to ensure young carers are listened to and consulted with.

In doing so, it aims to:

- Put this criteria into context.
- Enable you to identify the extent to which your school may already meet the criteria.
- Provide key information to make it as easy as possible for you fill any gaps.
- Ensure clarity about the evidence you need to include in your Young Carers in Schools Award application to make achieving a Young Carers Award as simple as possible.

Guidance

This document has been designed to be used alongside the slides which were used during Webinar 2, listening to young carers.

Putting the webinar into context; a whole school approach

For those of you who joined me for Webinar 1, I explained how it is vital to explore the context for these webinars and to ensure that we do not see them in isolation. Again, with this webinar, it is part of a series of steps schools can take to adopt a whole school approach to identifying and supporting young carers.

Working towards and embedding this whole school approach is essential for raising outcomes for this vulnerable pupil group. One of the main reasons young carers say they do not access support is due to stigma. A positive whole school ethos where young carers their families are respected and valued by pupils, staff and the wider school community is crucial to ensuring young carers and their families feel safe and confident to access support.

Again, some of you may be well on the way to implementing this whole school approach and are looking for clarification through this webinar about how best to demonstrate this to gain recognition through the Young Carers in Schools Award. Others may just be starting out on the journey, looking to build activities over a number of years.

The Young Carers in Schools programme aims to support you on this journey. The Award structure breaks down the development of a whole school approach into manageable, incremental steps to help you identify and prioritise what to do next. In doing so, we draw upon a wide range of research and extensive consultation with school staff, young carers and young carers' services.

Putting the webinar into context; a whole school approach

Don't forget! Building staff understanding and responsibility for meeting the needs of young carers does not mean creating additional functionality within staff's existing roles. Rather, by being aware of how to identify and support young carers, staff will be better equipped to fulfil their existing roles within the school.

Developing a whole-school commitment will help your school achieve the Bronze level of the Young Carers in Schools Award.

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Looking at Standard 4

During the session today we'll be looking at why young carers need to be listened to and given space to talk if necessary and the initial steps schools can take to put this in place.

At Bronze level, the criteria aims to get schools to do three things:

- Firstly, ensuring that young carers have a trusted member of staff they can talk to; this is covered in the essential evidence.
- Secondly, ensuring schools has a conversation with a young carer to identify what forms of support would be beneficial to them; this is covered in the desirable evidence.
- And thirdly, to start consulting with young carers about the school's policy and provision for young carers; this is also covered in the desirable evidence.

Standard 4
Listen: young carers in your school are listened to, consulted with and given time and space to talk if they need to.

Criteria	Suggested evidence from the school	Relevant guidance tools from the Step-by-Step Guide
<p>ESSENTIAL Young carers are listened to within the school, through for example drop-in sessions, consultations, or questionnaires/surveys for young carers</p>	<p>Essential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timetable of drop-in sessions at available times for young carers • Evidence of a system for young carers to communicate with staff e.g. email address or message box <p>Desirable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of questionnaire survey's undertaken within the school • Feedback from young carers at the school regarding gathering their views on the school's current policy and provision for young carers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step 6: Tool 1: Checklist of support young carers may need • Step 6: Tool 6: How to run a young carers forum • Step 3: Tool 4: Wellbeing questionnaire




- Ensure young carers have a trusted member of staff they can talk to
- Ensure schools have conversations with young carers to identify what forms of support would be most beneficial to them
- Consult with young carers as an easy way to start thinking about and progressing to Silver level








How can young carers be heard?

Looking at ensuring young carers have a trusted member of staff they can talk to first is important because the number one thing young carers say they would like from school, is for someone who recognises them as a young carer and who is available to talk to.

Not all young carers will feel comfortable with sharing information about their caring role to all members of staff. It is important that the young carer lead is available for young carers to talk to so that any issues a young carer may have can be shared confidentially with someone they feel comfortable with and can then be addressed quickly.

Having an open door policy ensures that young carers know and feel that they can communicate with you on a daily basis if necessary. It will help to encourage open communication and feedback. A young carer may need to speak to a member of staff on an ad-hoc basis because things can change quickly and unexpectedly at home. Something may have happened during the night or in the morning which they need to tell someone about, or perhaps everything was okay when they left for school but by lunchtime things have changed and they are worried.

This session and guidance in the Step-by-Step Guide will help to make implementing an open door policy really simple.

A key action you can do straight away is to let young carers know where they can find the school lead; especially if they are often available in the same location or if they are office based/in a regular location. This can be advertised easily on a pupil noticeboard.

How can young carers be heard?

“As a young carer you often have many worries which can limit concentration. Young carers should have someone there within school to talk to about their caring roles with confidence and trust.”

Young carer



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action-help-advice

The Children's Society

fatherhood
MIND

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Mental
Illness

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Email/message box

A second way to have an open door policy, especially if you are not office based, is to set up an email address which young carers and/or parents can use to contact staff. A young carer might not have chance to see you during the school day or after school; so by having this in place, it allows young carers to share with you when they might be facing some difficulties. We appreciate that setting up this email address is more applicable to secondary schools.

Another way to enable young carers to communicate with staff is to have a message box in place. Both primary and secondary schools can have a message box which young carers can use to drop in a message which staff can then follow up.

These need to be put in places where they are accessible to pupils and in a large school there will need to be more than one. A young carer may like to use this to ask about services and support available in private or as a way to leave a message with staff confidentially.

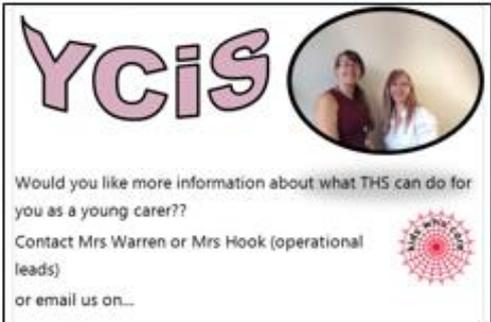
Even if the school lead is office based or in a regular location, having both the email address and message box in place is beneficial as young carer may not feel comfortable talking about a sensitive issue straight away, face to face and they may prefer to drop you a note beforehand.

How can young carers be heard?

Email/message box



St Ambrose Barlow RC High School



Tiverton High School



Drop-in sessions

In addition to young carers being able to access the lead on an ad-hoc basis if an urgent matter arises. Holding regular drop-in sessions ensure young carers know that there is protected time for them to speak to someone about non-urgent things.

Drop-in sessions can work particularly well in a secondary school setting where staff move around and are not accessible and/or as well-known as in primary schools.

Some of the key things to consider when setting up drop-in sessions are:

- To find a suitable room: the drop-in sessions need to be held in a place where young carers can talk in confidence and privately with staff. It should be in a room where young carers feel safe to share issues and you know that you won't be disturbed.
- To find a suitable time: drop-in sessions need to be held regularly so that young carers continue to feel supported; we recommend that they should be held at least fortnightly. It is important to remember that young carers may find it difficult to attend sessions after school

It is important that both the drop-in sessions and/or the email system and the message box are in place. This is vital in case a young carer needs urgent advice. What would happen if a young carer needed to talk to someone but the next drop-in session wasn't for another two days or even a week?

This ensures that young carers have a way to access support between sessions; it is important that they can speak to someone as and when things may be changing or happening at home.

As we previously touched upon, it is important to note that not all young carers will need or want the different types of support your school may have on offer. Some might not need any or want to engage in any support, at this specific moment in time. For example, not all young carers in your school may want to attend a drop-in session but will use the email address to contact staff instead.

It is therefore important to have multiple ways in which young carers can share what is going on at home and be able to feedback what types of support they may benefit from most.

How can young carers be heard?

Drop-in sessions

Key actions:

- Find a suitable room
- Find a suitable time



Tiverton High School

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“It's difficult to talk to teachers. It's not easy to explain ... It's always in the corridor or class. I just don't tell them.”
Young carer

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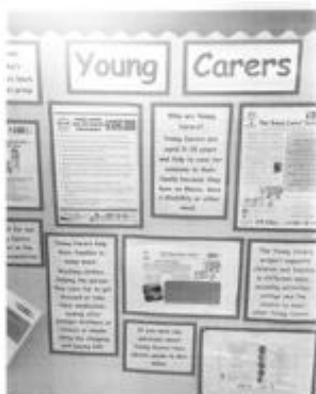
Advertise support and share information by using noticeboards

It is important that the key information about the drop-in sessions, email address and the message boxes and how young carers can use them are promoted in school. This information could easily be shared via a pupil noticeboard. It is also important that information about where young carers can find the school lead is also promoted and shared on the pupil noticeboard.

In our last webinar session, we started to discuss the importance of having a noticeboard, especially in secondary schools. Just to quickly recap; noticeboards are great because they can be updated regularly, are seen by a large number of pupils and are an easy constant way of sharing information quickly. A young person can become a young carer at any time so the information needs to be available all the time.

The noticeboard should be in a prominent place in the school where the majority of pupils will see it; for example, the library, canteen or school reception.

Advertise support and share information by using noticeboards



Lovelace Primary School



Tolworth Nursery, Infants & Junior School



What do schools need in place at Bronze level?

So at Bronze level the actions schools need to have in place are:

- A message box and/or email address to be implemented and promoted on the pupil noticeboard.
- In secondary schools and large primary schools, to implement a drop-in session.
- For all of these details to be promoted together with the location of the young carer if they are based in a regular office/location.

What do schools need in place at Bronze?



Essential:

- Ensure young carers have a trusted member of staff they can talk to, via message boxes and/or an email address
- In secondary schools and large primary schools, to implement a drop-in session
- These are promoted throughout the school



How can young carers be heard?

At a Bronze level, schools should be having conversations with young carers to identify what forms of support would be most beneficial to that particular pupil.

It is included in the desirable evidence as we want the focus to be on having those conversations with young carers, rather than feeling like you have to gather a lot of evidence and paperwork.

It is important to remember that not all young carers will benefit from or want the same types of support; each child is different. It is therefore important to make sure that young carers are consulted with so they can identify what would be the most beneficial to them.

It is important that young carers feel that they can talk in confidence and in a quiet suitable space and this discussion should take place in an area that would ensure this.

Schools can use their own assessments or use the tools we provide in the Step-by-Step Guide.

These include:

- The MACA form
- The PANOC form
- Wellbeing questionnaire
- Observation checklist

All of these are questionnaire designed as very short and easy to use tools.

The MACA (multi assessment of caring activities) and the PANOC (positive and negative outcomes of caring) are both evidence-based tools developed and tested with over 500 young carers by a number of academics specialising in young carers. They have been in use by a number of young carers' services since 2010 so can be used with confidence.

The MACA helps you to identify the level of caring a child is carrying out. It can be useful to use to identify whether a child is a young carer and to use before and after interventions to examine what sort of interventions are helpful in reducing their caring burden.

The PANOC is designed to give you an idea about how caring is impacting on a young carer and can help you identify what support may be needed.

The wellbeing questionnaire and observation checklist have been developed by Carers Trust to encourage young carers to think about and share their feelings regarding their own wellbeing and towards school.

In secondary schools the MACA, PANOC and wellbeing questionnaire are suitable for the young carer to fill in themselves; for younger children in primary school it may be more appropriate for a member of staff to ask the young carer the questions.

It is important that the observation checklist is used alongside the wellbeing questionnaire because it helps to provide a bigger picture of the young carer's wellbeing and to better inform the types of support they might need.

We are not stipulating that schools have to use the MACA, PANOC and wellbeing questionnaire but they are tried and tested tools which are there to help make consulting with young carers as easy as possible.

How can young carers be heard?




Example of the MACA form

Your group: _____
 Your name: _____
 Date of birth: _____
 Today's date: _____

Why do you help in school after or before school?
 (Please tick in every column in each row.)

Task	Before 5.00pm	After 5.00pm	After 5.30pm
Helping with homework	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helping with reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helping with other schoolwork	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helping with other tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Why do you want to work after school? (Please tick)

They need a job	They are bored
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How do you want to be heard? (Please tick)

How	When	How often
By talking to my class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
By writing to my class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
By talking to my class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
By writing to my class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Supporting Young Carers in Schools

Example of the PANOC form

Your group: _____
 Your name: _____
 Date of birth: _____
 Today's date: _____

Please tick each thing young carers like you have said about what it feels like to work after school.

Please tick each statement and then tick in the box to show how often you do this job. There are no right or wrong answers. We are just interested to what life is like for you because of caring. Thank you.

Statement	Never	Some of the time	A lot of the time
1. I am often in school after school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I am often in school before school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I am often in school during school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I am often in school during school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I am often in school during school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I am often in school during school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I am often in school during school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I am often in school during school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I am often in school during school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. I am often in school during school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Supporting Young Carers in Schools








Please tick to tell us how you feel about each of the things below on a scale of 1-5
(1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

	1	2	3	4	5
I feel my attendance at school is good					
I feel I arrive at school on time					
I feel I am able to complete my homework on time					
I feel I do well in my school and homework					
I feel I behave well at school					
I feel I have time for myself and to do hobbies					




Examples from the well-being questionnaire

I feel happy

I feel that my school understands the caring that I do					
I feel that my school supports me as a young carer					
I feel that other children/young people at my school understand the caring I do					
I feel I am doing something good because I am a young carer					

What support do you think would help you?

What support would you like from your school?

Any further comments you would like to make








STEP 9

Step 9, Tool 5:
Staff observation checklist

Pupil's year group _____

Pupil's name _____

Name of person being observed _____

Today's date _____

On a scale of 1-5 do you feel the pupil...
(1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

	1	2	3	4	5
Has good attendance at school?					
Arrives at school on time?					
Completes homework on time?					
Is doing well in their school and homework?					
Behaves well at school?					
Has time for themselves and to do hobbies?					
Is able to look after their health, have a good diet and do exercise?					
Is able to make friends and get along well with other pupils/teachers?					
Is able to get along with themselves?					
Is able to manage their own emotions?					



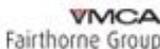

Examples from the staff observation checklist

Is happy with themselves?

Is confident?					
Is happy?					
The pupil's caring role is understood by the school?					
The pupil's caring role is well supported by the school?					
The pupil's caring role is understood by other children/young people at the school?					
Understands the positive aspects of their caring role?					

What support and/or facilities do you think the school should provide to meet the pupil's needs?

What referrals do you think the school should make for the child to other resources, such as the school nurse and local young carers service?





Gathering the views of young carers

Using young carer's views is vital to ensuring the school meet the needs of this vulnerable pupil group effectively. It will also demonstrate that the school value young carers' opinions and helps to reinforce and build a positive whole school ethos.

This is why at Silver level we have included criteria about demonstrating that schools have gathered young carers' views and used these to develop school policy and practice. Beginning to ask young carers for their opinions as part of the Bronze level, using the desirable evidence, is the first step in doing this and will help make progression to Silver level easier.

STEP 4

Step 4, Tool 3:
How to gather young carers' views about your school's provision

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Carrying out a baseline review and ensuring there are opportunities for the views of young carers to be heard will help schools achieve the Bronze level of the Young Carers in Schools Award.

Fatherhood Institute

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Consulting with young carers

Some of the ways that you can begin consulting with young carers are:

- By using questionnaires or surveys
- By having conversations with young carers at the drop-in sessions
- By setting up a young carer forum

Questionnaires and surveys are best used to quantitatively evaluate the effectiveness of your school's provision and what young carers feel are still issues that need to be addressed. These can work well when measuring the impact the school has had but are not always the best methods when trying to address new issues. They are a quick and easy way but there are some drawbacks for using them. For example, you may experience a lower intake of young carers completing them as well as young carers feeling that they may not be able to address issues they are having, if they are not covered on the questionnaire.

Drop-in sessions are much more effective as it offers a chance for young carers to talk to you face to face individually and can ensure that they can easily share with you any new issues which may have arisen at school.

To gather their views, the school lead will find it useful to ask young carers:

- Do you feel you get the information and support you need from school as a young carer?
- What is the school doing well to raise awareness in the school about young carers?
- What would you like the school to do to raise awareness in the school about young carers?
- What would you like the school to do to raise awareness in a better way?
- What is the school doing well to support young carers?
- What would you like the school to do to support young carers better?

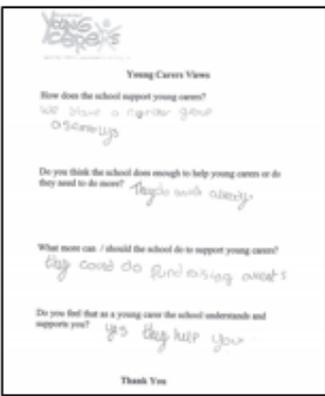
It is also really important to explain why you're gathering the information, how you're going to deal with anything raised and how you're going to feedback to the young carer.

To gather young carer views, the school lead will find it useful to ask:

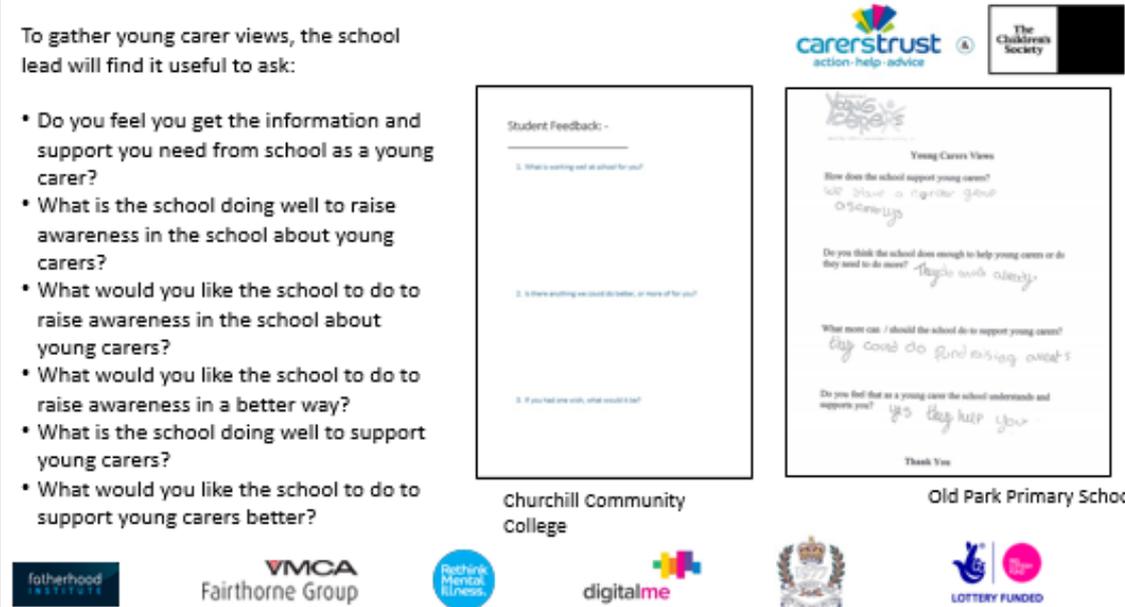
- Do you feel you get the information and support you need from school as a young carer?
- What is the school doing well to raise awareness in the school about young carers?
- What would you like the school to do to raise awareness in the school about young carers?
- What would you like the school to do to raise awareness in a better way?
- What is the school doing well to support young carers?
- What would you like the school to do to support young carers better?



Churchill Community College



Old Park Primary School



Young carers' forum

What is a young carers' forum?

A young carers' forum in your school brings together all or a representative sample of the young carers identified in your school on a regular basis to influence and develop the school's provision for young carers.

Setting up and running regular meetings of a young carers' forum creates the opportunity for schools to gather young carers' input as you develop the school's provision. By gaining young carers' input on how to make things such as, the pupil noticeboard more engaging or asking them about the kinds of support they feel they would benefit most from, will help to ensure the support available is relevant to young carers.

You could start setting this up by advertising the forum to pupils, either via the school noticeboard or verbally, perhaps during drop-in sessions or speaking to young carers one to one.

Similar to the drop-in sessions, key things to consider when setting up the young carers' forum are:

- Finding a suitable room where young carers feel able to discuss issues and policies in confidence.
- Finding a suitable time to hold the young carers' forum, it is important to remember that not all young carers are able to stay after school.

The forum should be held regularly enough to deal with any issues that come up but not so regularly that there is nothing to discuss during sessions. Once every half-term might be a good place to start and adjust accordingly depending on how needed the meetings are.

Young carers' forum

carerstrust
action help advice

The Children's Society

Key actions:

- Find a suitable room
- Find a suitable time

STEP 6

Step 6, Tool 4:
How to run a young carers' forum

STEP 4

Step 4, Tool 3:
How to gather young carers' views about your school's provision

fatherhood

VMCA
Fairthorne Group

Partnership
for
Inclusion

digitalme

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How do I evidence this for the Award?

At Bronze level, evidencing for this standard is again, really easy. The essential pieces of evidence you need to provide us with are:

- A timetable of drop-in sessions which show that they are held at available times for young carers to attend. This is easily evidenced by including a copy or photo of the poster which advertises the sessions.
- If from a smaller primary school, where the staff member who is the young carer lead is well known and easily accessible throughout the school day, a drop-in session may not be required. It is important that the young carer lead and support available is advertised via assemblies/verbally to pupils or on a noticeboard. In this instance the desirable evidence would be that feedback from young carers shows the young carer lead is accessible whenever needed.
- Evidence that a system is in place for young carers to use to communicate with staff. This again is easily evidence by sharing with us a photo of your message boxes and where they are placed around school. Demonstrating that the young carer email address is being advertised by sending a copy of a poster or another system you have in place.

If you have begun gathering feedback from young carers about their views on the school's provision, you can share this easily with us by sharing completed and anonymised MACA and PANOC forms, wellbeing questionnaires or other questionnaires they may have completed. Or you could include in your application an advert for the young carer forum or notes from the first young carer forum meeting.

If you would like to include any of these in your Bronze Award application, they must be anonymised.

How do I evidence this for the award?




Standard 4
Listen: young carers in your school are listened to, consulted with and given time and space to talk if they need to.

Criteria	Suggested evidence from the school	Relevant guidance tools from the Step-by-step Guide
BRONZE: Young carers are listened to within the school through for example drop-in sessions, consultations, or questionnaires/surveys for young carers.	Essential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timetable of drop-in sessions at available times for young carers. Evidence of a system for young carers to communication with staff e.g. email address or message box Desirable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of questionnaires survey's undertaken within the school Feedback from young carers in the school regarding gathering their views on the schools current policy and provision for young carers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Step 6: Tool 1: Checklist of support young carers may need Step 6: Tool 4: How to run a young carers forum Step 9: Tool 4: Wellbeing questionnaire



Churchill Community College



Tolworth Nursey, Infant & Junior School








Let's recap: what do schools need in place at Bronze level?

So to summarize, at Bronze level the essential actions schools need to have in place are:

- A message box and/or email to be implemented and promoted on the pupil noticeboard.
- In secondary schools and large primary schools, to implement a drop-in session.
- For all of these details to be promoted, together with the location of the young carer lead if they are based in a regular office/location.

It is also desirable to:

- Consult with young carers as an easy way to start thinking about progression to Silver level and help ensure that the support that young carers has said would be the most beneficial, is actually effective.

We have updated our website, www.youngcarersinschools.com. One of the updates includes 5 key steps that schools can take to get involved, with the first step being to complete the baseline review. The baseline review enables you to quickly and easily identify what you may already have in place, to celebrate this and prioritise what to do next.

What do schools need in place at Bronze level?

Essential:

- Ensure young carers have a trusted member of staff they can talk to, via message boxes and/or an email address
- In secondary schools and large primary schools, to implement a drop-in session
- These are promoted throughout the school

Desirable:

- Schools are having conversations with young carers to identify what forms of support would be most beneficial to them
- Schools are consulting with young carers about the policy and provision for young carers





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