YOUNG CARERS IN SCHOOLS

Supporting Young Carers in Schools

A Step-by-step Guide for Leaders, Teachers and Non-teaching Staff

CARERS TRUST & **The Children's Society**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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

Welcome to Supporting Young Carers in Schools: A Step-by-step Guide for Leaders, Teachers and Non-teaching Staff.

This resource has been designed with teachers and school staff to help make the identification and support of young carers in schools as easy as possible. It is for use in primary and secondary schools in England but could be easily adapted for use in the rest of the UK.

Who are young carers?

A young carer is a person under 18 who looks after someone in their family or a friend who is ill, disabled, or has a mental health problem or an addiction.

As many as one in five pupils in the UK could be a young carer.

Often these children are caring for relatives without their teachers' knowledge, slipping through the net, undetected by support services. The caring role they carry out means they have unique experiences and demands that impact on their capacity to enjoy and achieve at school.

What are the potential impacts of caring on pupil attainment, achievement and wellbeing?

Research shows that:

- Young carers have significantly lower educational attainment at GCSE level – the difference between nine Cs and nine Ds (The Children's Society, 2013).

- 42% of young carers or young adult carers 'always' or 'usually' feel stressed (Carers Trust, 2022).

- 27% of young carers say that they struggle to balance caring with school or college work (Carers Trust, 2022).

- 52% said they do 'not often' or 'never' get help from school or college to balance their work (Carers Trust, 2022).

- 34% of young carers say their school or college 'always' or 'usually' understands about them being a young carer – this means around two-thirds of young carers are spending their days in environments where they don't feel fully understood (Carers Trust, 2022).

- 40% said they 'never' or do 'not often' have someone at school to talk to about being a young carer or young adult carer (Carers Trust, 2022).

> **I often wonder, had I got support earlier, would my grades have suffered as much as they did?"**
>
> **Young carer**

What does this Step-by-step Guide offer your school?

Many schools are delivering exceptional practice, making a real and positive difference to the young carers they support. Other schools have told us they want to achieve these excellent outcomes, but don't know where to begin. This Step-by-step Guide sets out ten key steps to make identifying and supporting young carers as easy as possible.

Like other aspects of school life, the development of effective support for young carers is reliant on regular reviews of current provision and the identification of areas for continual improvement. The steps are therefore set out as a cyclical process, which schools should engage with throughout each school year.

Making it as easy as possible for schools to support young carers

The Step-by-step Guide has been written in association with teachers and school staff who understand the pressures that schools face to deliver the very wide range of demands placed upon them. As a result, it is designed to be as flexible and helpful as possible. Each step is accompanied by:

- Templates and exemplars.
- Materials to raise staff awareness.
- Teaching resources.
- Pupil noticeboard material.
- How to guides to running effective support.

The tools accompanying the Step-by-step Guide are available for schools to use and adapt to suit their school structure and local circumstances. They're available online at **youngcarersinschools.com**.

Don't forget

Not all schools will need to use all the tools included here. Some may find it more helpful to choose those that will help enhance the support they already offer to young carers and their families while others will want to simply start and build their activities over a number of years.

About the Young Carers in Schools programme

Young Carers in Schools is an exciting initiative in England that makes it as easy as possible for schools to identify and support young carers, and awards good practice. Run jointly by Carers Trust and The Children's Society, we are working with schools, young carers services and local authorities to share good practice and develop relevant, accessible tools and training.

The Step-by-step Guide is an update on Version 2, and it builds on and develops principles and tools from a previous resource (Phelps, D, Leadbitter, H, Manzi, D, 2010). Some of the tools linked to the guide have been taken and/or adapted from this resource.

By taking part, schools can have access to:

- A baseline review: enabling you to prioritise what to do next, this tool contains helpful signposts to the programme materials most relevant and useful to you.
- Termly enewsletters: spotlighting key policy developments and new resources, and the very latest programme news.

- Young Carers in Schools Award: enabling your school to showcase its provision for young carers.

- A resources hub (**youngcarersinschools.com**).

Schools' involvement in the programme has resulted in a positive impact on young carers' wellbeing, confidence and academic attainment, and has better equipped schools around awareness, identification and support. An independent evaluation (Coram 2018) of the programme highlights the benefits of taking part:

- 83% of young carers demonstrated an increase in confidence.

- 85% of young carers demonstrated increased wellbeing.

- 63% reported improvements in young carers' achievements.

- 73% of schools reported young carers' classroom engagement had improved.

- 94% of schools said staff were more likely to know what to do if they identified a young carer.

- 94% had a better understanding of the support required for young carers.

Don't forget to look out for this symbol throughout the Step-by-step Guide to find out how you can use the tools provided to meet the criteria in the Young Carers in Schools Award.

About Carers Trust

Carers Trust works to transform the lives of unpaid carers. It partners with its network of local carer organisations to provide funding and support, deliver innovative and evidence-based programmes and raise awareness and influence policy. Carers Trust's vision is that unpaid carers are heard and valued, with access to support, advice and resources to enable them to live fulfilled lives.

Our mission: We work to transform the lives on unpaid carers through collaboration, influence, evidence and innovation.

About The Children's Society

We are a national charity working to transform the hopes and happiness of young people facing abuse, exploitation and neglect. We support them through their most serious life challenges and we campaign tirelessly for the big social changes that will improve the lives of those who need hope most. We've been doing this for 140 years and we won't stop until we've built a society where hope is alive in every child.

Our vision is the world we seek to create. And we won't rest until we've achieved our vision. Where together with young people and our supporters, we've created a society built for all children. Where hope is alive in every child.

- **Our vision:** A society built for all children.

In the decade ahead we are determined to make sure this generation of children have a better childhood. So we will set out to build a happier, safer society for young people to grow up in, where they can look forward to their futures with more hope.

- **Our goal:** By 2030 we will have overturned the damaging decline in children's well-being, setting a path for long lasting growth.

The Children's Society's Include Programme

The Children's Society Include Service supports children and young people who care for parents, siblings or others who suffer from chronic illness or disability; young carers. Our campaigning and influencing work reaches across the whole of England as we promote best practice and work in partnership with external strategic stakeholders to support young carers and their families and deliver multi-agency, whole family approaches. Our work focuses on the complex and high-risk needs identified for young carers who exhibit multiple vulnerabilities and factors of Hidden Harm and those who are particularly hard to reach.

References

Phelps, D, Leadbitter H, Manzi D (2010), Supporting Young Carers: A Resource for Schools (The Princess Royal Trust for Carers and The Children's Society).

The Children's Society (2013), Hidden from View.

Carers Trust (2022), It's Harder than Anyone Understands.

Coram (2018), New Research by Coram Uncovers the Positive Impact of Schools Programme Helping Young Carers to Thrive in Education. **https://www.coram.org.uk/news/new-research-coram-uncovers-positive-impact-schools-programme-helping-young-carers-thrive-their**

Step 1
Gaining an Understanding About Young Carers

Key information

Young carers experience particular challenges that impact on their capacity to engage in learning. To ensure your school's provision meets the needs of young carers and raises their attendance and attainment effectively, an essential first step is to develop your knowledge about:

- **Who young carers are and what their caring role might involve.**
- **The likely number of young carers in each school.**
- **Why so many young carers are hidden.**
- **The potential impacts of caring responsibilities on a pupil's achievement, attendance and wellbeing.**
- **A Whole School Approach – enabling schools to meet young carers' needs effectively.**
- **Government's approach to young carers.**
- **Young carers' rights.**

Who are young carers and what activities might their caring role involve?

A young carer is a person under 18 who looks after someone in their family or a friend who is ill, disabled, or has a mental health problem or an addiction.

The tasks and level of caring undertaken by young carers can vary according to the nature of the illness or disability, the level and frequency of need for care, and the structure of the family as a whole.

Young carers often take on practical and/or emotional caring responsibilities that would normally be expected of an adult.

These can include:

- Shopping, cooking, cleaning.
- Managing medicines or money.
- Providing personal care.
- Helping get people out the house.
- Keeping an eye on someone.
- Providing emotional support.

Don't forget

You might not think that there are many young carers at your school, but pupils with caring responsibilities are not always easy to identify.

Will there be young carers in every school?

It is likely that there will be many young carers at every school in England.

The 2011 Census identified over 177,000 young carers in England and Wales, although this is widely believed to be the tip of the iceberg.

Further research (University of Nottingham and BBC News, 2018) suggests there could be 800,000 young carers in England aged 11-16. That means about one in five secondary aged pupils have caring responsibilities. This figure doesn't take into account young carers aged 17 and under 11, which means the real figure of young carers is likely to be higher.

The total figure of young carers in England is not known which means many young carers continue to remain hidden and unsupported.

Why are many young carers hidden?

- The condition of the person they care for is not obvious so people don't think that the young person needs any help.
- Young carers do not realise that they are a carer or that their life is different to their peers.
- They don't want to be any different from their peers so they don't draw attention to their caring role.
- They believe that the school will show no interest in their family circumstances.
- They want to keep their identity at school separate from their caring role.
- It's not the sort of thing they feel they can discuss with their friends.
- There has been no opportunity to share their story.
- They are worried about bullying.
- They worry that the family will be split up and that they will be taken into care.
- They want to keep caring a secret and/ or are embarrassed.
- They see no reason to tell their story and don't believe that any positive action will occur as a result of doing so.

❝ It is crucial to identify young carers as early as possible in order to support their wellbeing which will in turn help keep their grades and attendance levels up – which also benefits the school.❞

Young carer

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What impact can caring responsibilities have on a pupil's achievement, attainment and wellbeing?

In addition to the impact outlined in the introduction, caring can affect a young person's:

- **Physical health:** Young carers can be severely affected by caring through the night, resulting in a lack of sleep.

- **Emotional wellbeing:** Stress, tiredness and mental health problems are common for young carers.

- **Socialisation:** Young carers often feel different or isolated from their peers and have limited opportunities for socialising. A quarter of young carers in the UK said they were bullied at school because of their caring role (Sempik & Becker, 2013).

- **Stable environment:** Young carers can experience traumatic life changes such as bereavement, family break-up, losing income and housing, or seeing the effects of an illness or addiction on the person they care for.

As a result, caring responsibilities have a significant impact on a pupil's learning. If left unsupported, young carers can continue to struggle with school and have significantly lower educational attainment at GCSE level – the difference between nine Cs and nine Ds (The Children's Society, 2013). The introduction of this Step-by-step Guide outlines further impacts on attainment and achievement.

Don't forget

Supporting young carers will not only improve outcomes for these pupils, it will also improve your school's attendance and attainment levels.

> ❝ **Speak to young carers individually and collectively to find out what the school can do to support – what works for one doesn't work for all.**❞
>
> **Young carer**

A Whole School approach – enabling schools to meet young carers' needs effectively

It is vital that schools take a whole school approach to identifying and supporting young carers, and all school staff have the knowledge and confidence to identify and support pupils with caring responsibilities.

The Young Carers in Schools programme supports schools to adopt a whole school approach to identifying and supporting young carers, in which schools:

- **Have assigned members of staff for young carers** so that a member of the school's governing body and senior leadership team has responsibility for

leading and championing the school's provision for young carers, and there is a clearly identifiable lead, responsible for day-to-day implementation.

- **Promote positive images and information** about disability, illness and young carers.

- **Give staff the information they need to identify young carers.**

- **Consult and listen to young carers**, ensuring they have time and space to talk.

- **Embed young carers in existing school systems**, monitoring and tracking their attendance, attainment and wellbeing in the same way as other vulnerable pupil groups.

- **Support and signpost young carers and their families.**

A whole school approach is essential for effective identification and support of young carers in schools because it:

- **Reduces stigma:** one of the main reasons young carers say they do not access support is stigma. A positive whole school ethos where young carers and 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.

- **Increases identification:** many young carers are hidden. All school staff need to know how to identify young carers to ensure they do not slip through the net.

- **Promotes self-identification:** a pupil with caring responsibilities may self-identify to any member of staff whom they feel they can talk to and share their worries and concerns with.

- **Respects young carers' information:** all staff need to be aware of the school's process for sharing information about a young carer. This will help ensure that information is only shared with the appropriate consent and with a view to guaranteeing a pupil does not need to repeat their story several times. All school staff should know not to discuss a pupil's caring role in front of their peers.

- **Addresses all of the issues:** It will enable the effective delivery of flexibilities, interventions and support to raise outcomes. Teachers and support staff delivering targeted interventions, such as homework clubs, should know how to ensure these interventions meet young carers' needs, for example, flexibility with homework clubs as some will prefer before/after school whilst lunchtime will work better for others.

- **Creates long-term change:** a whole school approach that places young carers on a similar footing to other vulnerable pupils ensures sustainability.

Don't forget

Building staff understanding and responsibility for meeting the needs of young carers does not mean creating additional functionality within existing staff 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.

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What is the Government's approach to young carers?

Through the Care Act 2014 and Children and Families Act 2014, the Government has shown its commitment to young carers by ensuring that they are protected from inappropriate or excessive caring.

In order to ensure that the Government's commitment is achieved, children and young people who have caring responsibilities must be identified early and supported to fulfil their potential.

The Government recognises that schools have a vital role to play and are ideally positioned to identify young carers and to initiate support. Doing so will ensure they are able to fully participate in their education and have a fair start in life.

Ofsted – While young carers are no longer specifically mentioned in the **education inspection framework**, schools can still report on young carers during inspections along with other groups of children and young people who may face educational disadvantage, such as children with an education, health and care plan (EHCP), or looked-after children.

School census – From spring 2023, schools will be asked to include young carers in the **school census**. This won't be limited to young carers who have had a young carers needs assessment. The Young Carers in Schools programme can help your school identify the young carers and ensure they are supported in partnership with the local authority, the local NHS and the local voluntary sector e.g. young carers' services.

Safeguarding statutory guidance – The **Keeping children safe in education** statutory guidance states that "all school and college and staff should be alert to the potential need of early help for a child who...is a young carer". Additionally, the guidance states that schools should be "alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special education needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers".

What are young carers' rights?

Under the Children and Families Act 2014, all young carers under the age of 18 have a right to an assessment from the local authority, regardless of who they care for, what type of care they provide, or how often they provide care. The assessment needs to consider:

- Whether it is appropriate for the young carer to provide care.
- The young carer's needs for support, and their other needs and wishes.
- If any of the young carer's needs for support could be prevented by providing services to the person who is cared for, or another member of the young carer's family.

Under the Care Act 2014, young carers are entitled to a transition assessment to consider the support young carers may need to prepare for adulthood, and to raise and fulfil their aspirations. The assessment should take place well before the young carer is 18 so there is time to discuss and implement the required support.

The responsibilities are placed on the Local Authority, but other services including schools need to play a role in identifying young carers and coordinating support for whole families.

Carers Trust's Know Your Rights Guide (**https://carers.org/downloads/help-and-advice-section/knowyourrights.pdf**)is a free guide that explains the rights that young carers have and what should happen when a young person talks to the council about being a young carer or young adult carer. It is written for all young carers and young adult carers, especially for those aged eight to 25. Young carers and young adult carers worked with Carers Trust to ensure this is a highly useful and targeted resource for them.

What funding is available for the development of the school's provision for young carers?

Identifying and supporting young carers is a low cost and effective way of improving the attainment of this often low-achieving pupil group.

Young carers are frequently eligible for free school meals which enables schools to claim the Pupil Premium funding. However, as the needs of young carers mean they require different types of support to other disadvantaged pupils (see **Step 6, Tool 1: Checklist of support young carers might need**), it is important that schools identify pupils who have caring responsibilities in order to ensure effective use of this funding stream.

Head teachers and school governing bodies are required to publish details online each year on how they are using the Pupil Premium and the impact it is having on pupil achievement. It will be important for them to show how the school is using this funding to meet the needs of eligible young carers.

Pupil Premium funding is not ring fenced. Schools can target their use of this funding towards all young carers, regardless of eligibility, provided that the performance of the eligible pupils is demonstrably improving. Using Pupil Premium funding to support all pupils who are young carers is a low cost and effective way of improving the attainment of this often low achieving pupil group.

References

Sempik, J and Becker, S (2013), Young Adult Carers at School: Experiences and Perceptions of Caring and Education (Carers Trust).

UK Census 2011. Source: Office for National Statistics licensed under the Open Government License v.1.0.

The Children's Society (2013), Hidden from View.

University of Nottingham & BBC News (2018) New Research Suggests More Than One in Five Children in England Carry Out Some Care For Sick and Disabled Family Member. Available at: **https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/news/pressreleases/2018/september/children-england-care-sick-family.aspx**

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Step 2
Reviewing your School's Provision for Young Carers

Key information

Whether your school has been developing systems to identify and support young carers over many years, or is developing or just starting to develop its provision for young carers, a key next step to using this Step-by-step Guide is carrying out a baseline review. By reviewing your school's current provision for young carers, you will identify strengths, weaknesses and priorities, and agree actions to be taken forward.

Who should be involved in the review?

This review could be coordinated by a member of the school's senior leadership team (SLT) or delegated to another member of staff. This may be, for example, your school's Inclusion Coordinator, Pastoral Lead, SENCO, a Learning Mentor or another member of staff with specific interest in this work.

The staff member leading the review (Review Lead) may need to seek involvement of other staff to ascertain current practice. They should report key findings to the SLT and governing body, making recommendations for any required changes in whole school practice, and identifying resulting resource requirements that need to be approved at SLT and/or governing body level.
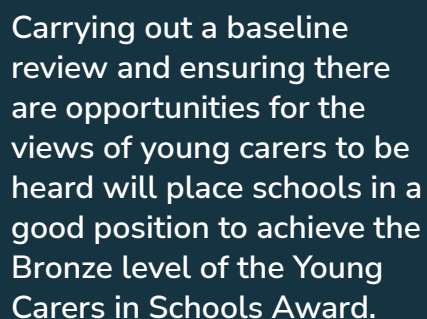
What tools are available to support schools to review provision for young carers?

Step 2, Tool 1: Baseline review aims to support schools by:

- Setting out the key actions that schools should ensure are completed to meet the needs of pupils with caring responsibilities.

- Categorising these actions into the basics, building on the basics and best practice so that you can prioritise what to do next.

- Providing space for the Review Lead to record whether each action is completed, in progress, or not started, as well as what the school intends to do next.

- Giving suggestions about which members of school staff may be best placed to carry out each action.

- Signposting to other tools accompanying this Step-by-step Guide that will support schools to complete each action.

The Review Lead may also wish to use **Step 2, Tool 2: A template proforma for making recommendations to school leaders.**

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

Gathering and using young carers' views

To understand how well your provision meets the needs of the young carers in your school, the Lead should also run a drop-in session or survey or set up a young carers forum to gather their views (see **Step 2, Tool 3: How to gather young carers' views about your school's provision**).

In particular, the Review 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 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?
- Any other comments.

Using young carers' views to inform your school's review is vital to ensuring the school meets the needs of this vulnerable pupil group effectively. It will also demonstrate that school staff value young carers' opinions, and support you to create a whole-school ethos where young carers feel respected and safe and confident to access support.

Gathering and using young carers' views to inform your school's review will help schools achieve the Silver level of the Young Carers in Schools Award.

Achieving best practice

To achieve best practice, the Review Lead should also:

- Examine the impact of provision on pupil attainment, progress and attendance (see **Step 2, Tool 4: Checklist for gathering attendance, attainment and progress data – primary and secondary schools**)
- Assess the impact of provision on pupil wellbeing (see **Step 9: Identifying, assessing and supporting young carers and their families**, for exemplar assessment formats that the school could use for this purpose).
- Review levels of staff understanding and confidence (see **Step 2, Tool 5: Survey to assess levels of school staff understanding and confidence in meeting young carers' needs**).

Implementing these additional actions will help schools achieve the Gold level of the Young Carers in Schools Award.

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Step 3
Securing Commitment of School Leaders

Key information

Effective identification and support of young carers in schools requires the development of a whole school approach where young carers and their families feel safe and confident to access support. It is therefore vital that your senior leadership team (SLT) and governing body understand young carers' issues and are committed to meeting their needs.

This step is crucial not only to the development of provision that meets young carers' needs but also to ensuring that the SLT and governing body have the information and resources they need to fulfil their wider roles.

Introducing a Young Carers Senior Leadership Team Lead, and ensuring information is available to governors about young carers will help schools achieve the Bronze level of the Young Carers in Schools Award.

Having a named Young Carers Lead Governor in place who raises awareness and ensures policies and practices are inclusive of young carers will help schools achieve the Gold level of the Award.

How does the identification and support of young carers form part of the wider role and responsibilities of the SLT and governing body?

The SLT and governing body are accountable for ensuring the school provides a highly cohesive learning environment which fosters equal opportunities and meets the diverse needs of the pupils at the school.

To fulfil this role effectively, the SLT and governing body should be aware that many pupils attending their school will have caring responsibilities.

Why should schools have a Young Carers Senior Leadership Team Lead and a Young Carers Lead Governor?

It is crucial that the development and implementation of the school's provision for young carers is led at an SLT and governing body level so that:

- Young carers' needs are reflected in whole school planning and, where appropriate, the whole school improvement plan.

- The school has an inclusive environment where young carers and their families feel comfortable and safe to tell staff about their caring role and access support (stigma is a commonly cited reason for young carers keeping their caring role hidden).

- There is appropriate timetabling of staff training and curriculum planning.

- Use of school resources such as the Pupil Premium funding to target young carers.

- All school staff know how to identify young carers, for example, office staff can identify a young carer when registering a late pupil, the School Attendance Officer can recognise potential young carers when discussing attendance issues with pupils and/or teachers notice signs that a pupil is a young carer (see **Step 7**).

- All staff know what action they can take within their everyday practice to support pupils with caring responsibilities, for example office staff pass on messages to pupils from a family member, when appropriate; and teaching staff are flexible, for instance, around negotiating homework deadlines (see **Step 6, Tool 1**).

- There are appropriate protocols for sharing information between staff so the young carer does not have to repeat their story.

- Links are made with wider school policy to ensure alignment with the school's approach to meeting the needs of young carers and their families (see **Step 5, Tool 3**).

Various tools accompany this step to support you to raise the awareness and secure the commitment of your governing body and SLT:

- **Tool 1: Young Carers Senior Leadership Team Lead duties checklist.**

- **Tool 2: Exemplar introductory letter to governors about young carers.**

- **Tool 3: Role and responsibilities of a governing body: ensuring effective provision for young carers and their families.**

- **Tool 4: Checklist to support governing bodies evaluating the effectiveness of their school's provision for young carers and their families.**

- **Tool 5: Targeting Pupil Premium support to young carers: Good practice examples.**

You will also need to ensure that the SLT and governing body are familiar with the information about young carers issues contained in **Step 1: Gaining an understanding about young carers**.

The SLT may also want to look at **Step 4: Introducing a Young Carers School Operational Lead**. **Step 4** provides further information about designating a member of staff who is responsible for the day-to-day management of the school's provision for young carers and their families. Depending on its size and organisational structure, the school may want to incorporate this role at senior leadership level.

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Don't forget

Research finds that child poverty rates were higher amongst young carers than other children (Vizard, Obolenskaya & Burchardt, 2019). This highlights the significant number of young carers eligible for free school meals who would benefit from targeted support funded through the Pupil Premium.

Head teachers and school governing bodies are required to publish details online each year of how they are using the Pupil Premium and the impact it is having on pupil achievement. It will be important for them to show how the school is using this funding to meet the needs of eligible young carers.

References

University of Nottingham & BBC News (2018) New Research Suggests More Than One in Five Children in England Carry Out Some Care For Sick and Disabled Family Member. Available at: **https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/news/pressreleases/2018/september/children-england-care-sick-family.aspx**

Vizard, P., Obolenskaya, P. & Burchardt, T. (2019). Child Poverty Amongst Young Carers in the UK: Prevalence and Trends in the Wake of the Financial Crisis, Economic Downturn and Onset of Austerity. Child Indicators Research, 12. pp 1831–1854.
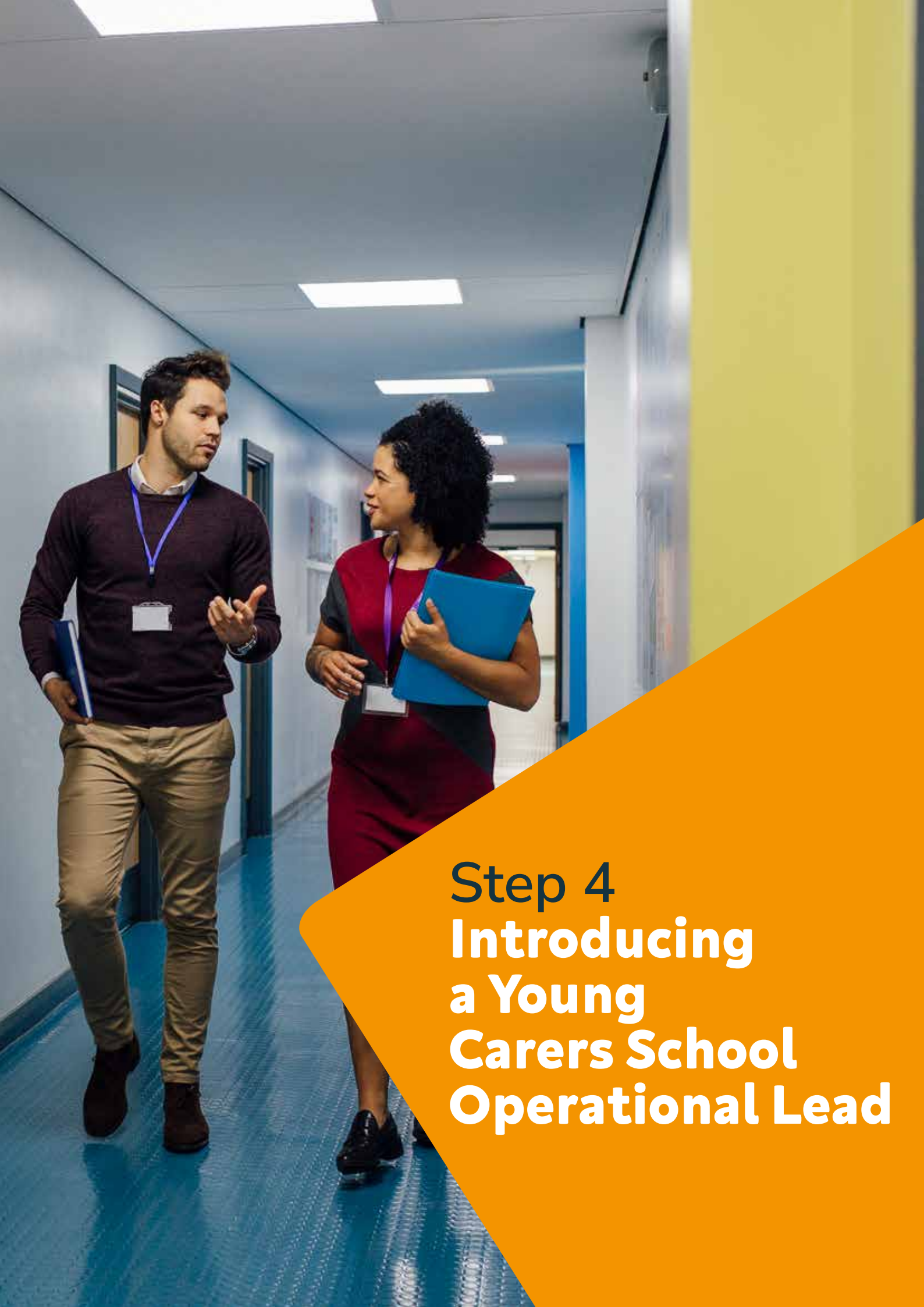
Step 4
Introducing a Young Carers School Operational Lead

Key information

To ensure the effective management of the school's provision for young carers, it is crucial that each school's senior leadership team (SLT) identifies a member of staff who will act as a Young Carers School Operational Lead in the school. This member of staff should understand young carers' issues and be clearly identifiable to pupils, families and staff.

What is the role of the Young Carers School Operational Lead?

As part of their wider role within the school, the Young Carers School Operational Lead should:

- Manage the school's provision for young carers and their families on a day-to-day basis.
- Act as the main contact for young carers and their families in the school.
- Advise and support school staff about how to identify and support young carers.
- Be the contact point for external agencies, such as the school nurse and local young carers service, and feeder/linked schools, supporting effective inter-agency working to meet the needs of young carers and their families.

Which member of staff should carry out this role?

Depending on the size and structure of the school, SLTs may decide that the role of the Young Carers School Operational Lead should sit within the wider work of the school's SLT or should be delegated to another member of staff. This may be, for example, your school's Inclusion Manager or Officer, Pastoral Lead, SENCO, a Learning Mentor or another member of staff with specific interest in this work.

Step 4 Tool 1: Young Carers School Operational Lead duties checklist supports schools by setting out the actions that need to be carried out at an operational level to ensure the effective identification and support of young carers in schools.

In quantifying the post, your school may want to consider allocating an additional Teacher Learning Responsibility point to this role. As many young carers are eligible for Pupil Premium funding, schools may wish to consider use this funding stream to this end.

What is the key first action for the Young Carers School Operational Lead?

The Young Carers School Operational Lead should ensure they themselves understand young carers' issues (see **Step 1: Gaining an understanding about young carers**).

Where the role is delegated, it is important that the Young Carers School Operational Lead is supported by a Young Carers Senior Leadership Team Lead.

What other local and national support is available for the Young Carers School Operational Lead?

There is a variety of support available for the Young Carers School Operational Lead including:

- Young Carers in Schools termly newsletter – highlighting policy developments, good practice and news from the Young Carers in Schools programme.

- Resources available on the Young Carers in Schools website – **youngcarersinschools.com**.

- Other organisations in the local community, including the local young carers service and emotional wellbeing support may also be able to provide advice, guidance and training.

Don't forget

For more information about the role and responsibilities of school leaders in ensuring effective young carers provision, see **Step 3: Securing commitment of school leaders.**

Introducing a Young Carers School Operational Lead, who is clearly identifiable to pupils, families and staff, will help your school achieve the Bronze level of the Young Carers in Schools Award.

Accessing local and national external support to develop practice will help your school achieve the Silver level of the Young Carers in Schools Award.

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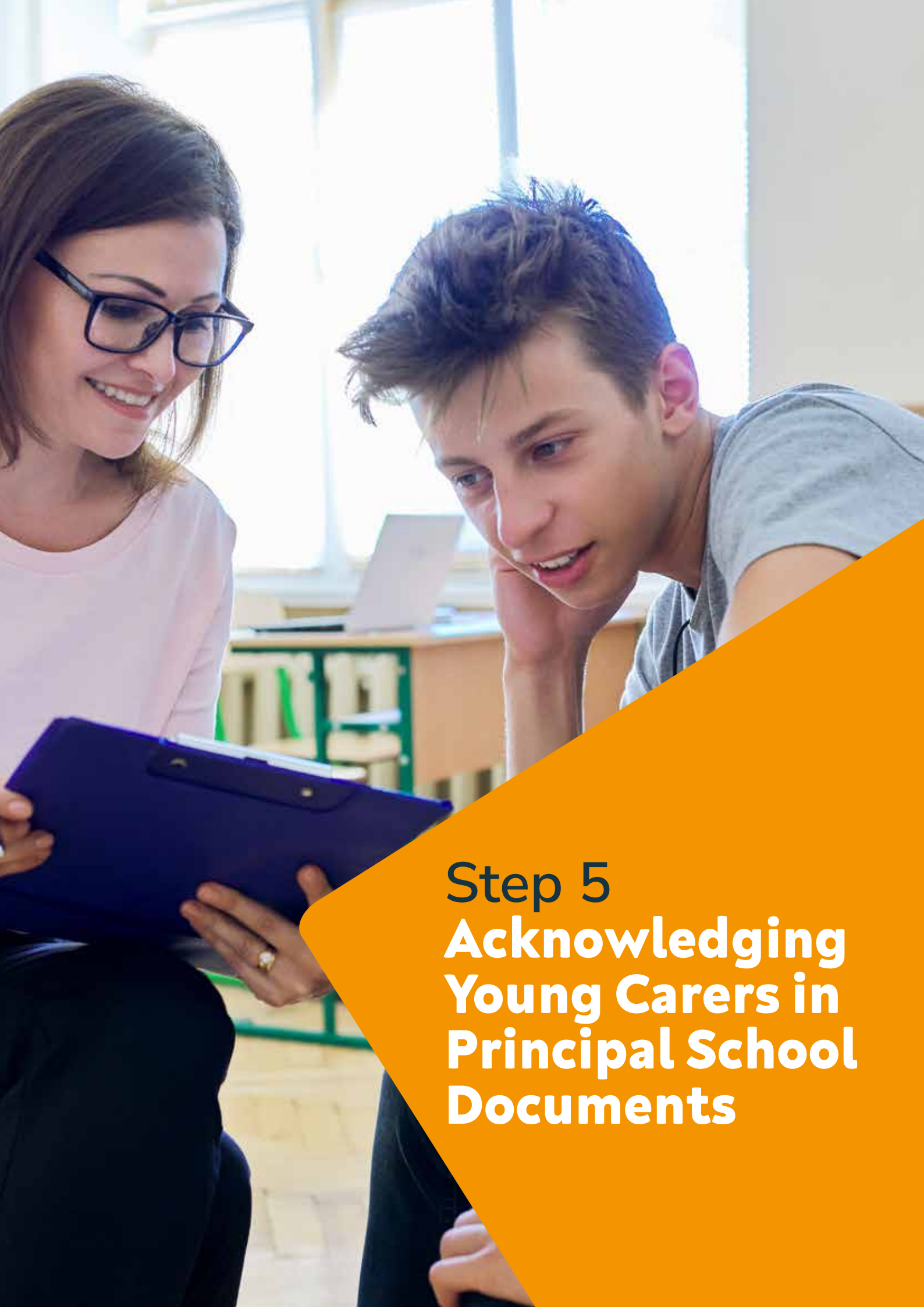STEP 3
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Step 5
Acknowledging Young Carers in Principal School Documents

Key information

It is vital that schools acknowledge young carers in their principal school documents and proactively communicate these to pupils, families and staff. Doing so will support the creation of a whole school ethos where young carers and their families are respected and valued. It will also provide clarity about the roles and responsibilities of school staff in relation to young carers, and the type of support available to pupils and their families.

To achieve these benefits, schools will need to take a number of key actions:

- **Develop a whole school commitment for young carers.**
- **Develop a school policy for young carers.**
- **Revise existing policy and documents to reflect young carers' needs.**

Don't forget

Schools will be at different stages in their journey to supporting young carers effectively and you should have identified which of these actions you intend to prioritise when reviewing your school's provision (see **Step 2**).

A whole school commitment for young carers and their families

The Young Carers in Schools programme supports schools to adopt a whole school approach to identifying and supporting young carers (see **Step 1: Gaining an understanding about young carers**).

All schools should have a whole school commitment for young carers and their families in place that:

- Captures the value that the school places on meeting young carers' needs.
- Summarises the school's approach to supporting this vulnerable pupil group.
- Reflects safeguarding requirements.

This commitment should be clear, engaging and succinct so that it can be:

- Displayed on the school website, prospectus, staff intranet and staff and pupil noticeboards.
- Referred to in school assemblies, governor meetings and annual reports.

When proactively communicated in these ways, it will:

- Ensure that prospective pupils and families are aware that the school recognises the needs of young carers and actively responds to meet their needs.
- Help young carers and/or their families feel safe and confident to access support.

The specific information that schools will need to capture in the commitment will depend on the extent of the school's wider provision for young carers. See **Step 5, Tool 1: Recommended points to include in a whole school commitment**.

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

School policy for young carers

To meet young carers' needs more effectively, schools should also have a policy in place that specifies in greater detail how the school will identify and address young carers' needs. This can either take the form of a new policy developed specifically for young carers, or the revision of an existing policy to include young carers, such as the school inclusion policy.

Developing a school policy, in addition to a whole school commitment to young carers, will provide greater clarity about:

- The roles and responsibilities of school staff in relation to young carers.
- The type of support available to pupils and their families in school.

- The ways in which the school works with other organisations, including the local young carers service, school nurse and emotional wellbeing support, in relation to young carers.

The specific information that schools will need to capture in the commitment will depend on the extent of the school's wider provision for young carers. **Step 5, Tool 2: Young carers school policy checklist**, sets out the points that should be covered in school policy.

Revising existing policy

To ensure a consistent approach to meeting the needs of this vulnerable pupil group across the whole school, you should also ensure young carers' needs are reflected in a broader range of existing school policies and documents. (See **Step 5, Tool 3: Checklist of other principal documents which should reference young carers.**)

Incorporating pupil views

To best meet the needs of young carers, you should gather and incorporate the views of young carers when developing and reviewing your whole school commitment and school policies.

> Gathering and utilising the views of young carers will help schools achieve the Silver level of the Young Carers in Schools Award.

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Don't forget

When establishing links with members of staff responsible for the development and revision of other school documents, the Young Carers School Operational Lead will need to ensure they understand:

- That many pupils attending their school have caring responsibilities and therefore have specific needs for which the school should be making adequate provision (see **Step 1: Gaining an understanding about young carers**).

- What they need to do in their role to support the development and implementation of a whole school approach to identifying and supporting young carers.
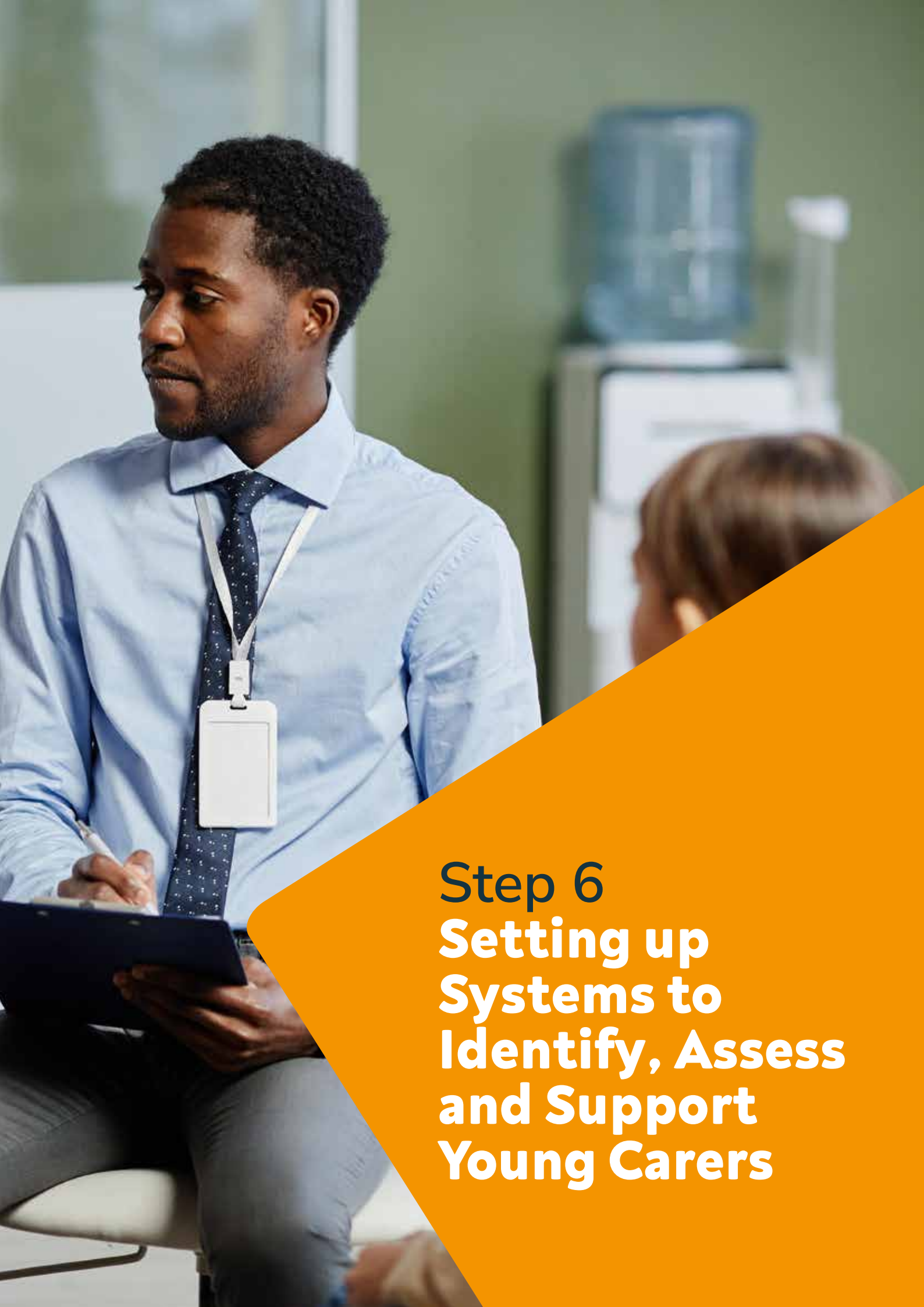
Step 6
Setting up Systems to Identify, Assess and Support Young Carers

Key information

To help ensure no young carer slips through the net, schools need to take a proactive approach to identifying and supporting young carers. All schools should ensure they have agreed procedures in place to identify, assess, and support young carers and their families.

Having these procedures agreed before schools proactively raise the awareness of staff, pupils and families about young carer issues will help ensure:

- **Staff roles in relation to young carers are clear.**
- **Processes are in place to ensure the needs of young carers are met effectively once identified.**

What is the role of the Young Carers School Operational Lead in implementing the school's procedures for young carers?

The Young Carers School Operational Lead will take a leading role in ensuring the procedures are agreed and implemented. To do so, they will need to engage other staff members, ask them to take specific actions forward and keep track of progress.

The specific staff that the Young Carers School Operational Lead will need to work with will vary according to the size and structure of the school but to give Leads an idea about who these staff may be, broad suggestions are provided in the guidance below.

❝ I struggle to reach out for help so it's great having check-in with staff and other carers at school to know I'm not alone and support is available."

Young carer

What procedures should schools have in place?

Young Carers School Operational Leads should have identified which procedures they intend to prioritise for implementation when reviewing their school's provision (see **Step 2: Reviewing your school's provision for young carers**).

The basics

In summary, if your school is just beginning to develop its young carers' provision, you may wish to focus initially on implementing the basics by:

- Ensuring there is a confidential setting where young carers or pupils who think they may be young carers will be able to access and talk to a member of staff.

- Making sure any targeted interventions, which are already being delivered in the school, are accessible to young carers (see **Step 6, Tool 1: Checklist of support young carers may need**).

- Support the implementation of a flexible approach across the school so that, where appropriate, young carers are able to use a telephone to call home during breaks and lunchtimes to reduce any worry they may have about a family member. This will involve finding somewhere confidential where young carers can talk on the phone.

- Consider setting up a peer support group for young carers (see **Step 6, Tool 2: Running a peer support group for young carers**).

- Ensure some detentions are run at lunchtime as young carers may not be able to attend after school.

- Consider implementing a school message box so that pupils can self-identify. **Remember**: Young carers tell us that pupils must be reassured that their privacy will be maintained. Message boxes need to be secure so that other pupils are unable to access any private material (see **Step 6, Tool 3: Exemplar handout for pupils to complete and post into a message box**).

Implementing these actions will help schools achieve the Bronze level of the Young Carers in Schools Award.

Don't forget

Not all pupils with parents or other family members who are ill, disabled, have a mental health problem or an addiction will be a young carer. You will need to agree with the staff responsible for collating the returned information that they notify you where families have responded positively to the questions. You should then have a follow-up conversation with pupils and/or their family to establish the extent of a pupil's caring role and whether they require any support from school.

Moving beyond the basics

To develop your systems further and meet young carers' needs more effectively, the Young Carers School Operational Lead should:

- Engage staff who are responsible for pupil enrolment processes and the school's annual process for checking pupil information to ensure the following questions are asked:

  - Does the pupil have someone in their family or a friend who is ill, disabled, or has a mental health problem or an addiction?

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- Would they like more information about the types of support the school provides to young carers?

● Engage staff responsible for the school's internal management system to arrange for known young carers to be flagged so that the attendance, attainment and progress of young carers can be understood.

● Establish a working group of school staff to support the needs of young carers. Young Carers School Operational Leads could explore existing working groups in the school that could be used for this purpose, for example, a group of staff who regularly meet to review the progress of vulnerable pupil groups.

● Check existing protocols for sharing information internally, and with external agencies to ensure that the young carer does not have to repeat their story multiple times.

● Consider establishing a young carers forum so that there are regular opportunities for young carers to influence and support the development of provision for young carers (see **Step 6, Tool 4: How to run a young carers forum**).

● Establish links with external agencies including the school nurse (see **Step 6, Tool 5: Working with school nurses to support young carers and their families**) and local young carers service (see **Step 6, Tool 6: Working in partnership with young carers services**). Find out what support is available to young carers within and outside of school and what details you should include on noticeboards and the school website to signpost pupils and their families appropriately.

Implementing these actions will help schools achieve the Silver level of the Young Carers in Schools Award.

Best practice

To achieve best practice for young carers, your school should also:

● Implement a fully proactive approach to identifying young carers. This will involve:

- Engaging staff responsible for monitoring and tackling poor attendance to ensure that where changes in trends are identified, staff consider whether these may be due to a potential caring role and know to inform the Young Carers School Operational Lead of any concerns.

- Agreeing that pupil progress meetings will be used to identify changes in trends and consider whether these may be due to a potential caring role.

- Engaging the Safeguarding Officer to ensure existing (and newly acquired) lists of children on Child protection and Looked-after children plans are reviewed to identify pupils who are living with adults experiencing a mental health problem or an addiction.

- Asking the staff member responsible for school census data to check data on pupils with disabilities at the beginning of each school year, to identify sibling carers on roll.

- Agreeing with feeder schools/early years providers a process for how they will tell you if a pupil has already been identified as a young carer.

- Engaging staff responsible for registering new pupils so that where a pupil transfers to your school from another, staff check whether any young carer status has been recorded on the Common Transfer File (sent to the new school via the Department for Education). Make sure you include this information when transferring a pupil.

- Establishing information sharing protocols with your school nurse, young carers services and health and social care services to ensure that, with appropriate consent, they tell you when they identify young carers attending, or about to start your school.

- Agree what assessment mechanisms will be used to assess pupils' needs when they are identified as a young carer. These assessments could be carried out by a relevant staff member within the school – perhaps using the assessment tools provided as part of **Step 9: Identifying, assessing and supporting young carers and their families**. The assessments could be carried out by other agencies if deemed more appropriate.

- Agree that individual pupil plans and/or provision maps will be used to record how the school plans to meet the needs of the pupil (exemplar pupil plans/provision maps are not provided within the Step-by-step Guide as schools will have existing and varying pupil plans/provision map templates in place).

- Agree processes for inter-agency working, including with the local young carers service (see **Step 6, Tool 7: Checklist for effective partnership working between schools and young carers services**). Develop formal joint working together agreements where appropriate (see **Step 6, Tool 8: Exemplar working together agreement for use with young carers services**).

- Make sure systems are in place, where appropriate, to support young carers to participate post-16 (see **Step 6, Tool 9: Supporting young carers to participate post-16**) and transition to adulthood at 18 (see **Step 6, Tool 10: Supporting young carers to transition into adulthood**). This will include working with colleges, training providers and universities to plan and implement support for young carers and their families through transitions, and agreeing how information will be shared between the operational leads, with the appropriate consent.

- Ensure the school and its communications are accessible to families of young carers (see **Step 6, Tool 11: Checklist of support that families of young carers may need**).

- Engage internal staff, such as the SENCO, Pastoral Lead, or Inclusion Manager and/or external agencies, including the local young carers service, to find out how to signpost and/or undertake whole family work that aims to support parents/siblings in order to prevent or reduce a caring role.

Implementing these actions will help schools achieve the Gold level of the Young Carers in Schools Award.

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Step 7
Raising Awareness of School Staff about Young Carers

Key information

To meet the needs of young carers in your school, it is vital that all school staff:

- **Understand why young carers need support to enjoy and achieve at school.**

- **Sign up to the school's whole school commitment for young carers.**

- **Know the simple things they can do to identify, support and signpost young carers as part of their wider roles within the school.**

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.

Why should schools raise the awareness of all staff members about these key points?

It is important that all staff members (teaching and non-teaching) understand young carer issues because:

- Doing so will help deliver a positive whole school ethos where young carers and their families are respected and valued and feel safe and confident to access support.

- Many young carers are hidden (see **Step 1: Gaining an understanding about young carers**). To identify pupils with caring

responsibilities effectively, all school staff should understand the possible signs that a pupil is a young carer and what to do when they identify such a child/young person (see **Step 7, Tool 1: Checklist of signs a pupil is a young carer**).

- A pupil with caring responsibilities may self-identify to any member of staff whom they feel they can talk to and share their worries and concerns with.

- All staff need to be aware of the school's process for sharing information about a young carer. This will help ensure that information is only shared with the appropriate consent and with a view to guaranteeing a pupil does not need to repeat their story several times.

- All staff should know not to discuss a pupil's caring role in front of their peers.

- A member of support staff who has established relationships with the local community may become aware a pupil is a young carer through conversations with the family and should be able to signpost them to support.

- Teachers and support staff delivering targeted interventions, such as homework clubs, should know how to ensure these interventions meet young carers' needs, for example that homework clubs should be run at lunchtime.

- All teaching staff should be able to adapt their practice to meet the needs of young carers in their class teaching.

- Office staff should know why it may be important for pupils to have access to the phone at break and lunchtime to check on a family member and to ensure the appropriate handling of messages from home.

How should the schools raise staff awareness?

Young Carers School Operational Leads should prioritise how they intend to raise the awareness of pupils and their families when reviewing their school's provision (see **Step 2: Reviewing your school's provision for young carers**).
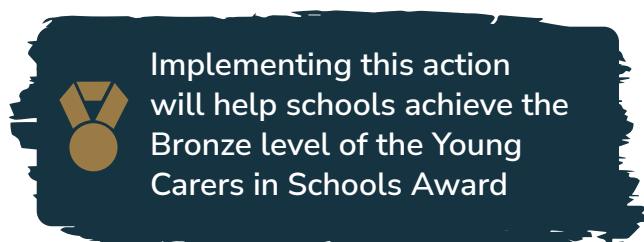
The basics

In summary, schools beginning to develop their young carers' provision may initially wish to raise awareness by developing and maintaining young carer material on a staff noticeboard and the intranet and/or shared drive.

This material should contain:

- The name and contact information of the Young Carers School Operational Lead.

- The school's whole school commitment to young carers (see **Step 5, Tool 1: Recommended points to include in a whole school commitment**).

- Awareness raising information regarding who young carers are, the likelihood that there will be many young carers at the school, the impact of caring on young people and the types of support available for young carers.

- A checklist of possible signs that a pupil is a young carer and what to do if staff know a pupil who is, or could be, a young carer and/or if a pupil tells them they have a caring role (**Step 7, Tool 1: Checklist of signs a pupil is a young carer**).

To secure proactive staff commitment, this material should be endorsed by the Senior Leadership Team.

See **Step 7, Tool 2: Exemplar staff noticeboard material**.

> Implementing this action will help schools achieve the Bronze level of the Young Carers in Schools Award

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Building on the basics

To meet young carers' needs more effectively, schools should also ensure training on young carer issues:

- Is included in all staff inductions.
- Features regularly as part of staff continuous professional development, for example, as part of a staff INSET day, staff meeting or twilight session.

Staff training should cover:

- Who young carers are and what their caring role might involve.
- The likely number of young carers in the school and why young carers are often hidden.
- The particular challenges young carers often experience that impact on their capacity to enjoy and achieve at school.
- The ways in which staff can support young carers as part of their wider roles in the school (see **Step 7, Tool 3: How school staff can support young carers**).
- The possible signs a pupil may be a young carer.
- What support is available both within and outside the school.

To ensure training effectively raises school staff's understanding and confidence in how to meet young carers' needs, it is important that the Young Carers School Operational Lead evaluates the impact of training in their school.

> Implementing this action will help schools achieve the Silver level of the Young Carers in Schools Award.

Best practice

To achieve best practice for young carers, staff should also have specific training to identify young people affected by stigmatised illnesses (such as parental mental ill-health, parental substance misuse and HIV).

Local safeguarding children's boards within local authorities may host specific training of this type that could be made available to education staff.

> Including specific training for teachers to identify young people affected by stigmatised illnesses will help schools achieve the Gold level of the Young Carers in Schools Award.

What tools are provided to support schools deliver training?

Training resources, accompanying this Step-by-step Guide include:

- **Step 7, Tool 1: Checklist of signs a pupil is a young carer.**
- **Step 7, Tool 2: Staffroom noticeboard material.**
- **Step 7, Tool 3: How can school staff support young carers.**
- **Step 7, Tool 4: Staff training facilitator's guide.**
- **Step 7, Tool 5: PowerPoint for use in staff training.**
- **Step 7, Tool 6: Handouts for use in staff training.**
- **Step 7, Tool 7: Staff training evaluation form.**

The purpose of these tools is to support the Young Carers School Operational Lead to deliver training in their school. Outside agencies, such as a local young carers service, may also be able to provide support with staff training or deliver the training themselves. Your school might want to consider inviting other professionals working in your school to join training sessions and even share training with other schools in the same school cluster or multi-academy trust.

Considering adult carers among your staff group

During training sessions, staff may identify themselves as carers and highlight their own support needs. It would be useful to make information available to adult carers, such as the Carers Trust website (Carers.org), local carers support information and the NHS Carers Direct helpline (0300 123 1053).

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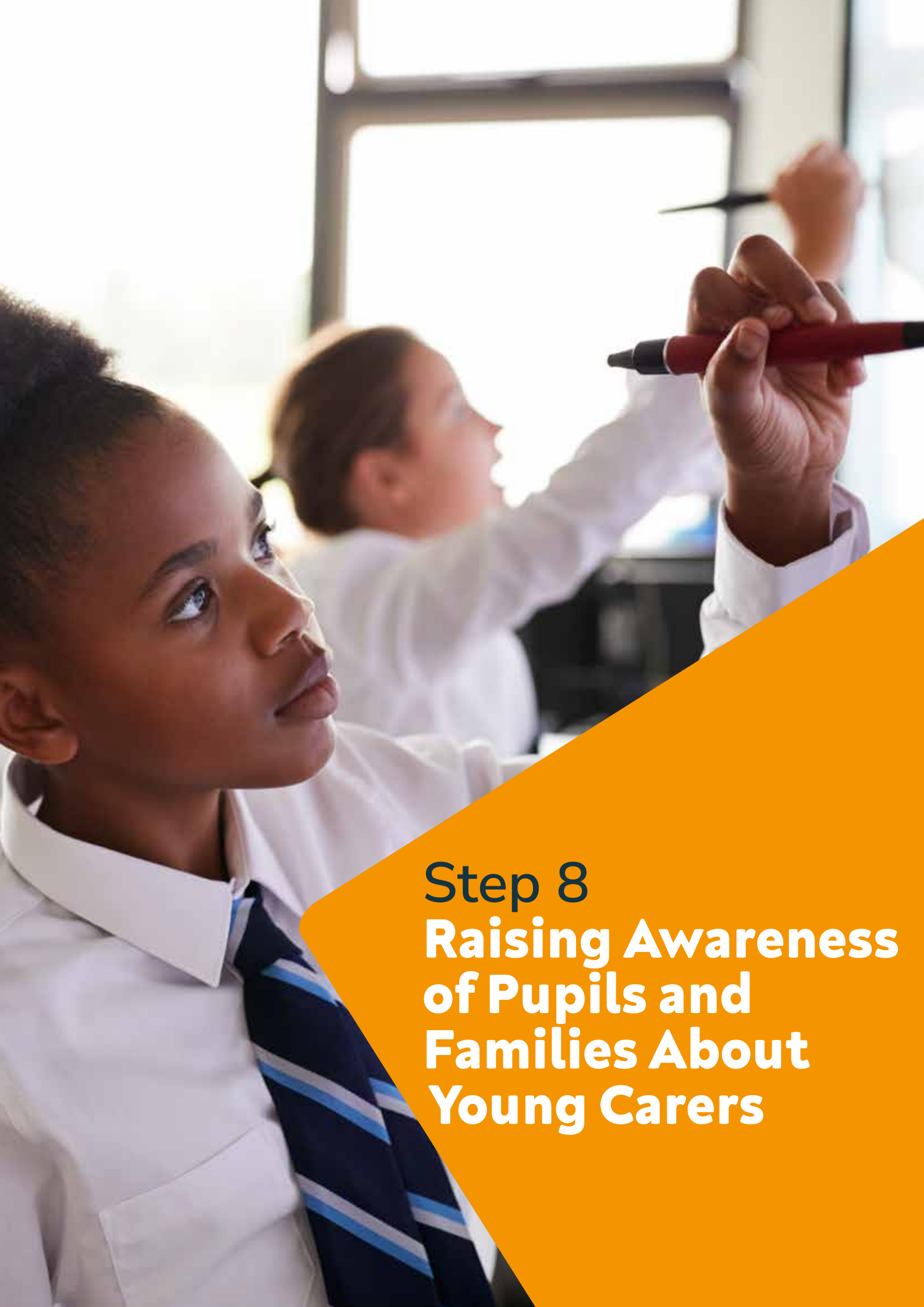**Raising Awareness of Pupils and Families About Young Carers**

Key information

To counteract the reasons why many young carers are hidden (see Step 1: Gaining an understanding about young carers), schools will need to proactively raise the awareness of pupils and their families about:

- What it means to be a young carer.

- Illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction, with a focus on dispelling common stereotypes.

Raising awareness in these areas can help pupils and their families self-identify as a young carer. It can also create more:

- Empathy towards pupils with caring responsibilities.

- Understanding as to why they may sometimes seem unsociable, stressed, worried or angry.

- Appreciation of the complicated responsibilities that young carers can have and why this can mean they can't attend clubs or why they have to rush off after school.

Not only will this help remove the stigma associated with certain illnesses, disabilities, a mental health problem or an addiction, thus helping to prevent bullying, but it will also help young carers to talk about their caring roles with their peers.

To encourage young carers to access appropriate support, it is also important that schools create a safe and understanding environment for young carers and families and raise pupil and family awareness about:

- The types of support the school will provide to young carers, dependent on their needs, and how to access this.

- The types of support other organisations in the local community may be able to provide to young carers and their families.

Don't forget

The earlier a young carer is identified the less likely an inappropriate caring role will become established and have a negative impact. No child or young person's education, wellbeing and potential should be affected by their caring role.

Ways to raise the awareness of pupils and their families

Young Carers School Operational Leads should prioritise how they intend to raise the awareness of pupils and their families when reviewing their school's provision (see **Step 2: Reviewing your school's provision for young carers**).

The basics

In summary, if your school is just beginning to develop its young carer provision, you may wish to focus initially on implementing the basics and raise awareness through:

Pupil noticeboards and school website: The Young Carers School Operational Lead should develop and maintain material about young carers on the pupil noticeboard and school website. This material should include:

- The name and contact information of the Young Carers School Operational Lead.

- The school's whole school commitment to young carers.

- Awareness raising information regarding who young carers are, the likelihood that there will be many young carers at the school, the impact of caring on young people and/or children, and the types of support available for young carers.

See **Step 8, Tool 1: Exemplar noticeboard material for schools**. This noticeboard will need to be refreshed on a regular basis to keep engaging pupils. Why not ask identified young carers to help produce new material for display?

Implementing this action will help schools achieve the Bronze level of the Young Carers in Schools Award

Building on the basics

In schools looking to develop their provision for young carers further, the Young Carers School Operational Lead should:

- Ensure pupil noticeboards and/or the school website also contains information signposting young carers to other resources, for example, details of the local young carers service, school nurse and emotional support delivered within and/or outside of school.

- Deliver regular assemblies to raise awareness of young carer issues which incorporate positive messages about illness and disability (including a mental health problem or an addiction). See **Step 8, Tool 2: Suggested assembly/tutor group activities**. The Young Carers School Operational Lead may also wish to invite relevant local services to make presentations about topics, such as a mental health problem or an addiction.

- Work with relevant colleagues to ensure related aspects of the curriculum, such as PSHE, include teaching that explores the roles and responsibilities of young carers, promotes positive images of disability and challenges stereotypes (see **Step 8, Tool 3: Lesson activity – Young Carer Quiz**).

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- Timetable regular communication to families with a view to providing them with information about young carer issues, available support and how to contact the Young Carers School Operational Lead.

Potential communication channels to use with families include:

- Discrete letters/emails to coincide with young carer assemblies or PSHE teaching (see **Step 8, Tool 4: Exemplar letter to parent(s)/guardian(s)**).

- Articles in a school newsletter (see **Step 8, Tool 5: Exemplar school newsletter article**).

- Including the school's whole school commitment to young carers and their families in the school prospectus.

Through these mechanisms, schools can take a proactive approach to raising the awareness of pupils and their families about young carer issues. This will not only create a supportive school ethos but also help ensure no young carer slips through the net.

> **Implementing this action will help schools achieve the Silver level of the Young Carers in Schools Award.**
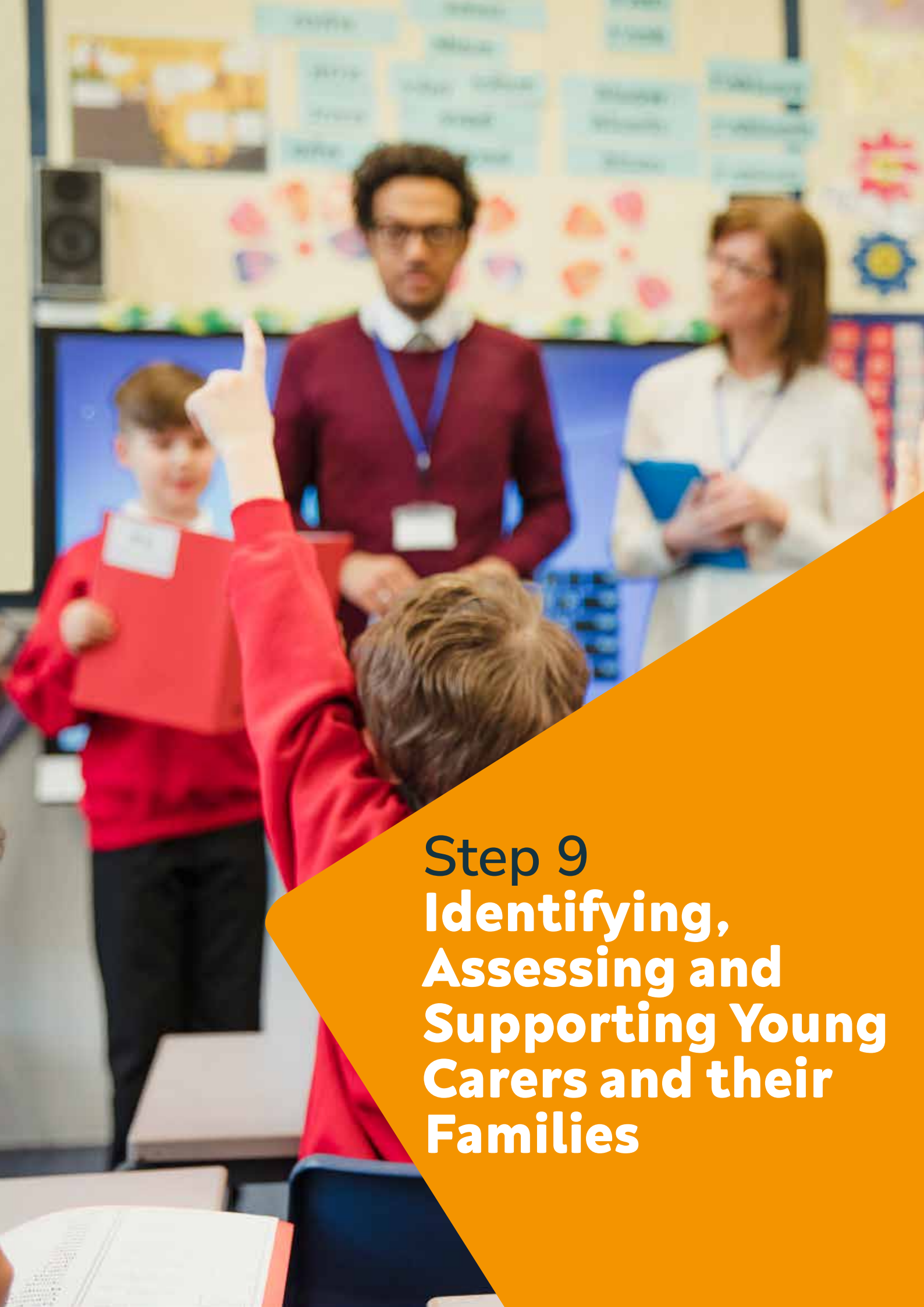
Step 9
**Identifying,
Assessing and
Supporting Young
Carers and their
Families**

Key information

Each time the school identifies a pupil as a young carer, the Young Carers School Operational Lead should ensure a number of key actions are taken to:

- **Assess the needs of this pupil and of their family.**

- **Secure consent for information to be shared.**

- **Establish the involvement of staff and other professionals to plan and implement support.**

- **Develop and agree pupil plans/provision maps.**

- **Deliver support.**

- **Monitor and review impact on the young carer and their family.**

It is vital that these actions are carried out for the pupil's needs to be assessed and met effectively by the school.

What key actions should schools take to deliver a basic level of provision for young carers?

The Young Carers School Operational Lead should:

- Ensure assessments are carried out promptly once a pupil has been identified as a young carer and with a view to identifying the types of support, interventions and/or flexibilities required to meet their needs. This should include taking into account pupil attainment, progress and attendance data and speaking with the young carer and/or their family about the types of support available. Assessments could be carried out by a relevant staff member within the school or by other agencies if deemed more appropriate. For a reminder about the types of support young carers may need see **Step 6, Tool 1: Checklist of support young carers may need**.

- Secure appropriate consent from the family for information to be shared with other staff and/or agencies delivering relevant support. Schools may wish to use existing information sharing consent forms for this purpose and/or use **Step 9, Tool 1: Exemplar information consent sharing form**.

- Ensure the pupil knows how and when they will be able to access and talk to a member of staff about their caring role in a confidential setting.

- Engage relevant school staff to ensure effective delivery of targeted interventions to meet the needs of the pupil.

- Engage relevant staff to implement appropriate flexibilities, for example access to phones at break/lunchtime to reduce any worry young carers may have about a family member.

- Ensure relevant teaching staff know that the pupil is a young carer and how to meet their needs within their role. For a reminder about how teaching staff can support young carers to enjoy and achieve at school see **Step 7, Tool 3: How school staff can support young carers.**

> ### 📌 Don't forget
>
> Some young carers say they do not want information that they are a carer to be shared with their teachers and/or other school staff. To help ensure that young carers feel comfortable with this information being shared it will be important for the Young Carers School Operational Lead to implement each of the steps set out in this Step- by-step Guide. Doing so will help ensure schools create a whole school ethos where young carers feel safe and respected by staff, pupils and the wider school community.

Beyond the basics

To move beyond the basics, to meet the needs of the young carer more effectively, the Young Carers School Operational Lead should also:

- Refer the young carer to external agencies, working inside and outside school. For example, the school nurse and the local young carers service.

> ### 📌 Don't forget
>
> A pupil's and family's situation may change rapidly and ongoing formal and informal monitoring is therefore important.

Best practice

To achieve best practice for young carers, the Young Carers School Operational Lead should also:

- Ensure assessments gather a range of evidence about the level of the young carers' caring responsibilities and the impact of caring on their ability to enjoy and achieve at school – perhaps through use of:

  - **Step 9, Tool 2: The multidimensional assessment of caring activities (MACA);**

  - **Step 9, Tool 3: The positive and negative outcomes of caring (PANOC);**

  - **Step 9, Tool 4: Wellbeing questionnaire;**

  - **Step 9, Tool 5: Staff observation checklist.**

- Identify whether the pupil is at risk of not being in education, employment or training (NEET) between the ages of 16 and 18.

- Ask the pupil's family about any barriers they may have in accessing the school and its communications.

- Develop an individual pupil plan and/or provision map to record quantitative/qualitative data from assessments, set out what interventions, support and/or

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flexibilities will be delivered to the pupil and set a formal review date.

- Establish multi-agency working where appropriate, for example with the school nurse, local young carers service, and social care – using existing local processes such as the Team Around the Child/Family or a Whole Family Approach, and ensuring there is a lead professional in place.

- Implement procedures, where appropriate, to support young carers to participate post-16 and/or transition to adulthood at 18.

- Where appropriate, refer the family for a whole family assessment to help ensure parents/disabled siblings gain the support they need in order to prevent or reduce the pupil's caring role (where the pupil has been identified by a feeder school/other agency, the Young Carers School Operational Lead may wish to check whether a referral has already been made).

- Ensure the timely review of pupil plans/provision maps. In doing so:

  - The same assessment tools should be used as in the pupil's original assessment. This will enable the effectiveness of the provision to be monitored in a robust manner.

  - Views of staff/other agencies delivering the targeted interventions should be taken into account.

  - Parental views about the pupil's wellbeing and barriers to education should be gathered and taken into account.

- The Young Carers School Operational Lead should also ensure that the school reviews the impact of any action taken to reduce/remove barriers the family identified in accessing the school and its communications.

Don't forget

If staff delivering support are concerned that the pupil's situation has changed and/or they require additional support, they should seek opportunities to remind the pupil they can speak with a staff member, for example approaching the pupil at the end of a lesson. In doing so, staff should respect the privacy of the pupil and ensure they do not approach or discuss the pupil's caring role in front of their peers. Any concerns should be raised with the Young Carers School Operational Lead.

Step 10
Sharing Good Practice

Key information

It is vital that schools that have adopted Steps 1 to 9 of this Step-by-step Guide, share their good practice and lessons learnt with feeder and linked schools including others in their school cluster or multi-academy trust.

By doing so they will ensure positive outcomes are delivered for young carers attending other schools. They will also make it more likely that the caring role of a pupil enrolling or transferring to their school is identified by others prior to the pupil's transition. This will make it easier for schools to implement support and early intervention.

Don't forget

Identifying a young carer early can stop them taking on caring roles which are excessive or inappropriate. Make sure no child or young person's education, wellbeing and potential is affected by their caring role by sharing your good practice.

Schools should seek opportunities to share effective practice by:

Disseminating learning with feeder and linked schools, including others in their school cluster or multi-academy trust through transition planning, joint training, mail outs and other information forums.

What to do next?

The development of effective support for young carers in schools is a reiterative process of continual improvement. Schools should review the effectiveness of their policy and provision for identifying and supporting young carers and their families on an annual basis,

with a view to continually improving outcomes.

Reviews should be timetabled at appropriate points within the school calendar so that they:

- Inform the school's processes for planning and reviewing its use of Pupil Premium funding.
- Ensure that where appropriate young carers are considered as part of the whole school development plan.

For guidance and tools to support schools to review their provision return to **Step 2: Reviewing your school's provision for young carers**.

Sharing good practice examples and support on amending practice and policy will help schools meet the Gold level of the Young Carers in Schools Award.

Monitoring and reviewing provision for young carers on an annual basis will help schools achieve the Gold level of the Young Carers in Schools Award.

Additional resources

In addition to the tools and information contained within the Step-by-step Guide, a variety of additional resources have been produced by Carers Trust, The Children's Society and other UK, national and local organisations, which school staff may find useful when developing their young carer provision.

- The Young Carers in Schools website has all the resources in this guide & has a regularly updated hub for other resources: **youngcarersinschools.com**

- Visit Carers Trust's and The Children's Society's websites for latest news and other relevant resources: **carers.org** & **childrenssociety.org.uk**

- For awareness raising material, visit the Young Carers Action Day area on the Carers Trust website: **carers.org/ycad**

- For online support for young carers, visit

  - The Mix: **themix.org.uk**

  - Kooth: **kooth.com**

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