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Identification & Early Recognition

- Work with pastoral staff, tutors, and safeguarding leads to identify young carers through:
 - Attendance patterns
 - Fatigue, anxiety, or emotional dysregulation
 - inconsistent engagement
 - Comments about home responsibilities
- Create a simple, non-intrusive referral pathway for staff to flag concerns.

Initial Assessment & Support Planning

- Conduct a Young Carer Needs Conversation using trauma-informed practice.
- Explore:
 - Type and level of caring responsibilities
 - Impact on emotional wellbeing
 - Impact on attendance, learning, and friendships
 - What the pupil feels they need
- Develop a Personalised Support Plan including:
 - Reasonable adjustments
 - Emotional regulation strategies
 - Academic support
 - Agreed communication methods
- Share the plan with relevant staff on a need-to-know basis.

Emotional & Wellbeing Support

- Provide regular check-ins (weekly or fortnightly).
- Offer a safe space for regulation during the school day.
- Teach emotional literacy and coping strategies.
- Support the pupil to understand that their feelings (stress, guilt, frustration, pride) are valid.

Academic Support & Flexibility

- Work with teachers to implement:
 - Access to quiet working spaces
 - Further support through the Prosper program
- Ensure the pupil has a trusted adult (Emotionally available adult) to advocate for them.

Attendance & Behaviour Support

- Recognise that lateness, tiredness, or dysregulation may be linked to caring duties.
- Use restorative Trauma Informed approaches rather than punitive responses.

Family & Multi-Agency Work

- With consent, liaise with:
 - Parents/carers
 - Social care (if involved)
 - Local young carer services
 - Health professionals
- Ensure the family understands the support available.
- Help the pupil access external young carer groups, respite opportunities, or benefits advice.

Peer Support & Social Development

- Encourage participation in:
 - Young carer groups
 - Enrichment activities
- Support the pupil to build friendships to enable a sense of belonging.

Staff Training & Awareness

- Care and Pastoral Senior Lead to provide staff with training on:
 - What young carers experience
 - How caring roles affect SEMH needs
 - Trauma-informed responses
 - How to refer concerns
- Brunel School will promote a whole-school culture that recognises and supports young carers.

Monitoring & Review

- Care and Pastoral Senior Lead to review the support plan every half term.
- Track:
 - Attendance
 - Emotional wellbeing
 - Academic progress (with support from teaching staff)
 - Engagement in school life
- Adjust support based on the student's changing needs.

Empowerment & Voice

Brunel School will -

- Involve the pupil in every decision.
- Encourage self-advocacy and celebrate strengths.
- Provide opportunities for leadership or responsibility in school that build confidence without adding pressure.

Action Plan

1. Identification & Early Recognition

Key Indicators

Young carers at Brunel School may show:

- Persistent tiredness or lateness
- Anxiety about home or separation
- Difficulty completing work
- Hypervigilance or emotional dysregulation
- Social withdrawal or conflict with peers

How we Identify at Brunel School

- Staff observations (teachers, pastoral, safeguarding)
- Self-disclosure through trusted adults
- Information from external agencies (social care, Early Help, CAMHS)
- Parent/carer conversations
- Attendance and behaviour data patterns

2. Initial Assessment

Care and Pastoral Senior Lead to conduct an initial assessment that is **strength-based**, **non-intrusive**, and **trauma-informed**.

Core Components

Area	What to Explore
Caring Responsibilities	What tasks they do, frequency, emotional load
Impact on Education	Attendance, concentration, homework, progress
Emotional & Mental Health	Stress, anxiety, coping strategies, triggers
Home Context	Family structure, support networks, professional involvement
Strengths & Protective Factors	Resilience, interests, trusted adults, peer relationships
Risk Factors	Neglect, inappropriate caring, unsafe responsibilities

- Young Carers Needs Assessment (local authority version)
- Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)
- Pupil voice tools (emotion scales, drawing, timelines)

3. Immediate Support Planning

Support should be personalised, flexible, and co-produced with the young person.

Practical School-Based Support:

- Named trusted adult for daily/weekly check-ins
- Quiet space for regulation or phone calls home
- Attendance flexibility where appropriate
- Pastoral mentoring or key-worker sessions
- Safe communication plan (e.g., if they worry about home during the day)

Academic Support:

- Catch-up sessions
- Differentiated tasks to reduce cognitive load
- Clear communication with subject teachers

Emotional & Mental Health Support:

- Emotion coaching
- Therapeutic interventions (ELSA, counselling, nurture groups)
- Social skills or resilience groups
- Trauma-informed strategies (predictability, co-regulation, sensory breaks)

4. Multi-Agency Coordination

Young carers often sit at the intersection of several services.

Who to Involve:

- Local authority Young Carers Service
- Early Help or Social Care
- CAMHS or mental health practitioners
- Family support workers
- GP or health professionals
- Voluntary sector (Barnardo's, Carers Trust)

Brunel School's Role:

- Share relevant information (with consent)
- Attend TAC/TAF meetings
- Ensure the young person's voice is central
- Monitor safeguarding thresholds

5. Ongoing Monitoring & Review

Review Cycle:

- Every 6–12 weeks depending on need
- Update support plan
- Reassess risks and strengths
- Check academic progress
- Capture pupil voice regularly

What to Look For:

- Changes in caring responsibilities
- Emotional wellbeing shifts
- Attendance patterns
- Engagement in learning
- Home circumstances

6. Building a Supportive School Culture

Whole-School Approaches

- Staff training on young carers and SEMH
- Clear identification and referral pathways
- Young carers group or peer support network

Environment

- Predictable routines
- Trauma-informed behaviour policy

- Safe spaces for regulation
- Consistent relationships with adults

7. Empowering the Young Person

Young carers often feel invisible or overwhelmed. Support should aim to:

- Build self-esteem
- Strengthen identity beyond the caring role
- Encourage hobbies and enrichment
- Teach emotional literacy and self-advocacy
- Celebrate achievements