

Young Carers Policy

Author	Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager
Version	2.0
Status	Live
Date Approved	March 2026
Approved by	Catholic Ethos and Culture
Effective Date	March 2026
Date of Next Review	Jan 2028
Responsibility for Review	Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager
Equality and Welsh Language Impact Assessment	Y
Health and wellbeing implications considered	Y

Version	Date	Description	Amended/Reviewed by
1.0	January 2024	A policy to identify and support young carers, reducing barriers to education and promoting wellbeing, attendance and achievement.	Vice Principal
2.0	February 2026	Updated to reflect Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, Keeping Learners Safe guidance and ESTYN recommendations; strengthened identification, support planning and external partnership arrangements; clarified safeguarding and confidentiality processes.	Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager

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1.0: Introduction

St David's recognises that young carers aged 16+ may face unique barriers in education, including reduced attendance, mental health challenges, limited time for study, or emotional strain due to their caring responsibilities.

Definition:

A young carer is a person under 18, or a young adult carer aged 18–25, who provides unpaid care to a family member or friend who has a disability, long-term illness, mental health condition, substance misuse issue or additional need.

The College recognises that many young carers may not identify themselves as carers and may be reluctant to disclose their circumstances. Identification will always be handled sensitively and without assumption.

The College is committed to:

- Identifying young carers early
- Providing appropriate support
- Reducing barriers to education
- Ensuring equality of opportunity
- Working in partnership with families (where appropriate) and external agencies

We value the contribution young carers make and aim to create an environment where they can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

This policy applies to all enrolled students aged 16–19 and to adult learners where appropriate.

2.0 Nominated Carers Lead

The College operates a structured leadership model to ensure effective operational delivery, strategic oversight, and governance accountability in supporting young carers.

2.1 Operational Carers Lead

Safeguarding and Wellbeing Officer

The Operational Lead:

- Acts as the main point of contact for young carers.
- Identifies and supports young carers sensitively and promptly.
- Maintains a confidential Young Carers Register.

- Completes a Young Carers Support Plan in partnership with the student.
- Coordinates internal support (e.g., pastoral, financial assistance, academic adjustments).
- Leads on referrals to external services where appropriate.
- Liaises with families where appropriate and with consent.
- Monitors progress and reviews support arrangements regularly.
- Provides advocacy for young carers within the College.

2.2 Strategic Carers Lead

Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager

The Strategic Lead:

- Provides strategic oversight of provision for young carers.
- Ensures the College meets its statutory and safeguarding responsibilities.
- Oversees the development and review of policy and procedures relating to young carers.
- Supports staff training and awareness across the College.
- Works with external partners and agencies to strengthen support pathways.
- Reports, where appropriate, to Senior Leadership and Governors.
- Supports quality assurance and development of provision, including external recognition where applicable.

2.3 Strategic Oversight

The Assistant Principal:

- Holds senior leadership accountability for young carers provision.
- Ensures alignment with the College's safeguarding strategy and priorities.
- Reviews impact, resources, and compliance.
- Reports to the Safeguarding Governor and Governing Body as part of safeguarding oversight.

2.4 Safeguarding Governor

The Safeguarding Governor:

- Provides oversight and challenge in relation to young carers provision.
- Receives safeguarding reports, including anonymised young carers data.
- Seeks assurance that statutory duties and safeguarding responsibilities are met.
- Reports to the Governing Body on safeguarding effectiveness.

3.0 Scope and Purpose of Policy

Individual pastoral care of every student, including young carers, is at the heart of our College. It encompasses academic progress, an appropriate curriculum, enrichment opportunities, and additional guidance and support for all personal, social and emotional needs.

This policy aims to:

1. Ensure young carers are identified and supported sensitively and promptly.
2. Provide tailored pastoral and academic support.
3. Reduce the impact of caring responsibilities on attendance, engagement, wellbeing, and achievement.
4. Promote positive mental health.
5. Build strong internal and external pathways of support.
6. Maintain confidentiality while keeping safeguarding at the centre of practice.

Where caring responsibilities place a young person at risk of harm, or where the needs of the person they care for are not being appropriately met, safeguarding procedures will be followed in line with College policy.

Young carers will be consulted about the support they receive and, where appropriate, invited to contribute to service development.

4.0 Support for young carers

St David's College will ensure that the following roles and responsibilities are adhered to:

4.1 Teaching and Support Staff

- Identify concerns or indicators of a young carer.
- Make referrals via the College's safeguarding system (e.g., MyConcern).
- Provide reasonable academic adjustments.
- Support inclusion and maintain confidentiality.

Young carers may be identified through:

- Self-disclosure
- Transition information from schools
- Safeguarding systems (e.g., MyConcern alerts)
- Tutor observations
- Family or agency referrals

4.2 Pastoral and Wellbeing Support

- Regular wellbeing check-ins
- Emotional support and signposting
- Priority access to counselling or mental health services
- Access to safe spaces or quiet rooms

4.3 Academic Support

- Flexible deadlines
- Permission for late arrival/early exit if needed
- Support with independent study
- Regular communication with tutors
- Exam access arrangements where appropriate

4.4 Financial Support

- Support with EMA and proof letters
- Bursary support for transport, meals, or educational materials
- Access to college food pantry

4.5 Attendance Support

- Understanding of caring duties when recording absence
- Flexibility for emergency caring situations

4.6 Holiday Support

- Signposting to holiday clubs or respite services
- On-site support in college-led holiday clubs (where applicable)

4.7 Practical Support

- Help with transport challenges
- Support with digital access
- Links to external carers services

5.0 Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- Information about young carers is handled with sensitivity.
- The student's wishes are central to decisions about sharing information.
- Confidentiality may be broken only if required to safeguard the student or someone in their care.
- Records will be stored securely in accordance with GDPR and college safeguarding policy.

6.0 Relevant legislation and guidance

This policy is informed by the following legislation and guidance:

- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Equality Act 2010
- Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018
- Children Act 1989
- Keeping Learners Safe (Welsh Government guidance)
- Supporting Young Carers in School: A Step-by-Step Guide for Leaders, Teachers and Non-Teaching Staff (Wales edition, 2017)
- ESTYN: Provision for Young Carers in Secondary Schools, Further Education Colleges and Pupil Referral Units Across Wales (May 2019)