

Working Carers Guide for Schools



Guide for Headteachers/Managers –

Bringing together information and advice available for working carers to help support you and your teams in schools

Purpose

We recognise that some staff have caring responsibilities which can be unpredictable and demanding, so aim to offer them as much support as reasonably practicable



This guide defines what a carer is and provides you (headteachers/managers) with resources to help signpost and support working carers in schools

What is a carer?



Anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support ([Carers Trust](#))

Anyone can become a carer, and carers come from all walks of life, all cultures and can be any age. Many feel that they're doing what anyone would do in the same situation, caring for a mother, father, wife, husband, son, daughter or best friend, for example.

Key Facts



- Around 3 in 5 people will be carers at some point in their lives.
- 1 in 8 adults (around 6.5 million people) are carers.
- Every day another 6,000 people take on a caring responsibility – that equals over 2 million people each year.
- 58% of carers are women and 42% are men.
- 1.4 million people provide over 50 hours of care per week.

Your role as a Headteacher/Manager

If an employee comes to you to talk about their caring responsibilities and/or struggles, be supportive. **Listen to them, take the time to understand their situation and encourage them to be open** – often, having this kind of two-way dialogue will help uncover some solutions and help to support their needs.



External information and advice



- [careLinks and poster \(PDF, 1MB\)](#) - CarerLinks+ is a free service dedicated to supporting and understanding the needs of unpaid carers from the LGBT+community across Cheshire East
- [Skills for Care](#) - Information to allow employers to ask important questions around the prevalence of carers they employ, acknowledge the important role that carers play and suggests how carer's skills can be retained and developed
- [Carers UK](#) - National advice, support and information

External information and advice



- [Carers Trust](#) - Action, help and advice. Getting help, money and benefits, local carers centres and discussion boards
- [Employers for Carers](#) - Cheshire East Council is a member of the Employers for Carers scheme, which gives staff full access to their resources for advice and information, specific to working carers. For full access to this site you must first create an account via the link on the homepage. The Cheshire East membership code is: **#EFC1929**
- [NHS choices](#) - provides information from the NHS for carers and people who are planning for their future care needs, including details of the [Carers Direct Helpline](#)

External information and advice



[Macmillan Cancer Support](#) - Manager guidance - supporting staff with cancer or who are caring for someone with cancer

[Age UK](#) - provides sources of emotional, practical and financial support that are available to carers of older people.

[Alzheimer Research UK](#) - provides details of information, support and care services to people with dementia as well as their families and carers.

External information and advice

[Joint All Ages Carers Strategy 2021-2025](#) - this strategy is health and social care's response to the stated needs of carers



Internal information and advice

[Cheshire East Hub](#) A single point of access for all age carers in Cheshire East. The service is delivered by Making Space. They provide a range of support from 1:1 support, peer support groups, information and advice, carers breaks and statutory carers assessments.



Any employee of Cheshire East Council can contact the service for information, advice and guidance about their caring role. Where an employee lives outside of the Cheshire East boundary they will be provided with information and advice and supported to contact their local carers service.

Internal information and advice

E-learning course – Carer Aware

This e-learning course is available from the Astute eLearning platform, and takes approximately 50 minutes to complete. It gives helpful information regarding who carers are, problems that they face, carers and the law and meeting their needs. It can be accessed through the link below (you will need to self- register).

<https://cheshireallagecarers.astute-elearning.com/>



Cheshire East Council

Carer Aware

CYLIX
© Cylx Limited
Licensed to Cheshire East Council until
26/07/2023

CPD CERTIFIED
The CPD Certification
Scheme

Start course

OFFICIAL

Internal information and advice

Occupational Health Unit (OHU)

The role of Occupational Health is to assess the impact of 'health on work' and 'work on health' and to help maintain the health of the workforce. A host of services are available.



Discuss with the employee whether an OHU referral is appropriate – only you, as a headteacher/manager, can make the referral.

Policy and Guidance



There are various policies available to support carers at work, please see below for details of the model policies:

Flexible working policy and procedure- Working carers may benefit from flexible working in order to balance work and caring responsibilities. The request can cover changing hours, times or place of work. See policy and procedure for more information.

Leave and time off policy- Carers may want to use their annual leave for caring responsibilities or to take a break. Employees also have the right to take 'reasonable' time off to care for dependents (including immediate family or someone relying on you as a carer), in the event of an emergency. An emergency might be an accident at home or a breakdown in care arrangements.



Policy and Guidance



Ordinary parental leave policy - There will be occasions when working parents wish to take time off to care for or spend time with their child or children. The policy sets out a general outline of statutory rights and responsibilities to take up to 18 weeks' unpaid Ordinary Parental Leave in respect of each child.

Equality and diversity in employment policy - It is illegal to discriminate against a carer because of their responsibilities as a carer, or because of the individual(s) they care for. Equality is about treating people alike according to their needs. The policy details more about this.

Policy and Guidance

Wellbeing policy- Supporting someone else as a carer can impact physical and mental health. The school has a responsibility for the health and wellbeing of its staff. The policy sets out the approach to managing its obligations to support and enable staff to maintain their physical and mental health wellbeing.



Useful internal contacts



- Human Resources
 - Email: HRenquiries@cheshireeast.gov.uk
- Senior Commissioning Manager, Integrated Adult Commissioning
 - Email: Jill.Stenton@cheshireeast.gov.uk